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to the Browns Ferry Power Plant
License Renewal Application

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U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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ENVIRONMENTAL SCOPING MEETING RELATED TO THE BROWNS
FERRY POWER PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION

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PUBLIC MEETING

+ + + + +

THURSDAY

APRIL 11, 2024

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The Public Meeting met via Video-
Teleconference, at 1:00 p.m. EDT, Lance Rakovan,
NMSS, facilitating.

NRC STAFF PRESENT

- LANCE RAKOVAN, NMSS, Facilitator
- SCOTT BURNELL, OPA
- JESSICA HAMMOCK, NRR
- STEVE KOENICK, NMSS
- JOHN MOSES, NMSS
- JESSICA UMANA, NMSS

ALSO PRESENT

- BRIAN PADDOCK
- DON SAFER

P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

1:00 p.m.

MR. RAKOVAN: Let's go ahead and get things started. I have one o'clock Eastern. If we could go to the second slide, please. Thank you, Angela.

Good afternoon, everyone. My name is Lance Rakovan. It is my pleasure to facilitate today's public meeting hosted by the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, or NRC, involving Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant Units 1, 2, and 3 subsequent license renewal.

My colleagues Jessica Hammock and Jessica Umana will be our main presenters.

Our goals today are to, one, provide you with an overview of the subsequent license renewal process for safety and environmental for Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant review. And, two, to solicit your input on the environmental issues that the NRC should address in our environmental review.

To avoid any potential confusion, I would like to stress that we are here today to gather information to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement to evaluate the environmental impacts for the potential license renewal of the operating license for Browns Ferry, again Units 1, 2, and 3.

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1 Today we look forward to hearing your
2 scoping comments related to areas covered by our
3 environmental review.

4 Now a term we are going to hear a lot
5 today is scoping, which simply means determining the
6 scope of the environmental review. Today's meeting is
7 just one way that you can participate in that process.
8 And we will be going more into details about that
9 later.

10 Slide 3, please. So here is our agenda
11 for today. After some opening remarks and
12 introductions, we will move on to a brief presentation
13 involving re-licensing with a focus on environmental
14 scoping. We will take a short time to see if anyone
15 has any clarifying questions on the presentation.

16 And then we will move to the final and
17 most important part of this webinar, where we will
18 open up the virtual floor to receive your scoping
19 comments. This is where we hope you will provide your
20 input on what the NRC should consider to be in scope
21 of the NRC's environmental review for Browns Ferry
22 subsequent license renewal.

23 For those of you on the phone, moving to
24 Slide 4. We have a number of NRC staff with us today,
25 including Jessica Hammock, who is our safety review

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1 lead, Jessica Umana, who is our environmental review
2 lead, John Moses, who is the deputy director of our
3 Division of Rulemaking, Environmental and Financial
4 Support, and Steve Koenick, who is the chief of the
5 Environmental Project Management Branch 1. Again, our
6 main speakers today will be the Jessicas.

7 Moving on to Slide 5, please? So this is
8 a comment gathering meeting by NRC's definition, which
9 means our primary purpose here is to listen to you,
10 specifically to collect your comments on topics to be
11 included in the Browns Ferry subsequent license
12 renewal and environmental review.

13 So, again, we appreciate your patience in
14 terms of waiting until we finish our presentation, but
15 we do want to make sure that everyone who is joining
16 us today has at least a basic understanding of the
17 license renewal process and the topics at hand.

18 Please note that we are recording and
19 transcribing today's meeting so that the NRC staff can
20 be sure to get a full accounting of all the comments
21 that you provide.

22 Participants will be in listen-only mode
23 until we get to the comment section or, again, once we
24 open the floor to see if there are any clarifying
25 questions following our presentation. And I would

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1 like to stress that no regulatory decisions will be
2 made during today's meeting.

3 I would like to turn things over to John
4 Moses, who I believe is going to provide some
5 additional opening remarks. And then we will go ahead
6 and turn things over to the Jessicas.

7 So, John, are you with us?

8 MR. MOSES: I am. Thank you, Lance. Good
9 afternoon, everyone. My name is John Moses, as Lance
10 said. And I am deputy director of the Rulemaking,
11 Environmental and Financial Services Division at the
12 U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

13 I would like to welcome you to our first
14 environmental scoping meeting for the Browns Ferry
15 Nuclear Power Plant subsequent license renewal
16 application.

17 But before we begin today's presentation,
18 I would like to take a few moments to briefly
19 introduce you to the NRC and its mission.

20 As the slide indicates, the NRC regulates
21 commercial nuclear power plants, research, test and
22 training reactors, nuclear fuel cycle facilities and
23 the use of radioactive materials in medical, academic
24 and industrial settings.

25 The NRC was created by the Energy

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1 Reorganization Act of 1974, which separated the former
2 Atomic Energy Commission into a regulatory body, the
3 NRC, and a promotional body, which became the
4 Department of Energy.

5 You can scan the QR code on the slide to
6 see the NRC's current strategic plan. If you have
7 some free time, I encourage you to take a look.

8 The plan's three strategic goals are key
9 to the Agency successfully fulfilling its mission.
10 The Agency's goals are broken down into strategic
11 objectives and the strategies to meet those objectives
12 and goals.

13 Specifically, the goals are one, to ensure
14 the safe and secure use of radioactive materials. Two,
15 continue to foster a healthy organization. And three,
16 to inspire stakeholder confidence in the NRC.

17 For the third goal, stakeholder
18 confidence, we use meetings like this one to include
19 you in the NRC activities as effectively and
20 transparently as possible.

