

than 20 years before expiration of its operating license.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed action would allow DNC to submit one application for renewal of the operating licenses of both nuclear units located at the site, with the goal of attaining efficiencies for preparation and review of the application.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that the issuance of the proposed exemption will not have a significant environmental impact. The proposed schedular exemption pertains solely to the future submission of an application to renew the MP3 operating license. It causes no changes to the current design or operation of MP3, and imparts no prejudice in the future review of the application for license renewal.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types or amounts of radiological 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

The action does not involve the use of any different resource than those previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for MP3, dated December 1984.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

On November 5, 2003, the NRC staff consulted with the Connecticut official, Mr. Michael Firsick of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, 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 December 13, 2002, as supplemented on April 28, 2003, and September 3, 2003. 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 Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Public Electronic Reading Room on the Internet at the NRC Web site, <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. Persons who do not have access to ADAMS or who encounter problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, should contact the NRC PDR Reference staff by telephone at 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to pdr@nrc.gov.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 22nd day of December, 2003.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Victor Nerses,

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

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NUCLEAR WASTE TECHNICAL REVIEW BOARD

Panel Meetings

January 20 and 21, 2004—Las Vegas, Nevada: The U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board's panel on the Engineered Barrier System and Panel on the Waste Management System will meet to discuss issues related to the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada, including design of the engineered system and information needed to plan for a system to transport

high-level radioactive waste spent nuclear fuel to the proposed repository.

Pursuant to its authority under section 5051 of Public Law 100-203, Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act of 1987, members of the U.S. Nuclear Waste Technical Review Board's Panel on the Engineered Barrier system and Panel on the Waste Management System will meet in Las Vegas, Nevada, on Tuesday, January 20, and Wednesday, January 21, 2004, respectively. The panels will discuss issues related to the proposed repository at Yucca Mountain in Nevada, including design of the engineered system and information needed as the Department of Energy (DOE) plans a system for transporting high-level radioactive waste and spend nuclear fuel to the proposed repository. The meetings will be open to the public, and opportunities for public comment will be provided. The Board is charged by Congress with reviewing the technical and scientific validity of activities undertaken by the DOE as stipulated in the Nuclear Waste Policy Amendments Act.

The panel meetings will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, 4255 South Paradise Road, Las Vegas, NV 89109; (tel.) 702-369-4400; (fax) 702-369-3770. The Panel on the Engineered Barrier System is scheduled to meet from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Tuesday, January 20. The Panel on the Waste Management System is scheduled to meet from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Wednesday, January 21. Meeting times will be confirmed when agendas are issued, approximately one week before the meeting dates.

At the Engineered Barrier System Panel meeting on Tuesday, the DOE will begin with a project update, followed by presentations on preclosure safety analysis and surface and subsurface facility design. In the afternoon, the DOE will present information on the design of the waste package, the drip shield, and the invert. Representatives of Nye County, Nevada, will then present an update on county oversight activities related to the engineered system. The final presentation of the day will be an update on the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management's science and technology program.

On Wednesday, the Waste Management System Panel will consider the information the DOE will need as it plans its transportation system. Invited participants include representatives of the DOE and state and local governments; utilities; truck, rail, and barge operators; and those involved in other transportation campaigns, including WIPP and naval spent fuel.