

the water (28 million gallons) is used in the cooling tower with the majority of the water lost to the atmosphere as water vapor. Wastewater from the facility discharges to the City of Columbia sewer system and is treated at the Columbia Regional Wastewater Treatment Plant.

The Missouri Department of Conservation has determined that no Federal or State listed plants or animals are known to occur on the MURR site, but did identify two species in the vicinity of the project site. One species, the Topeka Shiner, is listed as endangered. MURR withdraws a minimal amount of groundwater for reactor operation, has no major refurbishment or construction activities planned, and will have no significant change in the types or amounts of effluents leaving the facility as a result of construction permit recapture. Therefore, the proposed action is not expected to affect aquatic and terrestrial biota. The staff concludes there are no significant non-radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the "no-action" alternative). Denial of the proposed action would result in expiration of the current license in November 2001, and the commencement of decommissioning if an application for license renewal is not made. If the application is denied, it is expected that the licensee would apply for renewal of the license. With operation under the proposed action or with a renewed license or during the evaluation of a timely renewal application, the environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative are similar.

If the Commission denied the application for license renewal, facility operations would end and decommissioning would be required with no significant impact on the environment. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and this alternative action are similar. In addition, the benefits of education and research conducted by the facility would be lost.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Hazards Analysis Report prepared for initial licensing of

the facility and the power upgrade to 10 MW(t).

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on September 14, 2001, the staff consulted with the Missouri State official, Mr. Ron Kucera, Director of Intergovernmental Cooperation and Special Projects of the Missouri Department of Natural Resources, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments. In addition, the NRC determined to exercise its discretion to circulate an Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact to the public for a 30-day comment period in response to a request from the State of Missouri Department of Natural Resources. The Notice of "Request for Public Comment, Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact" appeared in the **Federal Register** on August 1, 2001 (66 FR 39803). During the comment period, the staff received 12 comment letters. All of the comments have been reviewed by the NRC. The majority of the comments received related to the operation of the reactor and other issues not related to the EA or the license amendment request. In response to comments relevant to the EA, several changes were made to the text of the EA to clarify issues raised in the comments.

A "Discussion of Comments Received on the Environmental Assessment for the University of Missouri-Columbia Construction Permit Recapture Amendment" has been prepared by the NRC staff. This document contains the NRC staff's discussion and response to the public comments relative to the EA and copies of the comment letters. This document has accession number ML012850463. Members of the public may view the document by using ADAMS or contacting the Public Document Room staff as discussed below.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated December 27, 2000, as supplemented by letter dated April 12 and June 6, 2001, and the NRC staff's "Discussion of Comments Received on the Environmental Assessment for the University of Missouri-Columbia

Construction Permit Recapture Amendment," which are available for public inspection, and can be copied for a fee, at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. The NRC maintains an Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS), which provides text and image files of NRC's public documents. These documents may be accessed through the NRC's Public Electronic Reading Room on the internet at <http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/ADAMS/index.html>. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who have problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS may contact the PDR reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737 or by email at pdr@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 12th day of October 2001.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Eugene V. Imbro,

Acting Chief, Operational Experience and Non-Power Reactors Branch, Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 01-26441 Filed 10-18-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-271]

Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp; Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station; Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR-28, issued to Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation (VYNPC, the licensee), for operation of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (Vermont Yankee) located in Windham County, Vermont. Therefore, as required by 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC is issuing this environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would amend the Facility Operating License (FOL) by deleting obsolete information, correcting errors, and make administrative changes to enhance the context and provide consistency.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated April 23, 2001.

The Need for the Proposed Action

When FOL DPR-28 was issued to the licensee and in subsequent amendments, the NRC staff deemed certain issues essential to safety and/or essential to meeting certain regulatory interests. These issues were imposed as license conditions in the FOL. Since the unit was licensed to operate in the 1970s, most of these license conditions have been fulfilled or changed. For the license conditions that have been fulfilled, the licensee proposed to have them deleted from the FOL. The license conditions that are incorrect or need to be updated are being changed.

The licensee also proposed to make changes to correct administrative errors such as words misspelled and deleted documents being referenced and to provide clarifying information such as identifying deleted license conditions with the applicable amendment number and date and providing consistent paragraph identification.

The fire protection license condition will also be changed to reflect an updated list of applicable NRC safety evaluation reports.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there is no significant environmental impact if the amendment is granted. No changes will be made to the design and licensing basis, and the applicable procedures at Vermont Yankee will remain the same. Other than the administrative changes, no other changes will be made to the FOL, including the Technical Specifications.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not have a potential to affect any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the NRC concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Environmental Impacts of the Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (*i.e.*, the “no-action” alternative). Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any different resources than those previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for Vermont Yankee dated July 1972.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

On August 6, 2001, the staff consulted with the Vermont State official, William Sherman of the Department of Public Service, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of the environmental assessment, the NRC concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated April 23, 2001. Documents may be examined, and/or copied for a fee, at the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR), located at One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike (first floor), Rockville, Maryland. Publicly available records will be accessible electronically from the ADAMS Public Library Component on the NRC web site, <http://www.nrc.gov> (Public Electronic Reading Room). If you do not have access to ADAMS or if there are problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, contact the NRC PDR Reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737 or by e-mail at pdr@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 12th day of October 2001.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Robert M. Pulsifer,

Project Manager, Section 2, Project Directorate I, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 01-26443 Filed 10-18-01; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Nuclear Industry Consolidation and Deregulation Issues Workshop

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will conduct a workshop on issues related to nuclear power industry consolidation and deregulation. The workshop will consist of two sessions. Session 1, “Nuclear Industry Consolidation Issues”, will be held from 8:30 a.m. to noon on Thursday, November 1, 2001. The document that forms the basis for discussion for this session is “Preliminary Impact Assessment of Nuclear Industry Consolidation on NRC Oversight (66 FR 34293, June 27, 2001).” The objectives of Session 1 are to discuss the staff's preliminary impact assessment and stakeholder comments on the assessments. Session 1 will be conducted in a “round table” format with discussions, as opposed to presentations, centered on selected focus areas related to nuclear industry consolidation. Suggested focus areas are Plant Operational Safety, Licensing, Inspection, Enforcement & Assessment, Decommissioning, Fuel Cycle Facilities, and Financial-Related Issues. Other issues of concern to the participants will also be discussed. A detailed agenda will be posted on the NRC website before the meeting. Selected staff and invited external stakeholders will be seated at the table to lead the discussions, but comments from all attendees will be entertained.

Session 2, “Effects of Deregulation on Safety—Research Issues”, will be held from 1:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 1, and from 8:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. on Friday, November 2. The document that forms the basis for discussion for this session is “Effects of Deregulation on Safety: Implications Drawn From the Aviation, Rail, and United Kingdom Nuclear Power Industries”, (NUREG/CR-6735). The primary objective of Session 2 is to recommend a research agenda for NRC to address any significant issues related to deregulation that could affect nuclear power plant safety. A detailed agenda will be posted on the NRC website before the meeting. Subject Matter Experts who have studied the effects of deregulation on safety in the aviation, rail and United Kingdom nuclear power industries, and invited external stakeholders, will be the primary discussants, however, members of the