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Title: Draft Environmental Impact Statement
for the Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant
Afternoon Session

Docket Number: 52-039

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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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PUBLIC MEETING

Regarding the
Draft Environmental Impact Statement
for the Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant
Combined License Application
Afternoon Session

+ + + + +

Docket No: 52-039

+ + + + +

Thursday, June 4, 2015

3:00 p.m.

+ + + + +

Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania

NRC STAFF PRESENT:

Francis Cameron, Meeting Facilitator

Jennifer Dixon-Herrity, NRC, Branch Chief

Tomeka Terry, NRC, Environmental Project Manager

Wade Chandler, USACE-Baltimore District Section Chief

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P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

(3:00 p.m.)

MR. CAMERON: Good afternoon, everyone.

My name is Chip Cameron, and it's my pleasure to serve as your facilitator for today's meeting. And our topic today is a draft environmental impact statement that the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission has prepared as part of its evaluation on a license application to build and operate a new reactor in Berwick. And the application was submitted by -- by the company, PPL Bell Bend. And I should note that as of June 1st, the company has been renamed Talen Energy, I believe, but the NRC in their presentations today are going to refer to it as PPL.

And we're going to try to not use many acronyms today; the two that you will hear are NRC for Nuclear Regulatory Commission and EIS for environmental impact statement. And the environmental impact statement is one of the primary parts of the NRC's decision making on whether they can grant the license to build and operate the new plant.

The other part of the NRC's evaluation is something called a safety evaluation report. And that is an evaluation of whether the license application meets all the NRC's safety requirements.

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1 Now, a footnote at this point is that the
2 NRC safety's evaluation is on hold at this point because
3 the design certification for the particular reactor
4 design that PPL wants to use at the site has been
5 suspended at this point.

6 And I know that a lot of you have an
7 interest in the timeline for when all this might happen,
8 assuming that the NRC is going to grant the license,
9 but the best people to talk to about the timeline are
10 the people from PPL; and I just wanted to introduce
11 Rocky Sgarro is back here, Rocky? And we have Todd
12 Martin also, both of them from PPL, slash, Talen Energy.
13 If you have questions about the timing of the project,
14 please talk to them after the meeting. But I wanted to
15 let you know they're here and they're -- they're willing
16 to answer questions about timing or whatever else you
17 might have -- might have for them.

18 What I want to do is spend a couple minutes
19 on the meeting process for today so that you know what
20 to expect, and I'd like to talk about the objectives
21 for the meeting, the format for the meeting, some simple
22 ground rules so that we can have a productive meeting,
23 and also introduce the staff, not only from the NRC but
24 also from the Army Corps of Engineers.

25 The Corps of Engineers is what's called a

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1 cooperating agency in the preparation of this EIS. And
2 the Corps has separate permitting responsibilities
3 separate from the NRC's permitting licensing
4 responsibilities. And in a few minutes you're going to
5 hear from Wade Chandler from the Corps, he's the Chief
6 of the Pennsylvania Section of the Corps's Baltimore
7 District, and Wade is right here.

8 And we also have Amy Elliott, who is the
9 Project Manager for the Corps on this particular
10 license application.

11 But you'll be hearing from Wade in a
12 minute.

13 And in terms of objectives, we want to make
14 sure that the NRC and the Corps give you a clear
15 explanation of the process and what's in the draft
16 environmental impact statement, and I want to emphasize
17 that word draft. Okay, there's not going to be a final
18 environmental impact statement or any use of the
19 environmental impact statement in the NRC or Corps
20 decision-making process until they evaluate all of the
21 public comments on this draft EIS. That includes
22 comments today at this meeting, comments tonight at
23 tonight's meeting, and written comments.

24 The NRC and the Corps are asking for
25 written comments on the draft EIS, and Tomeka Terry is

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1 right here. Tomeka is the NRC's Environmental Project
2 Manager for this license application. In a few minutes
3 Tomeka is going to explain how you submit written
4 comments. And feel free, even if you comment today at
5 the meeting, to submit written comments also.
6 Comments made today at the meeting will carry the same
7 weight as a written comment.

