

December 3, 2003

Ms. Deanna Beacham
Virginia Council on Indians
P.O. Box 1475
Richmond, VA 23218

SUBJECT: EARLY SITE PERMIT REVIEW FOR THE NORTH ANNA POWER STATION
SITE

Dear Ms. Beacham:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff is reviewing an application for an early site permit (ESP) for the potential future construction of one or more new nuclear power plants. If built, the new unit(s) would be located at the existing North Anna Power Station site near Mineral in Louisa County, Virginia, on the southern shore of Lake Anna. The application for an ESP was submitted by Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC (Dominion), on September 25, 2003, pursuant to NRC requirements at Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* Part 52 (10 CFR Part 52). The application is available through the web-based version of the NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) which can be found at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The application is under accession number ML032731517.

As part of its review of the application, the NRC staff will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) under the provisions of 10 CFR Part 51, the NRC rules that implement the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). In addition, as outlined in 36 CFR 800.8, "Coordination with the National Environmental Policy Act," the NRC plans to coordinate compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in meeting the requirements of NEPA. A draft EIS is scheduled for publication in October of 2004, and will be provided to you for review and comment.

If approved, the ESP will document the NRC staff's determination regarding the suitability of the proposed site for the construction and operation of one or more new nuclear plants. The ESP would not authorize the applicant to begin construction of the unit(s). However, in its review, the NRC staff will evaluate the environmental impacts of construction and operation and will also consider alternatives, including alternative sites.

Dominion has also included a site redress plan in its application in accordance with 10 CFR 52.17(c) and 52.25. If a site redress plan is included in an ESP approved by the NRC, the applicant may carry out certain site preparation and limited construction activities. See Part 4 of the application for the associated site redress plan. Dominion would still be required to obtain the appropriate local, State, and other Federal permits required for these activities prior to starting work.

In the context of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, the NRC staff has determined that the area of potential effect (APE) for this ESP review is the area at the power plant site and its immediate environs which may be impacted by land-disturbing activities associated with the construction and operation of the new unit(s). The APE may extend beyond the immediate environs in those instances where these land-disturbing activities may potentially have an effect on known or proposed historic sites. This determination is made irrespective of ownership or control of the lands of interest.

In its application, Dominion has stated that, prior to any activities that would disturb existing ground conditions, it would assess the need, in coordination with the Virginia Department of Historic Resources, to undertake subsurface investigations for the identification of potentially significant historic or cultural resources in the area(s) to be disturbed. In addition, Dominion has stated that it would implement the necessary administrative steps to make proper notifications in the event of an unanticipated discovery (including human remains).

Pursuant to 36 CFR 800.2(c)(i), the NRC wishes to ensure that Indian tribes that might have an interest in any potential historic properties in the APE are afforded the opportunity to identify their concerns, provide advice on the identification and evaluation of historic properties, including those of traditional religious and cultural importance, and, if necessary, participate in the resolution of any adverse effects to such properties.

On December 8, 2003, the NRC will conduct a public environmental scoping meeting at the Louisa County Middle School, 1009 Davis Highway, Mineral, Virginia. Representatives of the Council or any of the Virginia tribes are invited to attend. Your office will receive a copy of the draft EIS along with a request for comments. The anticipated publication date for the draft EIS is October 2004. If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact the Environmental Project Manager for the North Anna ESP project, Mr. Andrew Kugler, at 301-415-2828 or ajk1@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

/RA/

Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation

Docket No.: 52-008

cc: See next page

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Pao-Tsin Kuo, Program Director
License Renewal and Environmental Impacts
Division of Regulatory Improvement Programs
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OFFICE	LA:RLEP	PM:RLEP	SC:RLEP	OGC (NLO)	PD:RLEP
NAME	YEdmonds	AKugler	JTappert	LIZ	PTKuo
DATE	11/25/03	11/25/03	11/26/03	12/1/03	12/3/03

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CC:

Chickahominy Indian Tribe
Chief Stephen R. Adkins
7240 Adkins Road
Charles City, VA 23030

Chickahominy Indians-Eastern Division
Chief Marvin Bradby
12111 Indian Hill Lane
Providence Forge, VA 23140

Mattaponi Indian Tribe
Chief Carl Custalow
1467 Mattaponi Reservation Circle
West Point, VA 23181

Monacan Indian Nation
Chief Kenneth Branham
P.O. Box 1136
Madison Heights, VA 24572

Nansemond Indian Tribe
Chief Barry W. Bass
3427 Galberry Road
Chesapeake, VA 23323

Pamunkey Indian Tribe
Chief William Miles
289 Pamunkey River Road
King William, VA 23086

Rappahannock Tribe
Chief G. Anne Richardson
HCR 1, Box 402
Indian Neck, VA 23148

Upper Mattaponi Indian Tribe
Chief Kenneth Adams
1236 Mount Pleasant Road
King William, VA 23086

North Anna Early Site Permit
Dominion Nuclear North Anna, LLC

cc:

