



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

February 13, 2026

Jean Fleming
Vice President of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs
SMR, LLC. A Holtec International Company
Krishna P. Singh Technology Campus
1 Holtec Blvd., Camden, NJ 08104

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE REVIEW RESULTS FOR A LIMITED WORK AUTHORIZATION
APPLICATION FOR SMR-300 PIONEER UNITS 1 AND 2

Dear Ms. Fleming:

By letter dated December 31, 2025¹, SMR, LLC (SMR), a Holtec International Company (Holtec) submitted the first part of a phased construction permit application, including a limited work authorization (LWA) request, to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The LWA application requests NRC approval to conduct certain early construction activities of a dual-unit SMR-300 plant located at the Palisades Energy Center in Covert, Michigan, in accordance with the requirements of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) 50.10, "License required; limited work authorization." The units are individually named Pioneer Unit 1 and Pioneer Unit 2. The NRC staff acknowledged receipt of the application in the *Federal Register* (91 FR 2803) on January 22, 2025 (ML26009A012).

The NRC staff performed an acceptance review of the LWA application consistent with the requirements of 10 CFR 2.101, "Filing of application," 10 CFR 50.33, "Contents of applications; general information," 10 CFR 50.34, "Contents of applications; technical information," 10 CFR 51.49, "Environmental report – limited work authorization," and 10 CFR 51.50, "Environmental report – construction permit, early site permit, or combined license stage." The NRC staff determined that the application is acceptable for docketing and contains sufficient information to initiate detailed safety and environmental technical reviews and establish a predictable review schedule. However, the NRC staff's determination does not preclude audits or requests for additional information as the review proceeds. The docket numbers established for this application are 50-616 and 50-617 for Pioneer Units 1 and 2, respectively. These docket numbers should be included in all future correspondence.

¹ Letter from J. Fleming to NRC, "Submittal of Pioneer Units 1 and 2 Limited Work Authorization Application (Project Number 99902049)," dated December 31, 2025 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. ML25365A984, part of package ML25365A983).

The tables below provide key milestones for both the safety review and the environmental review and support the issuance of a final safety evaluation report and final environmental impact statement in approximately thirteen months from docketing.

Safety Review Milestones	Estimated Completion Dates
Draft Safety Evaluation Report*	August 2026
Advanced Safety Evaluation Report**	January 2027
Final Safety Evaluation Report	March 2027
<i>Notes:</i> *Safety Evaluation Report drafted and information gaps identified. **Safety Evaluation Report without open items.	

Environmental Review Milestones	Estimated Completion Dates
Draft Environmental Impact Statement	October 2026
Final Environmental Impact Statement	March 2027

It is estimated that the mandatory hearing will be completed within three months after issuance of the final safety evaluation report and final environmental impact statement and a decision on the LWA could be made by June 2027. Any potential contested hearings are not included in this schedule.

The application included three exemptions as discussed in Enclosure IV to SMR (Holtec's) submittal². The NRC staff expects to issue a final decision on the exemption to allow construction of permanent retaining walls prior to LWA issuance by August 2026; review of the exemptions related to the scope of construction and the identification of funding sources will adhere to the same schedule as the remainder of the LWA application.

The schedule reflects the NRC staff's best estimate of the level of effort needed for its review and is based, in part, on SMR (Holtec's) commitments to provide timely support during technical audits and to respond to requests for additional information within 30 days of issuance. To achieve this schedule, the NRC staff intends to engage with SMR (Holtec) frequently during the application review to assess progress and address emerging technical issues using audits, public meetings, and requests for additional information. Delays in the NRC staff's receipt of necessary information could result in changes to the review schedule. If potential delays arise in its support of the schedule, the NRC staff requests that SMR (Holtec) inform the staff in writing, as early as possible.

Based on pre-application activities and the information provided in the application, the NRC staff estimates that it will need approximately 6,300 staff hours and \$1.2 million in contractor support to reach a final decision on the application, including all three exemptions. This resource estimate also includes support for mandatory hearing activities.

During the acceptance review, the NRC staff identified information related to the stability of subsurface materials and foundations that will likely require an increased focus by SMR (Holtec) and the NRC staff to ensure a timely completion of the review. In addition, the NRC staff notes that there are two licensing topical reports (LTRs) referenced in the application that are in

² Enclosure IV, "Exemptions," to the letter from J. Fleming to NRC, "Submittal of Pioneer Units 1 and 2 Limited Work Authorization Application (Project Number 99902049)," dated December 31, 2025 (ML25365A989, part of package ML25365A983).

the early stages of NRC review. The proposed schedule is dependent on the timely completion and NRC issuance a final safety evaluation report for both LTRs, by December 2026.

Following the issuance of this letter, a notice will be forwarded to the *Federal Register* informing the public of the docketing of SMR (Holtec's) LWA application for detailed review by the staff and the associated opportunity for a hearing on the contents of the application.

If you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Ms. Victoria Huckabay, Senior Project Manager, at (301) 415-5183 or by email at Victoria.Huckabay@nrc.gov. For questions that are specific to the environmental review, please contact Robert Hoffman, Senior Environmental Project Manager, at (301) 415-1107 or by email at Robert.Hoffman@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,



Signed by Huckabay, Victoria
on 02/13/26

Victoria Huckabay, Senior Project Manager
Licensing and Regulatory Infrastructure Branch
Division of New and Renewed Licenses
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Project No.: 99902049

Docket Nos.: 50-616
50-617

SUBJECT: ACCEPTANCE REVIEW RESULTS FOR A LIMITED WORK AUTHORIZATION APPLICATION FOR SMR-300 PIONEER UNITS 1 AND 2
DATED: FEBRUARY 13, 2026

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