UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

August 2, 2021

VIA EMAIL ONLY
Melissa Wiatrolik, THPO
Little Traverse Bay Bands
of Odawa Indians
7500 Odawa Circle
Harbor Springs, MI 49740
MWiatrolik@ltbbodawa-nsn.gov

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION UNDER SECTION 106 OF THE NATIONAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION ACT FOR THE PROPOSED LICENSE RENEWAL OF GENERAL ELECTRIC HITACHI NUCLEAR ENERGY MORRIS OPERATION INDEPENDENT SPENT FUEL STORAGE INSTALLATION IN GRUNDY COUNTY, ILLINOIS (DOCKET NUMBER: 72-01)

Dear Ms. Wiatrolik:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) received, by letter dated June 30, 2020, an application from GE-Hitachi Nuclear Energy Americas LLC (GEH) to renew License No. SNM-2500 for the Morris Operation independent spent fuel storage installation (ISFSI). The license renewal application is available through the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession Number ML20182A699 or at https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML2018/ML20182A699.html. If the NRC approves this renewal, GEH will be allowed to continue interim storage of spent nuclear fuel at the ISFSI for a 20-year period that would begin upon expiration of the current license on May 31, 2022.

The ISFSI is located on a property of about 327 acres in Goose Lake Township, Grundy County, Illinois (see enclosure). It is situated within a 15-acre owner-controlled parcel within the property. The fuel storage facility consists of two interconnected water-filled basins with cranes, a water treatment system, and other facilities required to store irradiated fuel underwater. Fuel storage equipment in the basins is designed to protect the integrity of fuel rods during seismic or meteorological events. Security measures are in place to protect the facility against unauthorized access. GEH has no plans to make major changes to the facility structures, utility systems, or waste management systems during the proposed license renewal term.

The NRC staff is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for the proposed action in accordance with the NRC regulation in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR), Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Regulatory Functions," that implements the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA). In addition, consistent with 36 CFR 800.8, "Coordination with the National Environmental Policy Act," the NRC staff is coordinating compliance with the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA), with its NEPA review process. The EA will include an analysis of potential impacts to historic and cultural resources as well as other resource areas, such as land use, ecological resources, socioeconomics, and environmental justice.

Renewal of the license would result in a continuation of existing conditions. GEH does not plan to receive additional spent fuel or replace any of the spent fuel currently in storage. GEH anticipates no construction or refurbishment at the existing ISFSI and no impact to cultural resources. Only routine monitoring and maintenance is expected over the proposed 20-year period of continued operation.

Based on this information, the NRC staff has made a preliminary determination that the proposed license renewal does not have the potential to cause effects on historic or cultural properties. In accordance with the definition in 36 CFR 800.3(a)(1) of *no potential to cause effects*, "if the undertaking is a type of activity that does not have the potential to cause effects on historic properties, assuming such historic properties were present, the agency official has no further obligations under Section 106 or this part." Because continuation of the ISFSI operation is not a type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic or cultural properties, the NRC has preliminarily concluded that it has no further obligations under Section 106 of the NHPA. However, to support preparation of the EA, we respectfully request comments on this preliminary determination or any other information you may have regarding cultural resources that may be affected by this proposed license renewal. The Environmental Report section of GEH's application, which describes the cultural and historic resources in the vicinity of the GEH Morris facility, can be found in ADAMS at ML20182A703 or at https://www.nrc.gov/docs/ML2018/ML20182A703.pdf.

Please submit any comments or other information regarding the NRC staff's preliminary determination of no effects on historic properties or other environmental review resource areas within 30 days of receipt of this letter to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, ATTN: Ms. Jessie M. Quintero, Chief, Environmental Review Materials Branch, via e-mail at jessie.quintero@nrc.gov.

If you have any questions, please contact the NRC Project Manager, Ms. Christine Pineda, by telephone at (301) 415-6789 or via e-mail at christine.pineda@nrc.gov.

In accordance with 10 CFR 2.390 of the NRC's "Agency Rules and Practice and Procedure," a copy of this letter will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room or from the Publicly Available Records component of the NRC's ADAMS. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Website at http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html.