Mr. Joseph D. Hegner
Lead Engineer - Licensing
Dominion Generation
Early Site Permitting Project
5000 Dominion Boulevard
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Mr. C. Lee Lintecum
County Administrator
Louisa County
P.O. Box 160
Louisa, VA 23093

Ms. Lillian M. Cuoco, Esq.
Senior Nuclear Counsel
Dominion Nuclear Connecticut, Inc.
Millstone Power Station
Building 475, 5th Floor
Rope Ferry Road
Rt. 156
Waterford, CT 06385

Mr. David R. Lewis
Shaw Pittman
2300 N Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20037

Dr. W. T. Lough
Virginia State Corporation Commission
Division of Energy Regulation
P.O. Box 1197
Richmond, VA 23209

Mr. Chris L. Funderburk, Director
Nuclear Licensing & Operations Support
Virginia Electric Power Company
Innsbrook Technical Center
5000 Dominion Blvd.
Glen Allen, VA 23060-6711

Office of the Attorney General
Commonwealth of Virginia
900 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Senior Resident Inspector
North Anna Power Station
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
1024 Haley Drive
Mineral, VA 23117

Mr. David A. Heacock
Site Vice President
Virginia Electric and Power Company
North Anna Power Station
P.O. Box 402
Mineral, VA 23117-0402

Mr. Robert B. Strobe, M.D., M.P.H.
State Health Commissioner
Office of the Commissioner
Virginia Department of Health
P.O. Box 2448
Richmond, VA 23218

Mr. Marvin L. Smith
Project Manager
North Anna Early Site Permit Project
Dominion Energy, Inc.
5000 Dominion Blvd.
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Mr. Eugene S. Grecheck
Vice President - Nuclear Support Services
Dominion Energy, Inc.
5000 Dominion Blvd.
Glen Allen, VA 23060

Mr. David Lochbaum
Union of Concern Scientists
1707 H Street, NW
Suite 600
Washington, DC 20006-3919

Mr. Paul Gunter
Director of the Reactor Watchdog Project
Nuclear Information & Resource Service
1424 16th Street, NW, Suite 404
Washington, DC 20036

Mr. Ron Simard
Nuclear Energy Institute
Suite 400
1776 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-3708

Mr. Russell Bell
Nuclear Energy Institute
Suite 400
1776 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-3708

Mr. Thomas P. Miller
U.S. Department of Energy
Headquarters - Germantown
19901 Germantown Road
Germantown, MD 20874-1290

Mr. James Riccio
Greenpeace
702 H Street, NW, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20001

Ms. Patricia Campbell
Winston & Strawn
1400 L Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Mr. James F. Mallay, Director
Regulatory Affairs
FRAMATOME, ANP
3315 Old Forest Road
Lynchburg, VA 24501

Mr. Ernie H. Kennedy
Vice President New Plants
Nuclear Plant Projects
Westinghouse Electric Company
2000 Day Hill Road
Windsor, CT 06095-0500

Dr. Regis A. Matzie
Senior Vice President and
Chief Technology Officer
Westinghouse Electric Company
2000 Day Hill Road
Windsor, CT 06095-0500

Mr. Gary Wright, Manager
Division of Nuclear Safety
Illinois Emergency Management Agency
1035 Outer Park Drive
Springfield, IL 62704

Mr. Vince Langman
Licensing Manager
Atomic Energy of Canada Limited
2251 Speakman Drive
Mississauga, Ontario
Canada L5K 1B2

Mr. Ed Wallace, General Manager
Projects
PBMR Pty LTD
P. O. Box 9396
Centurion 0046
Republic of South Africa

Mr. David Ritter
Research Associate on Nuclear Energy
Public Citizens Critical Mass Energy
and Environmental Program
215 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20003

Mr. Tom Clements
6703 Guide Avenue
Takoma Park, MD 20912

Mr. Paul Leventhal
Nuclear Control Institute
1000 Connecticut Avenue, NW
Suite 410
Washington, DC 20036

Mr. Jack W. Roe
SCIENTECH, INC.
910 Clopper Road
Gaithersburg, MD 20878

Dr. Gail H. Marcus
U.S. Department of Energy
Room 5A-143
1000 Independence Ave., SW
Washington, DC 20585

Mr. Charles Brinkman
Westinghouse Electric Co.
Washington Operations
12300 Twinbrook Pkwy., Suite 330
Rockville, MD 20852

Mr. Marvin Fertel
Senior Vice President
and Chief Nuclear Officer
Nuclear Energy Institute
Suite 400
1776 I Street, NW
Washington, DC 20006-3708

Dr. Glenn R. George
PA Consulting Group
130 Potter Street
Haddonfield, NJ 08033

Mr. Arthur R. Woods
Enercon Services, Inc.
500 TownPark Lane
Kennesaw, GA 30144

Ms. Vanessa E. Quinn, Chief
Radiological Emergency Preparedness
Branch
Department of Homeland Security/FEMA
500 C Street, SW
Washington, DC 20472