21 We learned during the pandemic that
22 webinars, or virtual meetings, make our work more
23 accessible to a broader audience. Also we've learned
24 that holding meetings during working hours may limit
25 attendance.

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1 So to increase public access and
2 participation, we scheduled two virtual meetings for
3 Browns Ferry. And the first meeting, today's meeting,
4 will be held during work hours, while the second
5 meeting, next week, will be held during after work
6 hours. And we would appreciate any of your feedback
7 and how we are doing with that approach.

8 I am looking forward to hearing your
9 insights and feedback on significant environmental
10 issues that you feel are important for the staff to
11 consider on their detailed analysis of issues to be
12 included in our review of the applicant's
13 environmental report.

14 We realize that local communities provide
15 a unique perspective and knowledge of the area. Your
16 comments are an integral part of the environmental
17 process, which builds off of public participation and
18 transparency.

19 Public participation, openness and
20 transparency are key to all of the NRC's
21 responsibilities, including the licensing of nuclear
22 facilities. Therefore, our goal is to hear from as
23 many of you as possible and collect any comments you
24 may have so that we may fully consider them during our
25 environmental review.

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1 Thank you in advance for your
2 participation today. And with that, I will turn it
3 back to Lance to facilitate the rest of our meeting
4 and then also to the Jessicas. Thank you.

5 MR. RAKOVAN: Thanks, John. I will turn
6 things over to Jessica Umana, who is going to kick
7 things off with Slide Number 7.

8 MS. UMANA: Thanks, Lance. And thank you,
9 John for that introduction as well. I'm Jessica
10 Umana. I'm the lead environmental project manager for
11 the Browns Ferry subsequent license renewal.

12 Here we can see -- here's a slide that
13 provides some background information for Browns Ferry.
14 Browns Ferry has three units. The first one was
15 licensed in December 1973, the second one in June
16 1974, and the third one in July 1976.

17 The renewed licenses for all three units
18 were issued in May 2006.

19 The current licenses are set to expire
20 December 2033 for Unit 1, June 2034 for Unit 2 and
21 July 2036 for Unit 3.

22 If a renewal is granted to Browns Ferry,
23 all of these licenses will be extended for an
24 additional 20 years on the date of each expiration.

25 Next slide, please. Here, we are going to

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1 cover some of the contents of the application.
2 Tennessee Valley Authority submitted an application to
3 the NRC for subsequent license renewal for Browns
4 Ferry on January 19, 2024.

5 A license renewal is an application --
6 pardon me. A license renewal application is required
7 to contain general information such as the applicant's
8 name and address, business and administrative
9 information and technical information which pertains
10 to agent management. This information is the focus of
11 the safety review.

12 The application also includes an
13 environmental report, which is the applicant's
14 assessment of the environmental impacts of continued
15 operation. This information serves as the starting
16 point for the staff to review the environmental
17 aspects of subsequent license renewal for Browns
18 Ferry.

19 I am now going to turn it over to my
20 counterpart, Jessica Hammock to cover the safety
21 review for Browns Ferry.

22 Next slide, please.

23 MS. HAMMOCK: Thank you, Jessica. Once
24 again, my name is Jessica Hammock. And I am the
25 safety project manager for the Browns Ferry subsequent

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1 license renewal review. I will now walk us through
2 the NRC's subsequent license renewal review process as
3 shown on this slide.

4 Starting from the left, the process begins
5 once a subsequent license renewal license application,
6 or SLRA, has been accepted for review. Then the
7 process breaks out into two parallel reviews, the
8 safety review, which you see on the top, and the
9 environmental review in the middle. These two reviews
10 evaluate separate aspects of the license renewal
11 application.

12 On the safety side of the review,
13 following the staff's review of the application, the
14 Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, or ACRS,
15 completes an independent review of the application to
16 make a recommendation to the Commission.

17 At the bottom of the flowchart, the dotted
18 lines lead to hearings. The dotted lines represent
19 the opportunity for a hearing in accordance with the
20 Atomic Energy Act, which establishes a process for
21 members of the public to request involvement in
22 hearings on a variety of civilian nuclear matters,
23 including subsequent license renewal.

24 The Commission considers the outcome of
25 the hearing process in its decision on whether or not

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1 to issue a renewed operating license.

2 Finally, with the inputs from the
3 environmental review, the ACRS' recommendation on the
4 safety review, as well as the staff's finding from the
5 safety review, a final decision is made by the NRC.

6 Next slide, please. If you are following
7 along with me, we are moving on to Slide Number 10.

8 The Atomic Energy Act authorizes the NRC
9 to issue licenses for the commercial power reactor
10 stop rate for up to 40 years. These licenses can then
11 be renewed for an additional 20 years at a time.

12 This period following the initial
13 licensing term is known as the period of extended
14 operation. Now subsequent license renewals would
15 allow plants to operate beyond the 60 years of that
16 initial license renewal called first renewal.
17 Subsequent license renewals would also be for an
18 additional 20 years.

19 The purpose of the safety review is to
20 identify aging effects that would impair the ability
21 of systems, structures and components, or SSEs, within
22 the scope of license renewal to perform their intended
23 functions and to demonstrate these aging effects will
24 be adequately managed during the period of extended
25 operation.

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1 This scope has not changed from initial
2 license renewal to subsequent license renewal.

3 As previously mentioned, on January 19,
4 2024, TVA submitted a subsequent license renewal
5 application for Browns Ferry.

6 After receiving the application, the NRC
7 conducted an acceptance review, which is the first
8 step of our review. The NRC determined that Tennessee
9 Valley Authority's application was sufficient and
10 acceptable for docketing on February 8, 2024.

