

June 25, 2012

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

BEFORE THE COMMISSION

In the Matter of	)	
Calvert Cliffs 3 Nuclear Project, L.L.C.	)	Docket No. 52-016-COL
(Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 3)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Detroit Edison Co.	)	Docket No. 52-033-COL
(Fermi Nuclear Power Plant, Unit 3)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Duke Energy Carolinas, L.L.C.	)	Docket Nos. 52-018-COL
(William States Lee III Nuclear Station,	)	52-019-COL
Units 1 and 2)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Entergy Operations, Inc.	)	Docket No. 50-416-LR
(Grand Gulf Nuclear Station, Unit 1)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Entergy Operations, Inc.	)	Docket No. 52-024-COL
(Grand Gulf Nuclear Station, Unit 3)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
FirstEnergy Nuclear Operating Co.	)	Docket No. 50-346-LR
(Davis-Besse Nuclear Power Station,	)	
Unit 1)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Florida Power & Light Co.	)	Docket Nos. 52-040-COL
(Turkey Point, Units 6 and 7)	)	52-041-COL
In the Matter of	)	
Luminant Generation Co., L.L.C.	)	Docket Nos. 52-034-COL
(Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant,	)	52-035-COL
Units 3 and 4)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Nextera Energy Seabrook, L.L.C.	)	Docket No. 50-443-LR
(Seabrook Station, Unit 1)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Pacific Gas and Electric Co.	)	Docket Nos. 50-275-LR
(Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant,	)	50-323-LR
Units 1 and 2)	)	

In the Matter of	)	
PPL Bell Bend, L.L.C.	)	Docket No. 52-039-COL
(Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Progress Energy Carolinas, Inc.	)	Docket Nos. 52-022-COL
(Shearon Harris Nuclear Power Plant,	)	52-023-COL
Units 2 and 3)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Progress Energy Florida, Inc.	)	Docket Nos. 52.029-COL
(Levy County Nuclear Power Plant,	)	52-030-COL
Units 1 and 2)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
South Texas Nuclear Operating Co.	)	Docket Nos. 50-498-LR
(South Texas Project, Units 1 and 2)	)	50-499-LR
In the Matter of	)	
Nuclear Innovation North America LLC	)	Docket Nos. 52-012-COL
(South Texas Project, Units 3 and 4)	)	52-013-COL
In the Matter of	)	
Tennessee Valley Authority	)	Docket Nos. 52-014-COL
(Bellefonte Nuclear Power Plant, Units 3 and 4)	)	52-015-COL
In the Matter of	)	
Tennessee Valley Authority	)	Docket No. 50-0391-OL
(Watts Bar Unit 2)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Union Electric Co.	)	Docket No. 50-483-LR
(Callaway Plant Unit 1)	)	
In the Matter of	)	
Virginia Electric and Power Co.	)	Docket No. 52-017-COL
d/b/a Dominion Virginia Power and	)	
Old Dominion Electric Cooperative	)	
(North Anna Unit 3)	)	

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NRC STAFF'S ANSWER TO PETITION TO SUSPEND FINAL DECISIONS  
IN ALL PENDING REACTOR LICENSING PROCEEDINGS PENDING  
COMPLETION OF REMANDED WASTE CONFIDENCE PROCEEDINGS

Pursuant to 10 C.F.R. § 2.323(c) and the June 19, 2012 Commission Order, the Staff of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission ("Staff") hereby provides its answer to the "Petition to Suspend Final Decisions in All Pending Reactor Licensing Proceedings Pending Completion of Remanded Waste Confidence Proceedings" ("Petition"), served June 18 and 19, 2012. Multiple organizations and individuals filed essentially identical petitions in several reactor licensing proceedings.<sup>1</sup> The Petition sought the suspension of final decisions in all reactor licensing proceedings as a result of the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals' recent decision in *State of New York v. NRC*, No. 11-1045. sl. op. at 3 (D.C. Cir. June 8, 2012). The D.C. Circuit's decision vacated the NRC's updated Waste Confidence Decision and its Temporary Storage Rule and remanded those rulemakings to the NRC. *Id.* at 21 (citing Waste Confidence Decision Update, 75 Fed. Reg. 81,037 (Dec. 23, 2010) ("Waste Confidence Decision"); Consideration of Environmental Impacts of Temporary Storage of Spent Fuel after Cessation of Reactor Operation, Final Rule, 75 Fed. Reg. 81,032 (Dec. 23, 2010) ("Temporary Storage Rule")).

