



NRC NEWS

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NRC ISSUES DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR HARRIS NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL; PUBLIC MEETING JAN. 30

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has reached the preliminary conclusion that there are no environmental impacts which would preclude renewal of the operating license for the Harris nuclear power plant, operated by Progress Energy southwest of Raleigh, N. C. That conclusion is contained in the NRC's Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for the Harris plant, which was issued on Dec. 11.

Members of the public will have an opportunity on Jan. 30 to comment on the report at two meetings scheduled in Apex, about six miles from the plant site. On Nov. 16, 2006, the NRC received an application from Progress Energy to renew the Harris license for an additional 20 years. The original NRC operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years, but may be renewed for up to 20 additional years if requirements are met. The current operating license for Harris is due to expire on Oct. 24, 2026.

As part of its license renewal application, the company submitted an environmental report. The NRC staff reviewed that report and performed an on-site audit. The staff also considered comments made during the environmental scoping process, and at two public meetings held on April 18, 2007, in Apex.

Based on its review, the NRC staff has prepared and issued its draft environmental impact statement, which preliminarily recommends that the Commission determine the adverse environmental impacts of license renewal for the Harris nuclear plant are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal for energy planning decision-makers would be unreasonable. This recommendation is based on five factors: 1) the analysis and findings in the Generic Environmental Impact Statement used for license renewal reviews; 2) the plant-specific environmental report submitted by Progress Energy; 3) NRC consultation with other federal, state and local agencies; 4) the NRC staff's own independent review; and 5) the NRC staff's consideration of public comments received during the environmental scoping process.

The NRC will hold two meetings on Jan. 30 to accept comments on the report. The first meeting will begin at 1:30 p.m. A second meeting will get under way at 7 p.m. Both meetings will take place at the New Horizons Fellowship, 820 East Williams Street, Apex. NRC staff will be available for an hour prior to the start of each meeting for informal, one-on-one discussions.

Those interested may pre-register to attend or speak at the meetings by contacting Samuel Hernandez, the NRC Environmental Project Manager, by telephone at 1-800-368-5642, extension 4049, or by e-mail at ShearonHarrisEIS@nrc.gov by Jan. 23. Members of the public may also register 15 minutes before each session to provide oral comments. The duration of individual comments may be limited by the number of speakers who register.

Written comments on the draft report submitted before March 5, 2008, will also be considered by the NRC staff. Comments can be submitted by mail to Chief, Rulemaking, Directives and Editing Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Office of Administration, Mail Stop T-6D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, or by e-mail to ShearonHarrisEIS@nrc.gov.

The draft report is posted on the NRC web page at: www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1437/supplement33/. The Harris license renewal application is posted at: www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/harris.html . Additional information about the license renewal process is available at: www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html.

The draft report is also available for review at the West Regional Library, 4000 Louis Stephens Drive, Cary, and the Eva H. Perry Library, 2100 Shepherd's Vineyard Drive, Apex.

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