8 The second objective is for the Corps and
9 the NRC to listen to your comments.

10 And format for the meeting, we're going to
11 have some brief presentations, and I'll introduce the
12 speakers in a minute. Then we'll have a short period
13 of time for some clarifying questions on the process
14 so that you can understand the process, and then we'll
15 go to public comment. And there are yellow cards out
16 at the front desk if you want to comment. If you could
17 fill one of those out, then we'll know that you want
18 to comment. And I'm going to ask you to come up to the
19 podium to -- to talk to everybody, give us your
20 particular comments.

21 In terms of ground rules, I would just ask
22 you all to wait until all of the presentations are done
23 so that you get the whole picture before you want to
24 ask questions on the process. And when we get to the
25 question period, if you have one just raise your hand,

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1 and I'm going to bring you this cordless microphone,
2 and if you could introduce yourself to us.

3 And I would just ask that only one person
4 speak at a time because we want to give our full
5 attention to whomever has the floor at the moment but
6 we also want to get what I call a clean transcript. Ruth
7 is our court reporter. She's taking a transcript of the
8 meeting today, and that's going to be your record, that
9 will be available publicly, your record of what
10 transpired today. And it will be the NRC record. And
11 as I said, these will be considered as formal comments
12 on the EIS.

13 I would ask you to be brief in your
14 comments. I don't think that we're going to have any
15 time pressure today, so I'm not setting a time limit.
16 I'm going to let that to your discretion when you come
17 up to talk.

18 And I want to emphasize, the NRC staff is
19 not going to be responding to any comments that you give
20 today. Okay. Or responding to any questions that you
21 might ask when you're up here commenting. But they will
22 be listening carefully, and they will consider those
23 comments and questions when they prepare the final
24 environmental impact statement.

25 I also know you may have broader concerns

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1 than the environmental review on this license
2 application; for example, questions about the -- the
3 reactors, present reactors, at the Susquehanna site.
4 We do have Jeff Whited, Jeff is in the back of the room,
5 he's from the NRC's Office of Nuclear Reactor
6 Regulation at headquarters in Rockville. And if you
7 want to know anything about the existing reactors,
8 please see Jeff after the meeting.

9 And I also want you to know that on June
10 11th, there is going to be what's called the annual
11 assessment meeting for those reactors. And it's going
12 to be at the Susquehanna Information Center that's at
13 634 Salem Boulevard in Berwick. So you'll have an
14 opportunity to find out as much as you want about the
15 existing reactors at that June 11th meeting. And as I
16 said, see Jeff to talk more about that.

17 And finally, final ground rule is I would
18 just ask you to be courteous, for all of us to be
19 courteous to each other. You may hear opinions that
20 differ from your own today. But just please respect the
21 person who is giving that opinion.

22 In terms of our speakers, we're going to
23 start out with Jennifer Dixon-Herrity, who's right
24 here. And Jennifer is the Chief of the Environmental
25 Project Branch in the Office of New Reactors at the NRC

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1 headquarters in Rockville. She is going to give you a
2 welcome, and then we're going to go to Tomeka Terry,
3 the NRC Project Manager, who's going to discuss why
4 we're here, a little bit about the license application.
5 Then we're going to go to Wade, Wade Chandler from the
6 Corps of Engineers, who's going to tell you about the
7 Corps. And then we'll come back to Tomeka, who's going
8 to tell you about some of the findings in the draft
9 environmental impact statement.

10 I also want to introduce Peggy
11 Reichenbach. Peggy is right here, and she is a member
12 of Congressman Barletta's staff. And I just wanted you
13 to know that the congressman is -- is monitoring this
14 and taking an interest in this, and she's here also.

15 And with that, Jennifer, do you want to
16 start us off?

17 MS. DIXON-HERRITY: Good afternoon, and
18 welcome to today's public meeting. As Chip indicated,
19 we're here to talk about the Bell Bend Nuclear Power
20 Plant draft environmental impact statement that was
21 published in April of 2015.

22 The reason we meet with the public to
23 collect comments is to give you a chance to tell us of
24 any concerns that you have about the draft
25 environmental impact statement that we've written and

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1 to give you a chance to tell us if we mischaracterized
2 anything. We want to make sure that we have an accurate
3 document.

