



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

May 14, 2026

Jaime Loichinger, Director
Office of Federal Agency Programs
Advisory Council on Historic
Preservation
401 F Street NW, Suite 308
Washington, DC 20001-2637

SUBJECT: NOTIFICATION OF INITIATION OF SECTION 106 CONSULTATION FOR THE ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF NEXTERA ENERGY DUANE ARNOLD, LLC'S LICENSING AND REGULATORY REQUESTS FOR REAUTHORIZATION OF POWER OPERATIONS AT DUANE ARNOLD ENERGY CENTER (EPID NUMBER: L-2025-LNE-0009) (DOCKET NUMBER: 50-331)

Dear Jaime Loichinger:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is conducting an environmental review for a series of licensing and regulatory requests submitted by NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC (NEDA) that seek NRC approvals to reauthorize power operations at the Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC). Information regarding these submittals is located on the NRC's website at <https://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/reactors/duan>. Concurrently, NEDA has applied for Federal financial assistance (a loan guarantee) to support the reauthorization of power operations at DAEC from the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Office of Energy Dominance Financing (EDF). The NRC will be the lead Federal agency under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, as amended (NEPA) and the Section 106 consultation under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (NHPA). Accordingly, the DOE EDF will serve as a cooperating agency on the environmental review to combine expertise and support streamlining agency reviews in furtherance of the recently issued nuclear focused Executive Orders. The purpose of this letter is to notify you about the NRC's environmental review activities and consultation activities under Section 106 of the NHPA.

The DAEC is located along the Cedar River in Linn County, Iowa (Enclosures 1 and 2). The facility is located approximately 8 miles northwest of Cedar Rapids, Iowa. DAEC permanently ceased operations on August 10, 2020, after more than 45 years of commercial operation. In early 2025, NEDA, the licensee for the DAEC, expressed an interest in returning the plant to an operational status. As mentioned, NEDA is pursuing several licensing and regulatory actions to restore the operational licensing basis for the plant. The NRC will review NEDA's submittals to ensure that NEDA's proposal to restore the licensing basis of the plant to an operational status will comply with NRC safety, security, and environmental requirements. The licensing and regulatory requests, if approved, would allow for the placement of fuel into the reactor vessel and restart of power operations for the duration of the renewed facility operating license term, which expires on February 21, 2034.

As referenced by letter dated March 25, 2026 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System Accession No. [ML26082A006](#)), the NRC accepted the last submittal associated with the licensing and regulatory requests to potentially reauthorize power operations at DAEC. As part of the review of these requests, the NRC staff is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) as required by Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 51, the NRC's regulations that implement NEPA. On April 22, 2026, the NRC staff issued a notice in the *Federal Register* ([91 FR 21514](#)) that included the opportunity to file a hearing request or petition for leave to intervene. This notice also announced its intent to prepare a draft EA for public comment, thereby formally initiating the NRC's environmental review under NEPA for the Federal actions that collectively would authorize the resumption of power operations at DAEC. The notice also informed the public that the NRC has elected to use the NEPA process to comply with Section 106 of the NHPA.

In accordance with Title 36 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (36 CFR) Part 800, "Protection of Historic Properties," Section 800.8(c), the NRC is using the NEPA process to comply with Section 106 of the NHPA, in lieu of the procedures set forth in 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6. Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(a)(2), the NRC will serve as the lead federal agency for NRC's undertaking. The EA will include identification of historic and cultural resources and historic properties, an analysis of potential effects of the proposed actions, including potential effects on historic and cultural resources and historic properties as well as the NRC staff's preliminary determinations.

Specifically, the NRC has defined the Area of Potential Effects (APE) for this undertaking as the DAEC site with a one-half mile (0.5-mile) buffer surrounding the DAEC site boundary (see Enclosure 3).

In February 2026, DOE EDF consulted with the Iowa State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) and Federally recognized Tribes for their undertaking which focused on providing federal funding for the following proposed NEDA recommissioning activities: 1) external site preparation activities; 2) internal facility upgrades, system configuration, major overhauls, and equipment replacement; 3) internal facility required improvements and modernization; and 4) external facility required improvements. There is partial overlap of the NRC's and DOE EDF's scopes of review for activities occurring within the DAEC site boundary; activities to be funded by DOE EDF include "preconstruction" activities outside the NRC's jurisdiction (see 10 CFR 51.45(c)) as well as activities conforming to the NRC authorized definition of "construction" (see 10 CFR 50.10(a)(2)). Due to this partial overlap in agency scope, the NRC's APE as defined above encompasses the area reviewed by DOE EDF. On February 25, 2026, DOE-EDF issued a Finding of No Historic Properties Affected for its undertaking, consistent with 36 CFR 800.4(d)(1), and the Iowa SHPO concurred with this finding on March 25, 2026. DOE EDF's Section 106 consultation concluded on March 26, 2026.

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.8(c)(1)(iii), the NRC invites you to submit any comments or concerns that you may have regarding the environmental review and NRC's NHPA Section 106 consultation by June 15, 2026. Comments may be submitted to the points of contact listed below.

The NRC plans to issue the draft EA for consulting party and public review and comment in July 2026. A copy of the draft EA will be made available for your records.

J. Loichinger

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If you have any questions regarding the NRC's Section 106 consultation or environmental review, please contact Jennifer Davis, Archaeologist at 301-415-3835 or via email at Jennifer.Davis@nrc.gov; or the Environmental Project Manager, Kim Conway, at 301-415-1335 or via email at Kimberly.Conway@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,



Signed by Koenick, Stephen
on 05/14/26

Stephen S. Koenick, Acting Chief
Environmental Technical Review Branch 1
Division of Rulemaking, Environmental,
and Financial Support
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

Docket No. 50-331

Enclosures:
As stated

cc: GovDelivery

Bill Marzella, Program Analyst
bmarzella@achp.gov

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S. Burnell, HQ/OPA

C. Wolf, OCA

C. Conrad, PNNL (Cyler.N.Conrad@pnnl.gov)

A. Williamson, DOE (Alicia.Williamson@hq.doe.gov)

ADAMS Package No: ML26126A039; Letter ML26126A044;

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