

**NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION**

**[Docket No. 50-238; NRC-2011-0222]**

**Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact**

**for the N.S. Savannah**

**License NS-1, Baltimore, Maryland**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission

**ACTION:** Environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact

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**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Introduction**

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC or the Commission) staff is considering a request dated November 8, 2010, by the U.S. Department of Transportation, Maritime Administration (MARAD, the licensee) requesting exemptions from the security requirements in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) Part 73 and 10 CFR 50.54(p) for the N.S. Savannah (NSS).

This Environmental Assessment (EA) has been developed in accordance with the requirements of 10 CFR 51.21.

## **II. Environmental Assessment**

### *Identification of Proposed Action:*

The proposed action would eliminate the physical security requirements from the 10 CFR Part 50 licensed site because the NSS spent fuel elements were returned to the AEC and transferred by the AEC for reprocessing at its Savannah River site in South Carolina. There is no longer any special nuclear material (SNM) located within the NSS other than that contained in plant systems as residual contamination.

Part of this proposed action meets the categorical exclusion provision in 10 CFR 51.22(c)(25), as part of this action is an exemption from the requirements of the Commission's regulations and: (i) there is no significant hazards consideration; (ii) there is no significant change in the types or significant increase in the amounts of any effluents that may be released offsite; (iii) there is no significant increase in individual or cumulative public or occupational radiation exposure; (iv) there is no significant construction impact; (v) there is no significant increase in the potential for or consequences from radiological accidents; and (vi) the requirements from which an exemption is sought involve safeguard plans. Therefore, this part of the action does not require either an EA or an environmental impact statement. This EA was prepared for the part of the proposed action not involving safeguards plans (i.e.; transportation of SNM, interaction with emergency planning, and background checks.)

### *Need for Proposed Action:*

Sections 50.54 and 73.55 of 10 CFR require that licensees establish and maintain physical protection and security for activities involving SNM within the 10 CFR Part 50 licensed area of a facility. The proposed action is needed because there is no longer any nuclear fuel in the 10 CFR Part 50 licensed facility that requires protection

against radiological sabotage or diversion. The proposed action will allow the licensee to conserve resources for decommissioning activities.

*Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action:*

The NRC has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that exempting the facility from physical protection security requirements will not have any adverse environmental impacts.

The proposed action will not significantly increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any 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 non-radiological impacts, the proposed action does not affect non-radiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant non-radiological 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:*

The alternative is the no-action alternative, under which the staff would deny the exemption request. This denial of the request would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the no-action alternative are similar, therefore the no-action alternative is not further considered.

*Conclusion*

The NRC staff has concluded that the proposed action will not significantly impact the quality of the human environment, and that the proposed action is the preferred alternative.

### *Agencies and Persons Consulted*

In accordance with its stated policy, on July 1, 2011, the staff consulted with the Maryland State official, of the Maryland Department of the Environment, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

The NRC staff has determined that the proposed action is of a procedural nature, and will not affect listed species or critical habitat. Therefore, no further consultation is required under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act. The NRC staff has also determined that the proposed action is not the type of activity that has the potential to cause effects on historic properties. Therefore, no further consultation is required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

### **III. Finding of No Significant Impact**

The NRC staff has prepared this EA as part of its review of the proposed action. On the basis of this EA, the NRC finds that there are no significant environmental impacts from the proposed action, and that preparation of an environmental impact statement is not warranted. Accordingly, the NRC has determined that a Finding of No Significant Impact is appropriate.

### **IV. Further Information**

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated November 8, 2010 (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System [ADAMS] Accession Number ML103200198). Documents related to this action, including the application and supporting documentation, are available electronically at the NRC's Electronic Reading Room at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm.html>. From this site, you can access text and image files of NRC's public documents.

If you do not have access to ADAMS, or if there are problems in accessing the documents located in ADAMS, contact the NRC Public Document Room (PDR) Reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by e-mail to [pdrr@nrc.gov](mailto:pdrr@nrc.gov). These documents may also be viewed electronically on the public computers located at the NRC's PDR, O 1 F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, MD 20852. The PDR reproduction contractor will copy documents for a fee.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 15<sup>th</sup> day of September, 2011.

FOR THE NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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