4 Through this meeting and through the
5 different methods that Tomeka's going to talk about,
6 we collect all the comments, and we resolve them before
7 we publish the final environmental impact statement.
8 We expect that to occur about this time next year.
9 Resolution will be included in Appendix E of the final
10 environmental impact statement.

11 Next slide, please.

12 This is going to show you our agenda.
13 We're going to start, as Chip has already gone over,
14 Tomeka's going to give us a brief summary of the review
15 process and the schedule. Wade will talk about the role
16 that the Corps has had in the review. Tomeka's going
17 to follow that with an overview on the outcome of our
18 environmental review and let you know how you can get
19 other versions or tell other people how to find the
20 draft environmental impact statement. She'll also let
21 you know how to provide additional comments. If you get
22 home today and you find that you had additional
23 information that you wanted to pass on, this isn't your
24 only opportunity; you can send us comments in writing
25 or you can send them via email.

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1 We'll answer some questions, as Chip
2 indicated, but our main goal this evening is to -- or
3 today is to collect your comments to improve the quality
4 of our environmental impact statement for the Bell Bend
5 project.

6 So again, thank you very much for coming
7 today. And we look forward to having a great meeting.
8 Tomeka's going to start the presentation.

9 MS. TERRY: Thank you, Jennifer.

10 I also want to thank all of you for taking
11 the time to be with us today. My name is Tomeka Terry,
12 and I am the Environmental Project Manager for the
13 environmental review for the proposed Bell Bend site.

14 Since it has been several years since we
15 were here for the public scoping meeting, I want to take
16 a few moments to talk about the combined license
17 application as submitted by PPL.

18 In October 2008, PPL submitted an
19 application to NRC for one new nuclear unit at the Bell
20 Bend site for a combined license, or COL. A combined
21 license, if granted, would be authorization to
22 construct and operate one nuclear unit on the Bell Bend
23 site which is adjacent to the existing Susquehanna
24 Steam Electric Station.

25 For the Bell Bend Nuclear Power Plant

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1 combined license application, NRC is conducting two
2 reviews at the same time; a safety review and an
3 environmental review. The safety review will result in
4 a safety evaluation report in which the staff will
5 determine whether or not the reactor design as chosen
6 by PPL built at this site meets our safety requirements.

7 Please note: An NRC decision cannot occur
8 on the combined license application until both the
9 safety and environmental review are complete.

10 But today, the primary focus of this
11 meeting is to gather comments on the NRC Bell Bend draft
12 environmental impact statement for the environmental
13 review.

14 Next slide.

15 NRC is the lead Federal agency that has
16 partnered with U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Baltimore
17 District as a cooperating agency. In addition, the
18 Corps plans to utilize some of the information in the
19 draft EIS in its review of a Department of Army permit
20 application submitted by PPL.

21 In a few moments, Mr. Wade Chandler,
22 Section Chief of Regulatory Branch from the U.S. Army
23 Corps of Engineers, is going to talk to us about the
24 Corps environmental review of the proposed project.

25 At this time, before I get into the

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1 environmental review process and the permanent
2 analysis of the environmental impact, Wade Chandler is
3 going to come up and talk about the Corps environmental
4 review process.

5 Wade.

6 MR. CHANDLER: Thank you.

7 Good afternoon. My name is Wade Chandler,
8 and I am the Pennsylvania Section Chief for the Army
9 Corps of Engineers, Baltimore District. Also with me
10 is Amy Elliott; she is the Project Manager who's in
11 charge of evaluating the permit application for the
12 proposed project on behalf of the Corps. We want to
13 welcome you to the joint U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
14 public hearing and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission
15 public meeting for the proposed Bell Bend Power Plant
16 project.

17 It is the responsibility of my office to
18 evaluate applications for Department of the Army
19 authorization for work in navigable waters of the
20 United States and waters of the United States including
21 jurisdictional wetlands. Our authority comes from
22 Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 and
23 Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

24 At this time no decision has been made
25 regarding whether or not a Department of Army permit

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1 will be issued for the proposed project.