11 Then we moved into our technical review,
12 which includes an aging management audit. The aging
13 management audit consists of three parts, the in-
14 office technical review audit, the onsite audit and
15 the breakout audit.

16 During all phases of the audit, the NRC
17 staff reviews the application, documents and
18 references in greater detail. As part of the safety
19 review, the staff also reviews the applicant's
20 operating experience for information applicable to
21 aging management.

22 Following the audit, an audit report is
23 issued. At the very end, the staff will document its
24 review in a safety evaluation, or SE as we call it.

25 Next slide, please. We should be on Slide

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1 11 for everyone following along from home. The NRC
2 ensures the adequate protection of public health and
3 safety in the environment through the regulatory
4 process, which is shown on this slide.

5 The regulatory process consists of five
6 major components. We develop regulations and guidance
7 for applicants and licensees. We license and certify
8 applicants to either use nuclear materials, operate
9 nuclear facilities or decommission.

10 We oversee licensee operations and
11 facilities to ensure that licensees comply with safety
12 requirements, evaluate operational experience at
13 license facilities or involve license activities. And
14 in support of our regulatory decisions, we conduct
15 research. We hold hearings to address the concerns of
16 parties affected by the agency decisions, and we
17 obtain independent reviews. With license renewal, the
18 regulatory process now considers aging management as
19 represented with the red block and arrow.

20 No I am going to turn it back over to
21 Jessica Umana, who will discuss the environmental
22 review.

23 Next slide, please.

24 MS. UMANA: Thanks, Jessica. Okay. We
25 are on Slide 12. Now we are going to cover the

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1 environmental review process.

2 The National Environmental Policy Act
3 obligates federal agencies to consider environmental
4 impacts and federal actions. The NRC's specific
5 environmental regulations are contained in Title 10 of
6 the Code of Federal Regulations, Part 51.

7 The objective of our environmental review
8 is to determine if the environmental impacts of
9 subsequent license renewal are so great that renewal
10 would not be a reasonable option. Put simply, we are
11 assessing if the renewal is acceptable from an
12 environmental standpoint.

13 Slide 13, please. Our environmental
14 review considers the impacts of continuing to operate
15 the plant for an additional 20 years and any proposed
16 mitigation of those impacts as warranted.

17 We also consider the impacts of reasonable
18 alternatives to the proposed action of subsequent
19 license renewal, including the impacts of not issuing
20 a subsequent renewed license.

21 The staff documents its environmental
22 review in an Environmental Impact Statement.

23 The staff has developed a generic
24 Environmental Impact Statement that addresses several
25 issues common to all nuclear power plants. We call

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1 this the LR GEIS. It's a great resource to get
2 familiar with the areas we are looking at as part of
3 our environmental review.

4 The NRC is currently gathering the
5 information necessary to prepare a site specific
6 Environmental Impact Statement in which we will
7 address issues that are specific to Browns Ferry. The
8 site specific EIS will evaluate the environmental
9 impacts of subsequent license renewal for Browns Ferry
10 and reasonable alternatives thereto.

11 Slide 14, please. For a subsequent
12 license renewal review, the NRC looks at a wide range
13 of environmental impacts as part of preparing their
14 environmental impact statement.

15 If you take a look at the slide, these are
16 the areas that we are seeking comments as part of the
17 scoping process.

18 Next slide, please. This slide here
19 provides a good illustration of the different areas
20 the staff reviews and considers as part of preparing
21 the Environmental Impact Statement.

22 Next slide. The environmental review
23 begins with the scoping process, which is why we are
24 here today. The purpose of the scoping process is to
25 identify significant issues that should be considered

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1 in the environmental review.

2 We are now gathering information that we
3 will use to prepare the Environmental Impact Statement
4 for the subsequent license renewal.

5 As part of that process, today we would
6 like to collect your comments on the scope of the
7 environmental review, that is the environmental
8 impacts that the staff should consider in the areas
9 illustrated in the previous diagram.

10 The scoping period started on April 3,
11 2024 when a notice of intent to prepare an EIS and
12 conduct scoping was published in the Federal Register.
13 The NRC will be accepting comments on the scope of the
14 environmental review until May 3, 2024.

15 In general, we are looking for information
16 about environmental impacts from the continued
17 operations of Browns Ferry Units 1, 2 and 3 during the
18 period of extended operation.

19 You can assist us in that process by
20 telling us, for example, what aspects of your local
21 community we should focus on, what local,
22 environmental, social and economic issues the NRC
23 staff should examine during the environmental review
24 and what reasonable alternatives are most appropriate
25 for your local region.

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1 These are just some examples of the input
2 that we are looking for, and they represent the kinds
3 of information we are seeking through the
4 environmental scoping period. Your comments today
5 would be helpful in providing insight of this nature
6 for the environmental analysis.

7 Let's move on to Slide 17, please. In
8 conducting our environmental review, we coordinate and
9 consult with various local, state and tribal officials
10 and gather pertinent information from these sources to
11 ensure it is considered in our analysis.

12 As illustrated on this slide, some of the
13 agencies that we consult with include U.S. Fish and
14 Wildlife Service, the Environmental Protection Agency
15 and the State Historic Preservation Office.

16 As part of the environmental review, the
17 staff may hold public meetings to receive comments on
18 the draft Environmental Impact Statement.

19 I will now discuss the environmental
20 scoping process in more detail.

21 Slide 18, please. Here are some important
22 milestones that the environmental review process will
23 follow. If you have environmental scoping comments
24 you would like to submit outside of today's meeting,
25 you have until May 3, 2024 to do so. There will be an

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1 additional webinar opportunity next week in the
2 evening if you would like to hear this presentation
3 again. That is scheduled for April 18 at 6:00 p.m.
4 Eastern time.

