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NRC to Issue Early Site Permit to Tennessee Valley Authority for Clinch River Site

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission has authorized the issuance of an Early Site Permit for Tennessee Valley Authority's Clinch River site near Oak Ridge, Tenn. The permit closes several site-related issues, including many environmental impacts, for small modular reactors at the site.

The Commission authorized the agency's Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation to issue the permit following a [hearing](#) on Aug. 14, 2019. The Commission found the staff's review of TVA's application adequate to make the necessary regulatory safety and environmental findings. The permit, which will be valid for up to 20 years from date of issuance, is expected to be issued in the next few days.

The permit does not authorize any NRC-regulated construction activities. TVA would need to apply separately for an NRC license to build and operate a reactor at the site. The permit includes additional provisions, including approved analysis methods, that deal with the NRC's emergency preparedness regulations. This could allow a future license applicant at the Clinch River site to request an emergency preparedness zone smaller than those found at current U.S. nuclear power plants.

The NRC staff's technical review of TVA's application also covered issues such as how the site's characteristics could affect plant safety and environmental protection considerations. The staff published a [final environmental impact statement](#) for the permit on April 3, 2019, and a [final safety evaluation](#) on June 24, 2019. More information on the [Clinch River ESP review](#) is available on the NRC website.