2 The purpose of today's hearing is to inform
3 you of the proposed project and allow you the
4 opportunity to provide comments to be considered in the
5 Corps's public interest review of the proposed project.
6 A Federal public hearing is a formal process used to
7 gather information that otherwise would not be
8 available during the public notice comment period. Your
9 comments will be included and addressed in the
10 environmental impact statement for the project, and
11 your comments are important in the preparation of this
12 document and our evaluation of the permit application.

13 The subject project is being proposed by
14 Talen Nuclear Development, LLC, formerly PPL Nuclear
15 Development, LLC, referenced as the Bell Bend Nuclear
16 Power Plant project. The project as proposed is to
17 construct a new nuclear power plant at a site adjacent
18 to the existing Susquehanna Steam Electric Station.
19 Of the approximate 2,055-acre site, approximately 961
20 acres would be altered to support construction and
21 operation of the proposed facility. Site preparation
22 and construction work will include but not be limited
23 to construction access, temporary laydown areas,
24 switch yard expansion, power block, cooling towers,
25 transmission lines, and river dredging for intake and

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1 discharge structures.

2 Proposed project impacts to navigable
3 waters of the United States are located in the North
4 Branch Susquehanna River. Impacts to waters of the
5 United States including jurisdictional wetlands are
6 located in the North Branch Susquehanna River, Walker
7 Run, and an unnamed tributary to Walker Run, all located
8 near Berwick, Luzerne County, Pennsylvania.

9 As proposed, construction of the Bell Bend
10 facility would result in the following impacts:

11 Approximately 11.15 acres of wetland
12 impact, of which 1.25 acres will be a permanent impact;
13 9 acres would be a permanent wetland type conversion;
14 and nine-tenths of an acre would be a temporary impact;
15 1,443 linear feet of temporary stream impact is
16 proposed; and 742 linear feet of permanent stream
17 impact. North Branch Susquehanna River, as a result
18 of the river dredging, will total approximately 1.18
19 acres.

20 The decision of whether or not to issue a
21 permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable
22 impacts, including cumulative impacts of the proposed
23 activity on the public interest, and compliance with
24 the Clean Water Act Section 404(b)1 guidelines. That
25 decision will reflect the national concern for both the

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1 protection and utilization of important resources. The
2 benefits which may be expected to accrue from the
3 proposal will be balanced against its reasonable
4 foreseeable detriments.

5 All factors that may be relevant to the
6 proposal were considered. Among these are
7 conservation, economics, aesthetics, general
8 environmental concerns, wetlands, cultural values,
9 fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, accretion,
10 recreation, water supply and conservation, water and
11 air quality, threatened and endangered species, energy
12 needs, food and fiber production, safety,
13 environmental justice, cumulative impacts, and the
14 general needs and welfare of the public.

15 In compliance with the National
16 Environmental Policy Act, the Corps is a cooperating
17 agency in the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's
18 preparation of an environmental impact statement for
19 the proposed project.

20 The Corps comment period for this hearing
21 and for public comment extends to July 1st, 2015.
22 Comments received tonight and throughout the comment
23 period will be considered by the Corps as we reach a
24 permit decision. Your testimony this afternoon will be
25 recorded, and we will prepare a verbatim record of

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1 today's hearing. If you'd like to receive a copy of the
2 transcript of these proceedings, please provide us with
3 your information on the attendance record at the
4 registration table. Once we have a verbatim record, we
5 will contact you and let you know the associated cost
6 and how we can provide a copy. All comments made at this
7 proceeding will be made a part of the hearing record.

8 Thank you.

9 We've got kind of a little bit of a power
10 point.

11 As far as our role, as mentioned here
12 today, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission is considered
13 the lead Federal agency for Section 7 of the Endangered
14 Species Act, compliance for the overall project.

15 The Corps of Engineers is a cooperating
16 agency. We are dealing with Section 106 of the National
17 Historic Preservation Act. As part of the Corps permit
18 application evaluation, we do deal with the National
19 Environmental Policy Act requirements, the NEPA Act.
20 That is why we are a cooperating agency with the Nuclear
21 Regulatory Commission in this case.

