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Consideration of Environmental Impacts on Temporary Storage of Spent Fuel After Cessation of Reactor Operation

Comment On: NRC-2012-0246-0456

Waste Confidence - Continued Storage of Spent Nuclear Fuel; Extension of Comment Period

Document: NRC-2012-0246-DRAFT-1165

Comment on FR Doc # 2013-26726

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General Comment

Dr. Richard Sauerheber

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I am concerned about the thought of storing nuclear fission waste material indefinitely at San Onofre, CA, The reactor is no longer to be used, and the stored waste is just that, waste with no functional purpose. It must be constantly monitored. The material is within 5 miles of populated neighborhoods who have already been exposed to gaseous emitted radioisotopes for the duration of the operation of the former facility and have contaminated groundwater from the tritium water emissions that have been ongoing here.

My understanding is this high burn-up fuel is going to be stored in dry casks for decades to come at San Onofre. But this has never been done before and thus is an ongoing experiment. This puts the city at an unnecessary risk. We have opposed the presence of this plutonium generating facility since before it was ever constructed, and now we are expected to accept its waste indefinitely anyway. The land on which the plant sits is useless because of this. The risk of even a small scale hydrogen gas explosion or fire from electrolysis of any moisture that ever gains entry into the casks is unacceptable. The material needs to be placed in a safer facility a substantial distance from populated areas, a substantial distance from earthquake faults, and a substantial distance from any shoreline.

A military style method, as used by the Defense Department for decommissioned nuclear bomb waste in New Mexico deep caverns, is a type of storage that this material needs. Where or how this can be achieved without unnecessary risk I cannot say. But the idea that no attempt will be made to pursue that, and instead it will sit near the city of San Clemente for scores of years is not right.

We need to again become a green, organic Nation. By correcting this, cleaning the land in San Onofre and figuring out how to store the waste away from a population center or water source, is precisely how this return to a clean and well kept country begins.

Thank you for your consideration,

Richard Sauerheber, Ph.D.