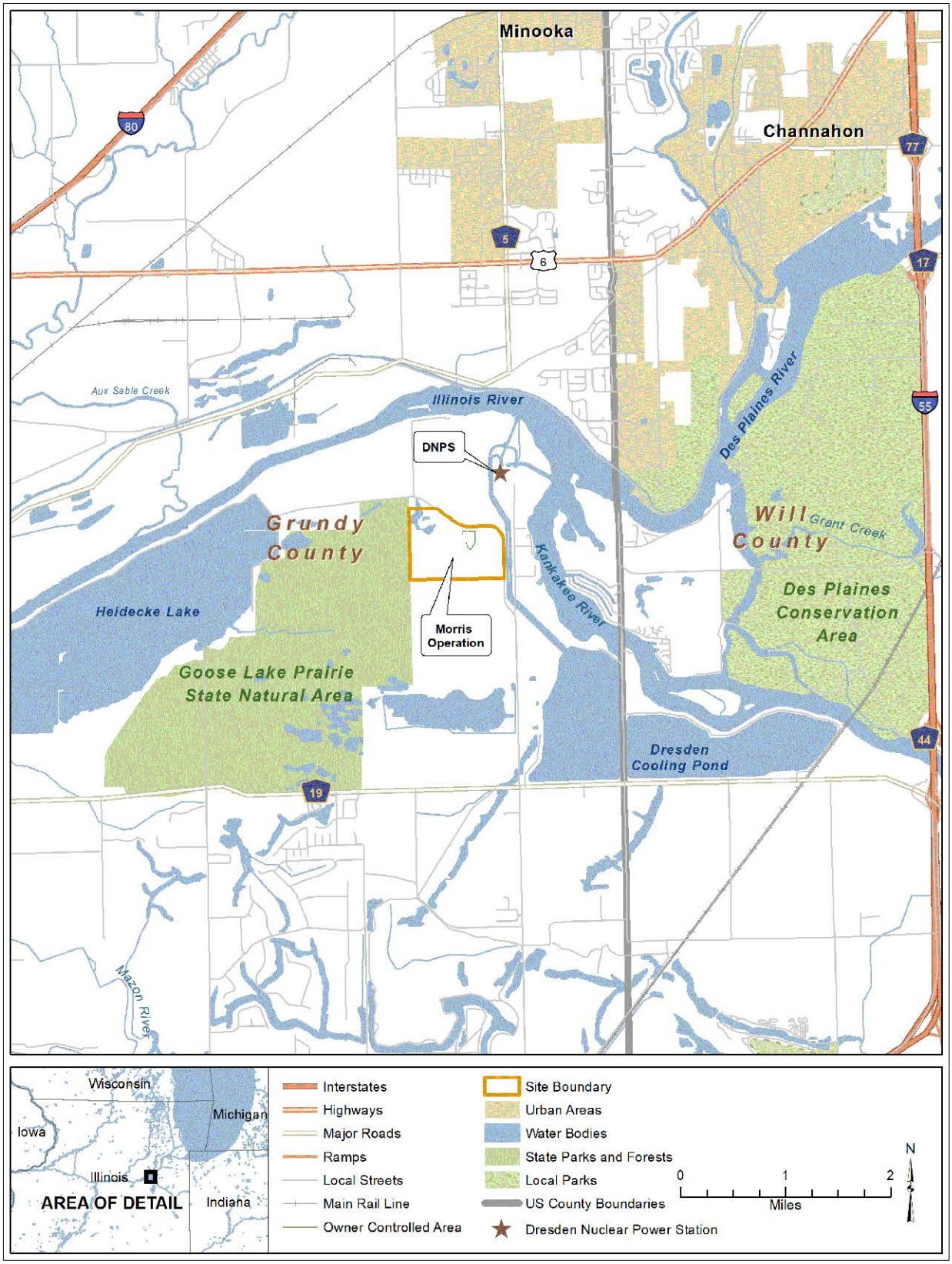
Sincerely,

Signed by Quintero, Jessie on 08/02/21

Jessie M. Quintero, Chief
Environmental Review Materials Branch
Division of Rulemaking, Environmental, and Financial Support
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards

Docket No. 72-01
License No. SNM-2500

Enclosure:
GEH Morris Operation Site Map



Location of GEH-Morris Operation Independent Spent Fuel Storage Installation

Enclosure