22 We also have a public interest review that
23 we are currently undergoing, and I did mention also the
24 404(b)1 guidelines that we were evaluating during our
25 permit review process.

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1 The Corps permit evaluation and decision,
2 the Corps's record of decision will make reference to
3 the final EIS as issued and any additional information
4 necessary to support compliance with regulations and
5 permit process. Decision, excuse me.

6 As far as our review, we received the
7 application June of 2011.

8 The second bullet there gives you the Corps
9 file number, the Corps application number for the
10 project.

11 There is a link here provided, this is
12 where our public notice was when we announced the
13 project. And there is also a second public notice out
14 also with regard to the public hearing today.

15 The Corps public -- or point of contact,
16 as I mentioned, is Amy Elliott. Her contact information
17 is there. And if you'd also like further information
18 about the Corps regulatory program, we've provided a
19 link.

20 So I believe with that I'll turn it back
21 over to Tomeka.

22 MS. TERRY: This slide is a high level
23 overview of the environmental review process. This is
24 a step-wise approach on how we meet our responsibility
25 under the National Environmental Policy Act, or NEPA.

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1 The review process started in 2008, and the
2 public scoping period ran from January 2009 to March
3 2009. Then a public scoping meeting was held on January
4 the 6th, 2009. Also, a 30-day supplemental public
5 scoping period ran from June 2012 into July 2012 in
6 regarding PPL's revised site layout that includes a
7 relocation -- relocated power block footprint
8 developed to avoid wetland impacts on the building
9 site.

10 Input provided during the scoping period
11 is summarized in Appendix D of the draft EIS.

12 Also during this time we conducted site
13 audits, visits to alternative sites, and we met with
14 officials from Federal, tribal, and state agencies,
15 local agencies. We carried out independent analyses and
16 evaluations based on information provided to us by the
17 applicant and on information sources that we developed.
18 All these steps led to the publication of the draft EIS,
19 which occurred April the 17th, 2015.

20 Currently we are in the comment period for
21 the draft EIS, seeking public comments.

22 The 75-day comment period began on April
23 the 24th and remains open until July the 7th. Once the
24 comment period is over, the staff will start processing
25 all the comments that were received on the draft EIS.

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1 That includes anything you want to share with us today.

2 Please note: Any comments you share with
3 us today will be considered in the same manner
4 weight -- manner as a comment received by letter or
5 email. All comments carry the same weight.

6 In addition, comments and responses on the
7 draft EIS will be included in Appendix E of the final
8 EIS so that you can be aware of how the review team
9 considered your comments.

10 Based on the comments we receive, we will
11 adjust our analysis as needed for the final EIS. We
12 expect to issue the final EIS in April 2016.

13 Next slide, please.

14 Let's take a look at the organization of
15 the draft EIS. This is the table of contents.

16 We start off in chapters 1 through 3 by
17 describing the current environmental setting and the
18 proposed project. Then we discuss the results of our
19 analysis of impacts for the various phases of the
20 project in chapters 4 through 7.

21 We assess the need for power in chapter 8,
22 as well as the alternatives to the proposed project in
23 chapter 9.

24 In chapter 10 we conclude the EIS with the
25 NRC staff's preliminary recommendation to the

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1 Commission.

2 Finally, we have appendices which mainly
3 include detailed information and materials which
4 support the environmental review.

5 Next slide.

6 To prepare the EIS, we assembled a team
7 with backgrounds in the necessary technical
8 disciplines. NRC contracted with Pacific Northwest
9 National Lab, PNNL, and Numark to assist in preparing
10 the EIS. Also, the Corps also provided technical
11 expertise in developing the EIS.

12 This slide shows most of the resource areas
13 that were considered in the EIS. Many of these staff
14 expertise have been available to you during the
15 informal open house and are here today to receive your
16 comments. In the interest of time, I will only present
17 the results of evaluation to some of these resource
18 areas.

