



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Office of Public Affairs

Telephone: 301/415-8200

Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

E-mail: opa@nrc.gov

Web Site: <http://www.nrc.gov/OPA>

No. 05-063

April 7, 2005

NRC ISSUES DRAFT SAFETY EVALUATION FOR GRAND GULF EARLY SITE PERMIT APPLICATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has issued a draft safety evaluation report (SER) for an Early Site Permit (ESP) for the Grand Gulf site, about 25 miles south of Vicksburg, Miss.

The ESP process allows an applicant to address site-related issues, such as environmental impacts, for possible future construction and operation of a nuclear power plant at the site. The Grand Gulf application was filed Oct. 21, 2003, by System Energy Resources, Inc., a subsidiary of Entergy. If approved, the permit would give the company up to 20 years to decide whether to build one or more nuclear plants on the site and to file an application with the NRC for approval to begin construction.

NRC staff expect to finalize the safety evaluation late this year. Along with the SER, the staff must complete an Environmental Impact Statement, the Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards must issue a report on the ESP application, and the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board Panel must conclude its mandatory hearing on the matter before the Commission can reach a final decision on issuing the permit. The NRC expects to finish this process late in 2006.

The 400-page draft SER contains the agency's review of the Grand Gulf ESP application. The NRC staff is reviewing information on:

- site seismology, geology, meteorology and hydrology;
- risks from potential accidents resulting from operation of a nuclear plant at the site;
- the site's ability to support adequate physical security for a nuclear plant; and
- proposed major features of the emergency plan System Energy Resources would implement if a reactor is eventually built at the site.

System Energy Resources will have 14 days to review the draft SER for proprietary information. The report will then be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Md. It will also be available on the NRC's Web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-licensing/esp/grand-gulf.html>. In addition, the Harriette Person Memorial Public Library at 606 Main St. in Port Gibson, Miss., has agreed to make the draft SER available for public inspection.

###