5 Based on our current schedule, we plan to
6 issue a draft Supplemental Environmental Impact
7 Statement for the public comment by April 2025. This
8 is another way you can stay involved in the process.
9 Members of the public will have an opportunity to
10 provide comments on the draft Supplemental
11 Environmental Impact Statement.

12 While this slide lists milestones for the
13 Environmental Review and opportunities for public
14 involvement, the safety review will be performed
15 accordingly with a separate schedule.

16 Slide 19, please. This slide provides the
17 primary points of contact within the NRC for the
18 license renewal of Browns Ferry. The other individual
19 you see there listed at the bottom of the slide is
20 Kimberly Green. And she is the current project
21 manager for the operation at Browns Ferry.

22 Next slide, please. The Athens-Limestone
23 County Public Library located at 603 South Jefferson
24 Street in Athens, Alabama has agreed to make the
25 license renewal application available for public

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1 inspection. The draft Supplemental Environmental
2 Impact Statement will also be available at this
3 library when it is published for comment. In
4 addition, these documents are also available on the
5 NRC website.

6 Next slide, please. The most important
7 piece of today's meeting is to receive any comments
8 that you may have regarding the scope of the
9 environmental review.

10 Here are the various ways you can submit
11 your comments for our consideration. You can provide
12 written comments by mail to the NRC at the address
13 provided here or you can send your comments
14 electronically by going to regulations.gov or via
15 email as indicated on the slide. Please remember that
16 your comments should be submitted by May 3, 2024.

17 Last slide. Again to recap, the comment
18 period ends on May 3, 2024. Comments will be
19 considered in the scoping summary report, which
20 scoping participants will receive a copy of sometime
21 in June 2024.

22 I am now going to turn it back over to
23 Lance.

24 MR. RAKOVAN: Thanks, Jessica. So we
25 wanted to take a moment just to pause to see if anyone

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1 had any clarifying questions about our presentation.
2 Again, we want to make sure that you all fully
3 understood the information that we covered.

4 So if you have a clarifying question, go
5 ahead and raise your hand, and I will activate your
6 audio so that you can ask your question. We will move
7 on to commenting and providing scoping comments
8 momentarily. But we just wanted to pause briefly to
9 see if anyone had any clarifying questions. I will
10 pause for a sec.

11 All right. I see we have a hand. Don
12 Safer, you should be able to unmute and ask your
13 question at this time. Your audio has been activated.
14 Mr. Safer, are you with us?

15 MR. SAFER: Yes. Can you hear me now?

16 MR. RAKOVAN: Yes. You are a bit faint,
17 but yes we can hear you.

18 MR. SAFER: Yeah. I had to unmute it on
19 my iPad as well. So I was wondering where the aging
20 management audit -- is that on the website at the --
21 where the -- I am looking at the TVA, some of the TVA
22 submissions. Is that in there as well? I'm --

23 MS. HAMMOCK: Hey, Don?

24 MR. SAFER: Yes.

25 MS. HAMMOCK: I can take that for you. So

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1 when we are talking about the aging management audit,
2 there are three distinct portions of it. There is the
3 in-office portion that is conducted by our technical
4 staff. And then there is an onsite audit portion
5 where we fly out to Browns Ferry and conduct an audit
6 onsite. Is that what you're referring to?

7 MR. SAFER: Yes.

8 MS. HAMMOCK: Okay. So right now we are
9 in the middle of that audit process. And then as soon
10 as we wrap that up, we gather all the inputs from
11 technical staff and then formulate the audit report,
12 which is public. And we will update the public
13 website with that information when it becomes
14 available.

15 MR. SAFER: How do you check the concrete
16 and the things you cannot possibly see?

17 MS. HAMMOCK: Well, I believe -- Lance,
18 correct me if I'm wrong -- I'm not sure if that's
19 within the scope of this particular public meeting.

20 MR. RAKOVAN: It's really not. We are
21 attempting to focus on environmental scoping. Could
22 we possibly get back to you on that, Don?

23 MR. SAFER: Please. Thank you.

24 MR. RAKOVAN: Okay. The best way to
25 ensure that that happens is if you send an email to

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1 any of the meeting contacts. We will get the right
2 people, and we will try to get a quick response back
3 to you.

4 MR. SAFER: Okay. Thank you.

5 MS. HAMMOCK: Thank you for your question,
6 Don.

7 MR. RAKOVAN: Any other clarifying
8 questions before we open the floor to comments? All
9 right. This does not preclude asking questions, of
10 course, moving forward, but let's go ahead and move on
11 to scoping comments.

12 Again, if you would like to provide a
13 scoping comment, use the raise your hand feature, and
14 I will go ahead and take hands as I see them in order.
15 If you are using -- if you are calling in on the
16 bridge line, then hit star-5, and it should raise your
17 hand for you.

18 You will still need to unmute. So, again,
19 if you are on the phone that is just your unmute
20 button or star 6. If you are on Teams, you will still
21 have to unmute. I can activate your audio, but I
22 can't, you know, make it so that I can listen in to
23 whatever is going on there so.

24 We will pause to see if we get any hands.
25 Again, we are looking specifically for scoping

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1 comments to help us determine the scope of the
2 environmental review.

3 MS. HAMMOCK: Hey, Lance, would it be okay
4 if I interject real quick with a clarification from
5 earlier?

6 MR. RAKOVAN: Please.

7 MS. HAMMOCK: I did quote the wrong date.
8 And I did want to clear that up for the record. So
9 the TVA application for Browns Ferry, the subsequent
10 license renewal application, was received on January
11 19, like I stated.

