

November 13, 2001

Mr. Heinz J. Mueller, Chief
Office of Environmental Assessment
United States Environmental Protection Agency
Region 4
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth Street
Atlanta, Georgia 30303-8960

Dear Mr. Mueller:

In a letter dated July 16, 2001, you provided comments on the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff's "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants," (GEIS, NUREG-1437), Supplement 4, regarding the Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant (HNP), Units 1 and 2. This final supplemental environmental impact statement (FSEIS) was published in May 2001. In this letter the staff responds to your comments.

First you asked that the staff define the term "small" as it is used in the FSEIS to describe environmental impacts, particularly with respect to surface and groundwater use conflicts. As discussed in the FSEIS (page 1-3 and other locations), the staff defines small impacts as environmental effects that are not detectable or that are so minor that they will neither destabilize nor noticeably alter any important attribute of the resource. This definition was developed starting from the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ's) definition of "significantly" (40 CFR 1508.27). In evaluating surface water use conflicts, the staff found that the maximum decrease in the level of the Altamaha River (the cooling water source for HNP) would be around 1 inch during periods of minimum river discharge. This level change is orders of magnitude less than the average annual level fluctuation. In addition, spawning of fish species of interest (e.g., shortnose sturgeon) occurs during periods of high river flow when the level change caused by HNP would be less than the 1-inch maximum. Based on these factors, and on the staff's review of the Clean Water Act 316(a) demonstration for HNP, the staff concluded that the potential impacts related to surface water use conflicts are small and mitigation is not warranted.

The staff also evaluated the potential for groundwater use conflicts. The staff found that the data on the aquifer used to supply groundwater for HNP indicates that the water usage by the plant is expected to have little effect on the aquifer. Specifically, data indicate that a properly designed well in the affected aquifer can safely yield approximately 1100 gpm. The two large onsite wells are designed to pump at 750 gpm, with actual plant groundwater requirements of approximately 126 gpm. In addition, tests showed that the onsite wells would not interfere with each other or with any offsite wells. Based on this information, the staff concluded that the potential impacts related to groundwater use conflicts are small and mitigation is not warranted.

You also recommended that further action should be taken by the NRC and Southern Nuclear Operating Company (SNC, the licensee for HNP) to plan for and implement future changes to

environmental regulations. To the extent that any changes in environmental regulations apply to HNP, SNC will have to implement these changes. However, the staff does not believe that any special measures or programs are necessary for HNP (as opposed to the myriad other facilities which would be affected by these regulations) to ensure that the appropriate actions are taken. SNC works closely with the various Federal and state regulatory agencies to ensure it complies with environmental regulations and the staff expects that this cooperation will continue in the future.

If you have any questions concerning these responses, please contact Andy Kugler of my staff at (301) 415-2828.

Sincerely,
Original Signed By: CACarpenter
Cynthia A. Carpenter, Chief
Risk Informed Initiatives, Environmental,
Decommissioning, and Rulemaking Branch
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321 and 50-366

cc: See next page

H. Mueller

- 2 -

any special measures or programs are necessary for HNP (as opposed to the myriad other facilities which would be affected by these regulations) to ensure that the appropriate actions are taken. SNC works closely with the various Federal and state regulatory agencies to ensure it complies with environmental regulations and the staff expects that this cooperation will continue in the future.

If you have any questions concerning these responses, please contact Andy Kugler of my staff at (301) 415-2828.

Sincerely,
Original Signed By: CACarpenter
Cynthia A. Carpenter, Chief
Risk Informed Initiatives, Environmental,
Decommissioning, and Rulemaking Branch
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket Nos. 50-321 and 50-366

cc: See next page

DISTRIBUTION:

Environmental R/F
DMatthews/FGillespie
CGrimes
CCarpenter
BZalcman
WBurton
AKugler
Mary Ann Parkhurst (maryann.parkhurst@pnl.gov)
OGC

Letter Accession no.: ML 013170104

US EPA, Rgn-4 Letter Accession no.: ML012190190

Pkg Accession no.: ML013170154

*See previous concurrence

DOCUMENT NAME: G:\RGE\B\HATCH\EPA 071601 Ltr Response.wpd

OFFICE	RGEB:DRIP		RGEB:DRIP		OGC		C:RGEB	
NAME	AKugler*		BZalcman*		RWeisman*		CACarpenter*	
DATE	10/26/01		10/29/01		11/02/01		11/08/01	

OFFICIAL FILE COPY

Southern Nuclear Operating Company
Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant Units 1 and 2

Docket Nos.: 50-321, 50-366

cc:

Mr. D. M. Crowe
Manager, Licensing
Southern Nuclear Operating Company Inc.
P.O. Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

