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NRC, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Issue Final Environmental Impact Statement for Proposed South Carolina Reactors

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has concluded there are no environmental impacts to preclude issuing Combined Licenses (COLs) to build and operate two reactors at the proposed Lee Nuclear Station site in Cherokee County, S.C. The NRC developed the Lee project's Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) jointly with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Charleston District. The Corps will use the document's information in considering its federal permit decision in accordance with the Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899.

Issuing the statement is part of the overall Lee COL review. The staff continues working on the Lee project's final safety evaluation report, which will include a review by the NRC's Advisory Committee on Reactor Safeguards, an independent group of nuclear safety experts. The NRC's five Commissioners will conduct a separate mandatory hearing regarding the application and the staff's review, when completed.

While all of these review activities continue, a Commission [Order](#) from August 2012 directs the staff to hold off on any new reactor license decisions until completion of a rulemaking and environmental impact statement to update the [waste confidence decision](#), expected by September 2014. If the rulemaking leaves any Lee-specific issues unresolved, those issues will be addressed separately. All of this work must be completed before the NRC can reach a final decision on the Lee application.

Duke Energy Carolinas submitted a COL application Dec. 12, 2007, seeking permission to construct and operate two AP1000 reactors at the Lee site near Gaffney, S.C. The NRC certified the AP1000 for U.S. use in December 2011. More information on the design's certification review is available on the NRC [website](#).

The FEIS is available on the NRC [website](#). The NRC staff, in cooperation with the Corps, started the environmental review in March 2008 by gathering community input on what issues should be considered. The agencies gathered additional community comments in June 2010 and issued a draft EIS in December 2011. The agencies met with the local community again in January 2012 for additional comments.

The three-volume FEIS and Reader's Guide are also available via the NRC's electronic document database, [ADAMS](#), under accession numbers [ML13352A015](#) (the guide), [ML13340A005](#), [ML13340A006](#), and [ML13340A007](#). The guide provides the public a general-language explanation of the proposed action and its potential environmental impacts, with computer hyperlinks to sections in the FEIS that can provide detailed analyses. In addition, a copy of the FEIS will be available for public inspection at the Cherokee County Library, located at 300 E. Rutledge Ave. in Gaffney.