12 We issued the receipt and availability of
13 that document on February 8, 2024. The acceptance and
14 sufficiency for docketing was issued on March 15. So
15 I mentioned the wrong date earlier, and I did want to
16 clear that up for everybody.

17 MR. RAKOVAN: Thanks for that. And I do
18 have a hand, Brian Paddock. Brian, you should be able
19 to unmute and provide your comment at this time.

20 MR. PADDOCK: Yes, thank you. Thank you.
21 Can you hear me all right?

22 MR. RAKOVAN: Yes, we can. Please
23 proceed.

24 MR. PADDOCK: Okay. I just became aware
25 of this application in the last few days. And so I

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1 haven't really had a chance to compare that to a lot
2 of the information that has already been collected
3 about Browns Ferry over the years, which those of us
4 in Tennessee, the adjacent area, where TVA's nuclear
5 power plant problems have watched closely, as
6 particularly since it was allowed to operate at least
7 two of the reactors recently. And that was a risky
8 enough activity without deciding to extend it for
9 another 20 years.

10 So one of the questions to my mind is are
11 we going to evaluate those reactors as they now
12 operate well beyond their original design in terms of
13 the generation they are expected to produce?

14 The second thing that I would think
15 belongs in the scoping is an awareness and response to
16 the Government Accounting Office report that
17 specifically noted that NRC apparently has decided to
18 ignore climate issues.

19 And we are looking at something that would
20 be an extension from, what, 2050 to 2060 or 2080
21 rather? And it just -- that is beyond the existing 20
22 year extensions which haven't yet kicked in in many
23 cases.

24 How one can predict the environment and
25 the impacts of the environment on the operations of

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1 these reactors that far in advance, we don't have any
2 idea what it will be like to be on earth in 2050 let
3 alone how something like a nuclear reactor producing
4 electricity would behave.

5 The ability to predict precipitation
6 levels and flooding, the ability to predict the
7 dangers from surrounding activities like floods and
8 fires and so forth, all of that looks to me like it
9 has to be paid attention to. And the GAO specifically
10 in its report lays out that there has been a failure
11 to do that in terms of the NRA's approach to these
12 licensing extensions.

13 And I would hope that the scoping would in
14 fact acknowledge that and change the scope of what it
15 is looking at in terms of -- it wants to consider
16 these same site specific depths. That's okay for the
17 moment. But what climate change will do to those
18 sites and the surrounding terrain and the surrounding
19 weather and so forth just has to be addressed in my
20 opinion. Thank you for accepting my comment.

21 MR. RAKOVAN: All right. I appreciate
22 your comment. You started the first with a question.
23 And I guess I just wanted to loop back around to that
24 if you could re-ask that. I think the Jessicas are
25 ready to answer it. I just want to make sure that we

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1 remember what it was. I apologize.

2 MR. PADDOCK: I would like a response.

3 MR. RAKOVAN: No. What was the question?
4 We were taking some notes. And then you provided some
5 comments, and we were listening to that. So if you
6 could ask the question again that would be very
7 helpful.

8 MR. PADDOCK: I wasn't really working from
9 notes so I'm not sure what I asked.

10 MS. UMANA: I have something scribbled
11 down. This is Jessica Umana. I have something
12 scribbled down. Brian, maybe this will jog your
13 memory a little bit.

14 But I think you were asking how we are
15 going to evaluate -- is the NRC going to evaluate the
16 reactors as they are operating now as opposed to how
17 they were originally designed to operate? Is that
18 correct? Did I characterize that?

19 MR. PADDOCK: Yes.

20 MS. UMANA: Did I capture that correctly?

21 MR. PADDOCK: Yes.

22 MS. UMANA: Okay.

23 MR. PADDOCK: Yes. Yes, you did. Thank
24 you.

25 MS. UMANA: I do not have a response for

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1 you right now. But I will be happy to get back to you
2 on that if possible.

3 MR. PADDOCK: Okay. Yeah, I think when
4 you decide what the scope of the EIS analysis is going
5 to include, I would hope it would completely and
6 accurately characterize the operations and the
7 capabilities and difficulties of those reactors as
8 they stand right now.

9 MS. UMANA: Jessica Hammock, do you know
10 if this falls under the aging management review?

11 MS. HAMMOCK: Yeah, I would say if we are
12 talking about operation beyond the initial 40 year
13 period, and we are looking at the initial license
14 renewal period, meaning 40 to 60 and then for TVA we
15 are specifically looking at 60 to 80 for that
16 subsequent license renewal period, aging management
17 really is the thing that we are considering.

18 At least on the safety side, that is
19 firmly within 10 CFR Part 54. I know Jessica Umana is
20 looking at 10 CFR Part 51 for the environmental review
21 portion. Does that answer your question a little bit
22 more, Brian? And we can obviously get back to you
23 with more detailed information.

24 MR. PADDOCK: Well, I guess what I hear is
25 that you are considering looking into these things.

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1 But I would have to go back and read Part 51 and do
2 some more research actually to press the point.

3 As long as I still have the floor and have
4 not been cut off, I would like to add one other thing.
5 I sat on a TVA-appointed community action committee
6 that actually received reports when the Watts Bar 2
7 reactor was being finalized in construction and then
8 was operated through its test phases.

9 And I was there as a representative of the
10 Sierra Club, as a matter of fact, which to me meant
11 that if TVA put me on this thing, they felt that I was
12 going to take issues seriously and based on facts and
13 not just say nasty things about nuclear.

14 But I learned in that experience that
15 there were some things built into the reactors that
16 were designed, for example, to measure what was
17 happening to some of the metals over time because of
18 the exposure to radiation and neutron flux. And it is
19 my understanding that those samples were used up by
20 being drawn down and analyzed over the 40 years, or
21 will be over the 40 years of the initial licensing.