Resident Inspector
Plant Hatch
11030 Hatch Pkwy N.
Baxley, GA 31531

Regional Administrator, Region II
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Atlanta Federal Center
61 Forsyth St., SW, Ste 23T85
Atlanta, GA 30303

Mr. Charles H. Badger
Office of Planning and Budget
Room 610
270 Washington St., SW
Atlanta, GA 30334

Harold Reheis, Director
Department of Natural Resources
205 Butler St. S.E., Ste 1252
Atlanta, GA 30334

Steven M. Jackson
Senior Engineer-Power Supply
Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia
1470 Riveredge Pky, N.E.
Atlanta, GA 30328-4684

Mr. Douglas J. Walters
Nuclear Energy Institute
1776 I Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20006

Stan Blanton, Esq.
Balch and Bingham
P.O. Box 306
Birmingham, AL 35201

Mary Jane Wilmoth, Esq.
National Whistleblower Legal Defense
and Education Fund
3238 P St., NW
Washington, DC 20007-2756

Alice Coleman
Appling County Public Library
242 East Parker St.
Baxley, GA 31513

Chairman
Appling County Commissioners
County Courthouse
Baxley, GA 31531

Mr. J. D. Woodard
Executive Vice President
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
P. O. Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

P. W. Wells, General Manager
Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Plant
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
U.S. Hwy 1 North
P.O. Box 2010
Baxley, GA 31515

Mr. R. D. Barker
Program Manager
Fossil & Nuclear Operations
Oglethorpe Power Corporation
2100 East Exchange Place
P.O. Box 1349
Tucker, GA 30085-1349

Charles A. Patrizia, Esq.
Paul, Hastings, Janofsky & Walker
10th Floor
1299 Pennsylvania Ave
Washington, DC 20004-9500

Mr. Ray Baker
Hatch License Renewal Project Manager
Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc.
PO Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

Mr. C. R. Pierce
Manager, Nuclear Operating Company
40 Inverness Center Parkway
P.O. Box 1295
Birmingham, AL 35201-1295

Mr. Mark Bowers
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Field Office
247 South Milledge Avenue
Athens, Georgia 30605

Mr. Bert Deener
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife Resources Division
Fisheries Management Section
108 Darling Ave.
P.O. Box 2089
Waycross, GA 31502-2089

Mr. Greg Masson
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
Ecological Services Field Office
4270 Norwich Street
Brunswick, GA 31520-2521

W.M. Winn, Director
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Environmental Protection Division
Water Protection Branch
4220 International Pkwy., Ste 101
Atlanta, GA 30354

David Walter
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife Resources Division
2070 U.S. Hwy 278,
Social Circle, GA 30025

W. Ray Luce, Director and Deputy State
Historical Preservation Officer
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Historic Preservation Division
156 Trinity Avenue SW
Suite 101
Atlanta, GA 30303-3600

Georgia Cranmore, Acting Chief
Protected Species Branch
National Marine Fisheries Service
9721 Executive Center Dr. North
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

David Bernhart, Fishery Biologist
National Marine Fisheries Service
9721 Executive Center Dr. North
St. Petersburg, FL 33702

Sandra Tucker, Field Supervisor
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Services
Ecological Services Field Office
247 South Milledge Ave.
Athens, GA 30605

Otha Dixon
Holiday Inn Express
2619 E. 1st St.
Vidalia, GA 30474

George Dickens
Development Authority
P.O. Box 536
Hazlehurst, GA 31539

Cathy Meehan
Southeastern Technical Institute
3001 E. 1st St.
Vidalia, GA 30474

Duane Whitley
Appling County Commission Chariman
P.O. Box 2
Baxley, GA 31515

Lewis Parker
Sheriff
Appling County Sheriff's Office
Court House Sq.
Baxley, GA 31513

J. Edward Tyson
Darby Bank & Trust Company
1404 Barron St.
Vidalia, GA 30474

Karon Durden
United Way
Vidalia Onion Festival
2004 Chevy Place
Vidalia, GA 30474

Dale Adkins
Appling County Development Authority
P.O. Box 710
Baxley, GA 31513

Jeff Baxley, City Manager
City of Baxley
P.O. Box 290
Baxley, GA 31513

Pamela Blockey O'Brien
D23 Golden Valley
Douglasville, GA 30134

Rita Kilpatrick
Georgians for Clean Energy
427 Moreland Ave., Ste 100
Atlanta, GA 30307

Laurence M. Bergen
Oglethorpe Power Corporation
3420 Greenside Ct.
Dacula, GA 30019

