

January 26, 2012

Chief Donald Rodgers
Catawba Indian Tribe
996 Avenue of the Nations
Rock Hill, SC 29730-7645

SUBJECT: JANUARY 31, 2012 WEBINAR AND DRAFT REPORT FOR COMMENT:
BACKGROUND AND PRELIMINARY ASSUMPTIONS FOR AN
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT – LONG -TERM WASTE
CONFIDENCE UPDATE

Dear Chief Rogers:

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is seeking comment by February 17, 2012, on the enclosed Draft Report entitled, "Background and Preliminary Assumptions for an Environmental Impact Statement – Long-Term Waste Confidence Update." The report updates preliminary assumptions for an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) NRC will develop to analyze the effects of storing spent nuclear fuel from the nation's commercial nuclear power reactors for as much as 200 years. The report was posted January 3, 2012, on the NRC [website](#). The report updates assumptions first laid out in [SECY-11-0029](#), dated February 28, 2011.

Additionally, the NRC staff will hold a **webinar on January 31, 2012**, to discuss the NRC's Draft Report. The meeting notice for this webinar is also enclosed. The NRC is co-hosting the webinar with The Council of State Governments' Midwestern Office. The webinar is open to the public and will begin promptly at 2:00 pm **Eastern** Standard Time. With time allotted for presentations and questions, the webinar will conclude by 3:30 pm.

The EIS will be part of NRC's effort to update its Waste Confidence Decision and Rule, last updated in 2010. The report being made available for comment is an early effort to obtain public input about the general scope of the EIS before the NRC formally initiates the EIS scoping process. The EIS will include analyses of environmental impacts that are directly related to the long-term handling, storage and transportation of commercial spent fuel and high-level waste.

The report discusses several storage scenarios, including at nuclear power plants, regional or centralized storage sites, or a combination of storage and reprocessing of spent fuel. A key assumption is that extended storage would be managed under a regulatory program similar to current regulation of spent fuel. To analyze the impacts associated with the scenarios, the staff will develop generic, composite sites for each scenario, and these sites will account for a range of characteristics of actual reactor and storage sites.

As revised in 2010, the Waste Confidence Decision and Rule included the Commission's confidence that spent fuel can be safely managed until it undergoes final disposition. At the same time, the Commission directed the staff to prepare a long-term update to the Waste Confidence Decision and Rule that would cover extended storage of spent fuel. This long-term

update is to be informed by the analysis and conclusions of the EIS anticipated in the current report.

To register for the free webinar, go to the registration page **by January 30, 2012**, and fill out the online form at <https://www2.gotomeeting.com/register/844201962>; select "Show in my Time Zone" when registering. The registration confirmation will arrive by e-mail and will include instructions for accessing the audio and video components of the webinar. Contact Lisa Janairo at ljanairo@csg.org with any questions about accessing the webinar.

Comments on the report can be provided by email to WCO Outreach@nrc.gov, or by U.S. mail to:

Christine Pineda, Project Manager
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards
Mailstop EBB-2B2
Washington, DC 20555-0001

Any questions with respect to this correspondence should be directed to:

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/RA/

Keith I. McConnell, Acting Director
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Enclosures:

1. Draft Report for Comment
2. Webinar Public Meeting Notice

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