22 And I am wondering if there is any
23 parallel, if the Environmental Impact Statement is
24 going to figure out some other way to look at things
25 like the metals degradation in the radiation in the

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1 subsequent licensing periods.

2 It seems to me like it's sort of a thing
3 where -- which reinforces actually the fact that this
4 was supposed to be -- these designs were set up to
5 operate safely and effectively for 40 years. And at
6 the time of their design and initial construction, the
7 idea that they would be extended for 20 years at a
8 time and now proposed the most recent extension we're
9 talking about here for another 40 years altogether
10 beyond their initial design, in other words twice as
11 long as they were originally thought to be operating
12 and designed for.

13 And it seems to me that figuring out how
14 to see what level of difficulty and degradation you
15 have in the operating parts of the reactor gets to be
16 more difficult since you can't really stop it in the
17 middle and take a chunk out of it and say, oh, this is
18 where the middle is now from the radiation.

19 So I am concerned about that and how that
20 is going to be analyzed and evaluated. And how it's
21 going to be analyzed, you know, for a full 80 years.
22 Thank you.

23 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you. And again if
24 there is any specific comments you have, the best
25 thing to do is to email one of the contacts for this

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1 meeting. And we will make sure that it gets to the
2 right people.

3 All right. The next hand I see is Don
4 Safer. Don, you should be able to unmute.

5 MR. SAFER: Okay. Can you hear me?

6 MR. RAKOVAN: We can. Please proceed.

7 MR. SAFER: Okay. Thank you. I wanted to
8 call your attention to the General Accounting Office's
9 report of April 2 of this year. It is GAO 24-106326,
10 a Report to Congressional Requesters About Climate
11 Change and Nuclear Regulatory Commission
12 Considerations of Reactor Safety and for you all to
13 specifically include the findings from that General
14 Accounting Office study in your analysis of the
15 environmental realities around this -- the extending
16 the life of these reactors. That's one point.

17 The second point is in that report
18 Appendix 3, Table 2, it says that the risk of flood
19 hazards to Browns Ferry is high. And we know down
20 here in the Tennessee Valley that Browns Ferry is on
21 the Tennessee River and at that point it drains an
22 enormous area. And the TVA and the Corps of Engineers
23 have a series of dams on that, what used to be a free
24 flowing river. That really, the river now is a series
25 of manmade impoundments.

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1 And during that same panel that I was on
2 along with Brian, the question was raised about
3 flooding, potential flooding, for Watts Bar Unit 2.
4 And TVA did extensive studies of the dam safety
5 upstream of that reactor of Watts Bar.

6 So TVA has that information in hand. I am
7 sure they have the information about the dam safety of
8 all of their dams, or I would hope so. But one of the
9 concerns that was raised around that issue was the
10 possibility of cascading dam failures caused by
11 unprecedented rainfall events such as we have been
12 experiencing in the Tennessee Valley for the last
13 several years, I am presuming, because of climate
14 change.

15 But I know in Nashville, we had a flood.
16 That's where I live. We had a flood that was 17
17 inches -- caused by 17 inches of rain in a two day
18 period. And it was totally off the charts in terms of
19 the amount of water.

20 And so I think in terms of the
21 environmental analysis, it is incumbent upon the
22 Nuclear Regulatory Commission to not go in the
23 rearview mirror with flood data or high probable
24 maximum flood data and go to what's likely to happen
25 or what's possible to happen even moving forward.

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1 When Browns Ferry was originally designed
2 and approved and built, it was a different environment
3 than we have now because after all, that's going to be
4 the end of 60 years of licensing. And we all know
5 that climate changes are affecting weather patterns in
6 ways that are unprecedented.

7 So that's another aspect of incorporating
8 into this consideration on the environment just what
9 the effects of climate are going to be and, you know,
10 for that matter even these incredible cold weather
11 events that happen -- you know, we've always had cold
12 weather, but some of those things would be exacerbated
13 and intensified by the colder vortex or whatever
14 event. So that's kind of number two.

15 Number three, I have been looking at the
16 TVA Subsequent License Renewal Environmental Report.
17 It's just 450 pages. So I have not read all of it.
18 But on Page E455, Section 4.10.2, Severe Accidents,
19 this is something that has just been consistent over
20 the years, even after Fukushima.

21 And by the way, these Browns Ferry
22 reactors are GE Mark I's. And I know this is part of
23 the safety analysis, but the same reactor design has
24 caused those enormous radiation releases when they had
25 their accidents at Fukushima.

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1 So I'm reading from that section I have
2 quoted, the 2013 generic EIS, and I think that using
3 generic EIS for these subsequent license renewals is
4 an egregious shortcut that short changes the public in
5 terms of public safety. It certainly makes it easier
6 for the applicant and the Nuclear Regulatory
7 Commission to approve these applications.

8 But in terms of public protection, I think
9 it is a disservice to the residents within that 50
10 mile zone and really anybody downwind or downstream to
11 be going over something this serious in terms of the
12 consequences of an accident and using a generic
13 Environmental Impact Statement.

14 And further, using the sleight of hand
15 called probability weighted consequences of severe
16 accidents is also a disservice to the residents and
17 really everybody in the TVA region because we are all
18 going to suffer, and everybody in the nation, because
19 as in Japan and as in Chernobyl, the former Soviet
20 Union, a major nuclear accident is going to be a major
21 financial disaster as well as human disaster.