Jan Kozyra
868 Ivanhoe Dr.
Florence, SC 29505

Roger Byrd
State Representative
P.O. Box 756
Hazlehurst, GA 31539

Gary G. Drury
Georgia Coast Watch
Route 9, Box 281
St. Simons Island, GA 31522

Mayor Steve Rigdon
194 Stephens Ave.
Baxley, GA 31513

Phil Proctor
1907 O'Neal Cir.
Vidalia, GA 30474

Deborah Sheppard
Altamaha Riverkeeper
P.O. Box 2642
Darien, GA 31305

Mike Cleland
County Manager
Appling County
83 S. Oak St.
Baxley, GA 31513

Ross C. Kist III
Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia
1470 Riveredge Pwky NW
Atlanta, GA 30328-4686

Ralph Beedle, Sr. Vice President
and Chief Nuclear Officer
Nuclear Energy Institute
1776 I Street NW, Ste. 400
Washington, DC 20006

Tony Banks
Virginia Power
Innsbrook Technical Center
500 Dominion Blvd.
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Dennis Capella
PECO Energy Co.
2301 Market St.
Philadelphia, PA 19101

Bill Maher
PECO
965 Chesterbrook Blvd.
M/C 63A-3
Wayne, PA 19087-5691

Marty Ray
Tetra Tech, NUS
900 Trailridge Rd.
Aiken, SC 29803

Bill Slocumb
GA DNR/EPD
4244 International Pwky., Ste. 114
Atlanta, GA 30354

Richard R. Zuercher
Dominion Energy
5000 Dominion Blvd., 2 SE
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Kathy Bradford
Advance Progress
P.O. Box 669
Vidalia, GA 30475

Christi Hardin
Georgia Power Company
11036 Hatch Pwky
Baxley, GA 31513

Doug Shaw
The Nature Conservancy
P.O. Box 484
Darian, GA 31305

Philip Moore
Tetra Tech
900 Trail Ridge Rd.
Aiken, SC 29803

Julea Hovey
Constellation Nuclear Services
1359 Silver Bluff Rd., Ste. G-17
Aiken, SC 29803

Karen Patterson
Tetra Tech, NUS
900 Trail Ridge
Aiken, SC 29803

Barty Simontar
GA DNR/EPD
4244 International Pwky, Ste., 114
Atlanta, GA 30354

Mike Whitten
Tetra Tech, NUS
900 Trail Ridge Rd.
Aiken, SC 29803

William Bleck
Box 1188
Baxley, GA 31515

Patricia Dixin
United Way
P.O. Box 352
Vidalia, GA 30474

Cole Lindell
MEAG Power
P.O. Box 1600
Waynesboro, GA 30830

Jerry Strickland
Sun Trust Bank
420 Satilla Ch. Rd. SE
Baxley, GA 31513

Calvin K. Bobbitt
511 Bay St.
Vidalia, GA 30474-5303

Stephen Summer
SC Electric & Gas Co.
6248 Bush River Rd.
Columbia, SC 29212

David Lochbaum
Union of Concerned Scientists
1707 H St., NW, Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006-3919

Jeffrey Stair
Georgia Public Service Commission
47 Trinity Avenue
Atlanta, GA 30334

The Honorable Cynthia A. McKinney
Attn: Mr. E. Lausten, Constituent Services
Representative
246 Sycamore St. Suite 110
Decatur, GA 30030

Mr. Heinz Mueller
Chief, NEPA Compliance Branch
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region IV
61 Forsythe St.
Atlanta, GA 30303

Sara Barczak
Georgians for Clean Energy
3025 Bull Street, Suite 101
Savannah, GA 31405

Mr. Mike Mulligan
PO 161
5 Wood Lawn Lane
Hinsdale, NH 03451

Dusty & Wright Gres
1100 Deen Landing Road
Baxley, GA 31513

Janisse Ray
604 Hilton Baxley Road
Baxley, GA 31513

Dane Bruce
Appling County EMA
P.O. Box 747
Baxley, GA 31515

Zack Fouler
Vidalia Communications
P.O. Box 900
Vidalia, GA 30475

Jim Hardeman
Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources
Emergency Planning Division
4244 International Pkwy, Suite 114
Atlanta, GA 30354

Ronald E. Widener
Toombs County EMA
P.O. Box 487
Lyons, GA 30436

Charles Wilson
Tennessee Valley Authority
1101 Market Street
Chattanooga, TN 37402-2801

Dusty Gres
Ohoop Regional Library System
610 Jackson Street
Vidalia, GA 30474

David Kyler, Executive Director
Center for a Sustainable Coast
P.O. Box 598
Darien, GA 31305

Joan O. King
304 Manor Drive
Santee, GA 30571

Merriam A. Bass
M.K. Pentecost Ecology Trust Fund
3590 Darien Highway, Suite 8
Brunswick, GA 31525