



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

May 7, 2026

W.A. "Tony" Hayes, Tribal Chair  
Occaneechi Band of the Saponi Nation  
P.O. Box 356  
Mebane, NC 27302

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR SCOPING COMMENTS REGARDING THE ENVIRONMENTAL  
REVIEW OF THE BELEWS CREEK EARLY SITE PERMIT APPLICATION (EPID  
NUMBER: L-2026-ESE-0002) (DOCKET NUMBER: 52-055)

Dear Tribal Chair W.A. "Tony" Hayes:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application submitted by the Duke Energy Carolinas, LLC (DEC) for an early site permit (ESP) for the Belews Creek Site in North Carolina. DEC submitted the application on December 30, 2025, (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Package Accession No. [ML25364A004](#)), in accordance with Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 52 seeking approval of the potential future construction of multiple nuclear reactors at the Belews Creek site. If licensed, the facility would be located along Belews Creek and Belews Lake in Sauratown Township, Stokes County, and partially in Belews Creek Township, Forsyth County, North Carolina (see Enclosures 1 and 2). The purpose of this letter is to inform you about the NRC's environmental review activities.

The ESP application and review process makes it possible to evaluate and resolve safety and environmental issues related to siting potential future construction of multiple nuclear reactors at the Belews Creek site. An ESP does not, however, authorize construction and operation of a nuclear power plant. Such authorization would require an additional application and review.

The application is available through the NRC's ADAMS. ADAMS is accessible at <http://www.nrc.gov/readingrm/adams.html>. The environmental report portion of the application is listed under ADAMS Accession No. [ML25364A006](#). The application is also available on the Internet at <https://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/advanced/who-were-working-with/applicant-projects/dukeenergy>.

As part of the review of this ESP application, the NRC is preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as required by 10 CFR 51, the NRC's regulation that implements the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Wilmington District is participating as a cooperating agency on the environmental review. The NRC will be the lead Federal agency under NEPA and for the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) of 1966, as amended Section 106 consultation.

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. The EIS 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. The NRC has defined the Area of Potential Effects for this ESP as an approximately 1,080-acres within the Belews Creek site and its immediate environs which may be impacted by land-disturbing and building activities associated with the construction and operation of multiple nuclear reactors (see Enclosure 3).

In accordance with NRC's Tribal Policy Statement, the NRC encourages participation by State-recognized Tribes and invites them to participate in this permitting process. The NRC invites you to submit any comments or concerns that you may have on the scope of the environmental review by June 8, 2026. Comments may be submitted by any of the following methods or directly to the points of contact listed below:

- Email comments to: [BelewsCreekEnvironmental@nrc.gov](mailto:BelewsCreekEnvironmental@nrc.gov);
- Mail comments to: Office of Administration, Mail Stop: TWFN-5-A85, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Program Management, Announcements and Editing Staff; or
- Federal Rulemaking Website: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRC-2025-2161.

Comments may also be submitted to the points of contact listed below. Comments may be submitted to the points of contact listed below. The NRC plans to issue the draft EIS for consulting party and public review and comment in February 2027. A copy of the draft EIS will be made available for your review and comment.

If you have any questions concerning the NRC's Section 106 consultation or the environmental review, please contact Jennifer Davis, Archaeologist, by phone at 301-415-3835 or via email at [Jennifer.Davis@nrc.gov](mailto:Jennifer.Davis@nrc.gov) or to William Burris, Environmental Project Manager, by phone at 301-415-1621 or via email at [William.Burris@nrc.gov](mailto:William.Burris@nrc.gov).

Sincerely,



Signed by Koenick, Stephen  
on 05/07/26

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

Docket No. 52-055

Enclosure: As stated

cc: GovDelivery

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**ADAMS Package No: ML26124A154 (Multiple Tribal Letters)**

**Encl. 1: ML26128A144; Encl. 2: ML26128A145; and Encl. 3: ML26128A146**

**e-Concurrence case: 20260504-90013**