In addition to seeking the suspension of all reactor licensing decisions, the Petition seeks a declaration from the Commission that "any [Environmental Assessments ("EA")] or [Environmental Impact Statements ("EIS")] issued by the NRC will be published in [draft] form with a reasonable opportunity for public comment." Petition at 12. Finally, petitioners requested

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<sup>1</sup> In the petitions filed in the Fermi combined license ("COL") proceeding and Davis-Besse license renewal ("LR") proceeding, the petitioners indicated in their 10 C.F.R. § 2.323(b) certification that "[c]ounsel for the staff stated that the NRC Staff would oppose the motion." Petition at 16. However, this was not the Staff's position. In responding to petitioners' inquiry, the Staff stated that "Based on the representation in your email, we do not have enough information to take a position on this petition. We will respond to the petition after it is filed." The Staff's response was accurately represented in petitions filed in the other proceedings.

a generic modification to each proceeding's timely filing standards as applied by the NRC regulations or the applicable scheduling orders. The Petition asks that "a period of at least 60 days [be allowed] for raising site-specific concerns relating to the remanded proceedings in individual licensing proceedings."<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

The Commission has not yet indicated how it intends to respond to the D.C. Circuit's ruling. While the Staff agrees that no final decision to grant a combined license ("COL"), operating license, or renewed operating license should be made in the captioned proceedings until the NRC has appropriately dispositioned the issues remanded by the court, there are no imminent final initial or renewed reactor licensing decisions.<sup>3</sup>

Second, to the extent the Commission chooses to disposition the remanded Waste Confidence Decision through the preparation of either an environmental analysis or, if necessary, an environmental impact statement, the Staff will provide a reasonable opportunity for public comment consistent with the NRC's regulations, the National Environmental Policy Act, and the current staff practice.<sup>4</sup> *See generally* 10 C.F.R. Part 51.

Finally, with respect to the petitioners' request for a 60-day period to raise site-specific concerns in individual proceedings, the Commission's normal adjudicatory procedures in

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<sup>2</sup> In linking the 60-day filing period to "remanded proceedings", the Petition is unclear as to what remanded proceedings are the triggering events for invoking the 60- day filing period.

<sup>3</sup> With respect to license renewal proceedings, Indian Point is perhaps the closest to a final decision by the Board. The Indian Point license renewal still has three contentions that are not currently scheduled for a hearing and are waiting on the Staff to issue a draft supplement environmental impact statement ("EIS"), final supplemental EIS, and a supplemental safety evaluation report, which is currently anticipated to issue no earlier than December 2012. With respect to COL proceedings, the Levy County COL will most likely be the next application for which a decision to grant or deny a combined license will be reached; a contested hearing before the Board is scheduled for October 2012. The date for the uncontested hearing has not been established by the Commission.

<sup>4</sup> While not legally required, the Staff typically provides for public participation on environmental assessments of significant public interest.

10 C.F.R. Part 2 already provide well-understood and appropriate means for raising contentions based on new information and site-specific considerations. See *Union Electric Co. d/b/a Ameren Missouri* (Callaway Plant, Unit 2), CLI-11-05, 74 NRC \_\_, \_\_ (slip op. at 32-36, 42) (Sept. 9, 2011); cf. *Pacific Gas & Electric Co.* (Diablo Canyon Nuclear Power Plant, Units 1 and 2), CLI-12-13, 75 NRC \_\_, \_\_ (slip op. at 7) (Jun. 7, 2012) (“[T]he ‘trigger point’ for the timely submission of new or amended contentions is when new information becomes available, and our process places on the intervenor the obligation to raise new contentions based on such information.”). Given the varying procedural postures of the captioned proceedings, as well as the uncertainty as to what site-specific concerns petitioners may decide to raise, it is unnecessary to establish a generic 60-day timetable as petitioners propose.<sup>5</sup> Rather, the appropriate timeframe for raising concerns associated with the Waste Confidence Decision (and/or the NRC’s response to the court ruling) will necessarily depend on the nature of those concerns and can be appropriately resolved under each proceeding’s scheduling order or the applicable NRC regulations as appropriate.

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<sup>5</sup> As the petition acknowledges, in the event petitioners seek participation in individual licensing proceedings, they may need to submit hearing requests or petitions to intervene, standing declarations, or motions to reopen the record, depending on the posture of the particular proceeding. See Petition at 11-12. Some of the captioned proceedings have admitted contentions including Bellefonte COL, Calvert Cliffs COL, Fermi COL, Levy County COL, South Texas Project COL, Turkey Point COL, Davis-Besse license renewal (“LR”), Seabrook LR, and Diablo Canyon LR, and Watts Bar. For others, although intervention was granted, all admitted contentions were subsequently dismissed or otherwise resolved including Comanche Peak COL and North Anna COL; for still others, a hearing was either not granted or was never requested including Bell Bend COL, Shearon Harris COL, W.S. Lee COL, Grand Gulf COL, South Texas LR, and Grand Gulf LR. In Callaway LR, contentions were filed, but the Board has not yet ruled on the admissibility of the contentions. Accordingly, the Staff’s view is that any contentions filed in an individual proceeding would still need to satisfy all the applicable requirements of 10 C.F.R. Part 2, including the reopening standard for those proceedings with a closed record, for example.