22 So using probability-weighted consequences
23 because you all have been able to figure out that the
24 chances of a severe accident in your view is so small
25 that you don't -- it lessens -- you don't nearly need

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1 to even go over the analysis of what would happen.
2 And you don't need to include any data that may have
3 been learned from Fukushima and Chernobyl about the
4 environmental consequences of a severe accident.

5 And to say that the probability is so low
6 that we don't need to really consider it is ignoring
7 the fact that two of these major accidents have
8 already happened. And Three Mile Island in the United
9 States, we just passed, what, the 45th Anniversary,
10 that was almost on that level of accident, but it was
11 not as industry people, including the Nuclear
12 Regulatory Commission I believe, but industry
13 proponents saying that Three Mile Island didn't hurt
14 anybody, and it was no big deal.

15 Well, just see the movie Radioactive - The
16 Women of Three Mile Island, which was recently
17 released and tell me that it didn't affect people in
18 the area and plenty of farm animals by the way and
19 pets.

20 So I think that this Environmental Impact
21 Statement to be valid, and not just an exercise in
22 bureaucratic checking off boxes, has to go into the
23 detail of what the environmental effect of a serious
24 accident, release of radiation, both to the land and
25 water and to the surrounding people, and those things

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1 should be considered and not dismissed out of hand as
2 unlikely because the unlikeliness argument has been
3 proven wrong by our experience.

4 I guess that's all I have today. I hope
5 I can participate next Thursday.

6 And I also would like to say that
7 providing just a week's notice for these meetings
8 doesn't seem like an effort to include the public. I
9 don't know how many people you have participating from
10 the public, but it could easily sneak by in the week.

11 And I don't know how much publicity you
12 all do, particularly in the region, the area around
13 Athens and Decatur and Northern Alabama and in the 50
14 mile zone. It would seem that you ethically should
15 make every effort to publicize this process. And the
16 people who are living near these reactors get a full,
17 you know, opportunity to engage and to learn about
18 what they're living with.

19 And the last thing I guess I would want to
20 bring up today in terms of environmental impact is the
21 high level radioactive waste that is called spent
22 fuel, misleadingly called spent fuel by your industry,
23 onsite at Browns Ferry needs to be considered given
24 the fact that it's store in half inch stainless steel,
25 and this material is not, I'll put it in these

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1 canisters and forget it, material.

2 It's going to need to be transferred out
3 of those canisters at some point or moved. And there
4 is currently -- and moving it is problematic. And
5 there is currently no place to take it. So even after
6 a reactor is shut down, they are left with the
7 radioactive waste onsite.

8 And -- but I think during this license
9 extension process, subsequent license renewal, it
10 would be an opportunity for the NRC to get serious
11 about the safety of the used fuel because there are
12 many questions that are unanswered about particularly
13 the high burnup fuel that is being stored onsite.

14 So I will see if I can think of anything
15 else for next week, and I appreciate the opportunity
16 to talk, to ask these questions. And I hope you all
17 do a very serious consideration of the environmental
18 effects and thank you.

19 MS. UMANA: Hi, this is --

20 MR. RAKOVAN: Thanks.

21 MS. UMANA: -- hi, Lance. Sorry. This is
22 Jessica Umana. I wanted to address, your comment,
23 Don, about, you know, a week's notification for these
24 meetings.

25 We actually provide -- we publish an ad

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1 notifying -- for notification of this meeting -- I
2 don't have the dates on hand, but it was well ahead of
3 a week, I believe, in local newspapers. And we also
4 have the meeting up in our public meeting notice
5 system a couple of weeks ahead of time.

6 We have a 10-day notification that is
7 required of us before we have a public meeting. So if
8 it falls under the 10 days, we can't have the meeting
9 that quick unless we have some sort of extraordinary
10 circumstances.

11 So we do take seriously involving the
12 public and being transparent. So we try to get these
13 meeting notices out well ahead of the 10-day required
14 notification as possible.

15 MR. BURNELL: And Mr. Safer, this is Scott
16 Burnell. I'm one of the agency spokespeople.

17 I will also note that we have put out on
18 social media announcements for next week's meeting,
19 again, to make sure people are aware that it's
20 happening.

21 And just for the record to speak to a few
22 of the things that you mentioned, the GAO report
23 speaks to effects of the environment on the plants.
24 What the staff is looking at here for license renewal
25 is the potential effects of normal operation of the

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1 plant on the environment. Those are two separate
2 things.

3 That being said, the NRC has formally
4 notified the GAO that we disagreed with their
5 conclusions when they gave us a draft version of the
6 report. We will be responding in full to their final
7 report in the coming months.

8 I can say we continue to disagree with the
9 GAO's conclusions in part because all U.S. nuclear
10 power plants conducted additional detailed hazard
11 analysis for both seismic and flooding considerations
12 using updated state-of-the-art analysis techniques
13 covering topics such as locally intense precipitation
14 in line with the events that you mentioned.

15 Beyond that, the NRC also has a process
16 for analyzing new information on natural hazards as it
17 becomes available. That process will ensure that if
18 any particular site, any group of sites or the entire
19 U.S. nuclear fleet could be adversely affected by new
20 information on natural hazards, the NRC will take
21 appropriate steps to make sure that the plants remain
22 safe.

23 And finally to your mention of the generic
24 Environmental Impact Statement, the NRC recently spent
25 more than two years revising the generic Environmental

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1 Impact Statement for license renewal. We offered
2 multiple opportunities to comment, for the public to
3 comment during that process. And to be clear, for
4 issues that are generic to all nuclear power plants,
5 a single impact statement is appropriate.

6 For site specific issues, such as for
7 Browns Ferry, the staff does additional work to make
8 sure that site specific issues are appropriately
9 accounted for. Thank you.