Respectfully submitted,

**/Signed (electronically) by/<sup>6</sup>**

Brian G. Harris  
Counsel for NRC Staff  
*Davis-Besse LR*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O15-D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-1392  
Brian.Harris@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

David E. Roth  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Watts Bar*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O15-D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-2749  
David.Roth@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Sarah Price  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Turkey Point COL, Shearon Harris COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O15-D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-2047  
Sarah.Price@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Maxwell Smith  
Counsel for NRC Staff  
*Diablo Canyon LR, Seabrook LR,  
South Texas LR*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O15-D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-1246  
Maxwell.Smith@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Marcia Carpentier  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Fermi COL, North Anna COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-15 D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-4126  
Marcia.Carpentier@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Mary B. Spencer  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Callaway LR*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O15-D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-1324  
Mary.spencer@nrc.gov

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<sup>6</sup> Because the Staff is filling identical documents in each of the applicable proceedings, the signature block utilizes the term "Signed (electronically) by" to indicate that each counsel signed for the proceedings listed below their signature.

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Jody C. Martin  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Bellefonte COL, Levy County COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-15 D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-1569  
Jody.Martin@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Michael A. Spencer  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*South Texas COL, William S. Lee COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-15 D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-4073  
Michael.Spencer@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Anthony Wilson  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Calvert Cliffs COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-15 D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-3699  
Anthony.Wilson@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Patrick Moulding  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Grand Gulf COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-15 D21  
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001  
(301) 415-2549  
Patrick.Moulding@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Susan H. Vrahoretis  
Counsel for NRC Staff  
*Bell Bend COL, Comanche Peak COL*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O-15 D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-4075  
Susan.Vrahoretis@nrc.gov

**/Signed (electronically) by/**

Beth N. Mizuno  
Counsel for the NRC Staff  
*Grand Gulf LR*  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop O15-D21  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
(301) 415-3122  
Beth.Mizuno@nrc.gov

Dated at Rockville, Maryland  
This 25th day of June 2012

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

BEFORE THE ATOMIC SAFETY AND LICENSING BOARD

In the Matter of	)	
	)	
NEXTERA ENERGY SEABROOK, LLC	)	Docket No. 50-443-LR
	)	
(Seabrook Station, Unit 1)	)	
	)	

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that copies of the foregoing "NRC STAFF'S ANSWER TO PETITION TO SUSPEND FINAL DECISIONS IN ALL PENDING REACTOR LICENSING PROCEEDINGS PENDING COMPLETION OF REMANDED WASTE CONFIDENCE PROCEEDINGS," have been served upon the following by the Electronic Information Exchange, this 25<sup>th</sup> day of June, 2012.

Administrative Judge  
Paul S. Ryerson, Chair  
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board  
Mail Stop - T-3 F23  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
E-mail: Paul.Ryerson@nrc.gov

Office of Commission Appellate  
Adjudication  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Mail Stop – O-16G4  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
E-mail: ocaamail@nrc.gov

Administrative Judge  
Dr. Michael F. Kennedy  
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board  
Mail Stop - T-3 F23  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
E-mail: Michael.Kennedy@nrc.gov

Office of the Secretary  
Attn: Rulemakings and Adjudications Staff  
Mail Stop: O-16G4  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
E-mail: HEARINGDOCKET@nrc.gov

Administrative Judge  
Dr. Richard E. Wardwell  
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board  
Mail Stop - T-3 F23  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
E-mail: Richard.Wardwell@nrc.gov

Anne Siarnacki, Law Clerk  
Atomic Safety and Licensing Board  
Mail Stop: T-3F23  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Washington, DC 20555-0001  
E-mail: Anne.Siarnacki@nrc.gov



Steven Hamrick, Esq.  
NextEra Energy Seabrook, LLC  
801 Pennsylvania Ave NW Suite 220  
Washington, DC 20004  
E-mail: Steven.hamrick@fpl.com

Raymond Shadis  
Friends of the Coast  
New England Coalition  
Post Office Box 98  
Edgecomb, Maine 04556  
E-mail: shadis@prexar.com

Mitchell Ross, Esq.  
James Petro, Esq.  
NextEra Energy Seabrook, LLC  
700 Universe Boulevard  
Juno Beach, FL 33408  
E-mail: mitch.ross@fpl.com  
James.petro@fpl.com

Matthew Brock  
Assistant Attorney General  
Environmental Protection Division  
Office of the Attorney General  
One Ashburton Place, 18th Floor  
Boston, Massachusetts 02108  
E-mail: matthew.brock@state.ma.us

David R. Lewis, Esq.  
Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman, LLP  
2300 N Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20037-1137  
E-mail: david.lewis@pillsburylaw.com

***Signed (electronically) by***

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Maxwell C. Smith  
Counsel for NRC Staff  
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission  
Office of the General Counsel  
Mail Stop – O-15D21  
Washington, DC 20555  
Telephone: (301) 415-1246  
E-mail: Maxwell.Smith@nrc.gov  
Date of signature: June 25, 2012