10 MR. RAKOVAN: All right. So I do have
11 another hand up. Brian Paddock, Brian, you should be
12 able to unmute and provide your comments.

13 MR. PADDOCK: All right. I hope you can
14 hear me.

15 MR. RAKOVAN: We can.

16 MR. PADDOCK: There is one other known
17 impact on the plant operations, and it is to some
18 extent caused by plant operations of nuclear and other
19 heat discharging, waste heat discharging operations of
20 TVA upstream.

21 And that is that if your records will
22 probably show you exactly when this happened, but the
23 Sequoyah plants opposite Chattanooga were forced to --
24 I think they used the word de-rate and cut back on
25 their level of generation because the river had gotten

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1 too hot.

2 And each of these plants, as you know, has
3 a permit for discharge of cooling water from the state
4 agency, the Tennessee Department of Environment and
5 Conservation, under the Clean Water Act's regulation
6 of discharges.

7 And this problem of the river heating both
8 from manmade contributions to that and from climate
9 change is going to happen again and again. And the
10 French have shown that they have actually had rivers
11 virtually run dry and thus had to cut down -- not just
12 cut down, but close their nuclear plant operations at
13 certain locations. And this is something that I think
14 that can happen.

15 And to Browns Ferry, as time goes on, we
16 may even see it this summer, since we are now setting
17 a new record for worldwide increase in temperatures,
18 not the amount of increase but the fact that it
19 increases over the previous month.

20 I think we are on 18 months now where we
21 have higher and higher global warming average
22 temperatures around the globe. And of course that
23 translates to increases in temperature in certain
24 sites more than others.

25 But these plants are not immune from the

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1 environment in which they work. And since their job
2 is to provide energy for us, that is a risk to their
3 operations that I think should be considered. And to
4 just write it off as climate change, particularly when
5 it has already happened in the Sequoyah reactors by
6 Chattanooga, I think would be a terrible mistake.

7 Thank you for your time today. I really
8 appreciate the fact that we have had an opportunity
9 and a good dialogue. I appreciate it.

10 MR. RAKOVAN: Thank you, sir. Anyone else
11 have any environmental scoping comments that they
12 would like to provide at this time? Again, please
13 raise your hand if you're on MS Teams or if you're on
14 the phone, you can press star-5 and that will raise
15 your number, if you will, similar to raising your
16 hand. So we will pause for a moment to see if we have
17 any additional comments.

18 All right. While we are pausing, maybe we
19 can back up and go one more time through how folks can
20 provide their comments through other means. So
21 Angela, if you could now back us up -- I think it's
22 the slide right before the public participation slide.
23 There we go.

24 So, again, you can provide your comments.
25 You can write them and send them into our Office of

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1 Administration. That's at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory
2 Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555. You can go to the
3 website regulations.gov and search for Docket ID NRC-
4 2024-0030 or you can send them by email to
5 brownsferryenvironmental -- that's one word,
6 brownsferryenvironmental@nrc.gov. Again, we ask that
7 you submit your comments by May 3 to ensure that we
8 can incorporate them into our processes.

9 So I am seeing no hands at this point.
10 John, do you want to go ahead and -- oh, I got a hand.
11 Mr. Safer, please, go ahead.

12 MR. SAFER: Yes. So the questions we have
13 raised today, are they included in the record or do we
14 have to duplicate our efforts and send that in in
15 addition to participating today?

16 MR. RAKOVAN: So we will have your
17 questions as part of the transcript. And we can
18 attempt to mine them, if you will, from them. But
19 your best option if you have anything specific is to
20 send it in to one of the meeting contacts. And,
21 again, we will get it to the right people and try to
22 get you an answer.

23 MR. SAFER: Well, to meeting contacts or
24 to this brownsferryenvironmental@nrc?

25 MR. RAKOVAN: Either way. Any way that

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1 you send it in, as long as it is to someone at the NRC
2 who is involved in this meeting, we will funnel it to
3 the right people.

4 MR. SAFER: Okay. Thank you.

5 MR. RAKOVAN: Of course. John, do you
6 want to go ahead and close us out today?

7 MR. MOSES: Thanks a lot, Lance. And good
8 afternoon, everyone. On behalf of the staff, I want
9 to thank you for taking the time to attend today's
10 virtual public meeting and for your questions and
11 comments.

12 Just to reiterate a few things. I am
13 going to summarize our next steps. We are currently
14 about halfway through the scoping period. And we will
15 accept your comments until May 3, 2024. And our team
16 will gather the comments that we heard today as well
17 as comments that we receive, as Lance mentioned, from
18 regulations.gov at Docket NRC-2024-0030 and also by
19 email and postal mailed letters.

20 So our team will compile those comments,
21 evaluate them and issue a scoping summary report that
22 will summarize the conclusions reached from the
23 scoping process.

24 We anticipate issuing a draft
25 Environmental Impact Statement in the spring of 2025.

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1 I believe it's April or so. Once we issue the draft
2 Environmental Impact Statement, we will have another
3 public meeting and comment period to receive
4 additional input from you. And we look forward to
5 your comments on that document once we have prepared
6 the draft evaluation.

7 In summary, we really appreciate tonight's
8 dialogue and your sharing of perspectives. Even
9 though this is an environmental scoping meeting, I
10 want to assure you that any safety issue that you
11 raised, we will consider and share it with the safety
12 team, also and Jessica will also take it back to her
13 team. And it will get appropriately addressed and
14 considered by the safety reviewers.

15 So with that, thank you for your
16 participation, your comments and your questions. And
17 thank you for taking your time this afternoon. I hope
18 you have a wonderful day. Thanks.

19 (Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went
20 off the record at 2:00 p.m.)

21

22

23

24

25