19 Next page. Next slide, sorry.

20 The NRC have established three impact
21 category levels, small, moderate, and large, to help
22 explain the effects of the project in consistent terms
23 for each resource area. As the team was developing its
24 analysis, the review team members would ask if the
25 effects are minor or not even detected, then it will

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1 be categorized as a small effect. If the effects was
2 sufficient to noticeably alter but not destabilize
3 important attributes of the resource, then it would be
4 moderate effect. Or if the effect was sufficient to
5 destabilize important attributes of the resource, then
6 it would be a large effect.

7 So throughout our EIS, for each technical
8 area, like the ones we saw in the previous slide, the
9 team would develop its analysis and then assign a level
10 of small, moderate, or large impact to the impact.

11 Next slide, please.

12 Now we get into more details about some of
13 the technical areas. First is water resource. Our
14 evaluation considered impact of construction and
15 operating Bell Bend for both surface water and
16 groundwater resources. This includes impact on water
17 use and water quality.

18 PPL's application indicated surface water
19 would not be used during building activity of the
20 proposed site. During operation of the proposed Bell
21 Bend unit, the Susquehanna River would be the source
22 of makeup water for normal plant operations. Therefore,
23 our evaluation concluded the impacts to surface water
24 use and surface water quality during building and
25 operations would be small.

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1 No on-site groundwater would be withdrawn
2 for operational use of the proposed Bell Bend unit. The
3 Susquehanna River Basin Commission will require
4 mitigation in the form of releases from upstream source
5 to -- sorry, source to compensate for the Bell Bend
6 consumptive water use during low flow conditions.

7 Next slide.

8 Next is ecology impact. Ecology impacts.
9 The review team evaluated the impacts of ecology that
10 either exist or can exist on the Bell Bend site, in the
11 surrounding areas, or nearby water bodies. Our
12 evaluation covered species such as the northern cricket
13 frog, the northern long-eared bat, and the brown trout.
14 The staff con -- the staff -- excuse me, the staff
15 consulted with other agencies including Fish and
16 Wildlife, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission,
17 Pennsylvania Game Commission, and other state
18 agencies.

19 The review team concluded that terrestrial
20 ecol -- terrestrial ecology impacts would be moderate
21 during building activities due to disturbance of
22 wetlands, forests, and other terrestrial habitats on
23 the Bell Bend site and associated impact on wildlife
24 such as long-eared bat or the northern cricket frog.

25 The potential impacts of operating the

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1 proposed Bell Bend and associated cooling system,
2 including consumptive water use mitigation, on upland
3 and shoreline vegetation, birds, and mammals,
4 including important species and habitats, are likely
5 to be minor. Therefore, the review team concluded the
6 impacts from operation of the proposed Bell Bend site
7 on the terrestrial resources would be small.

8 The review team concluded that the aquatic
9 ecology impacts would be small during both building
10 activities and operation. The potential for small
11 aquatic ecology impact during building activities
12 would involve some unavoidable permanent impacts to
13 wetlands and streams that would require mitigation. A
14 portion of this mitigation would include a stream and
15 a flow plan -- and flood plan restoration projects on
16 two reaches of Walker Run. This would improve the local
17 hydrology and provide a high quality habitat for brown
18 trout. PPL would need to comply with mitigation
19 measures.

20 The operational impacts from the river
21 water intake system would be minor with the use of
22 closed cycle cooling and dual low travel screens, with
23 low through screen intake velocity. The impact of
24 aquatic resource and habitat in the Susquehanna River
25 due to discharge could result in thermal, chemical, or

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1 physical effects, as well as hydrology change, but this
2 impact was found to be minor.

3 Next slide, please.

4 As part of the NRC analysis, we evaluated
5 potential doses of workers during construction, doses
6 to members of the public, and the plant workers during
7 operation, and dosage received by wildlife. NRC
8 provided further guidelines that nuclear power plant
9 operators are expected to maintain doses to the public
10 as low as reasonably achievable by limiting liquid and
11 gaseous release concentrations.

12 NRC regulation limits the whole body dose
13 to a member of the public from both liquid and gaseous
14 effluent releases not to exceed around 8 MREM per year
15 from a nuclear power plant. NRC regulations also
16 implement U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
17 standards designed to limit individual whole body doses
18 from the entire fuel cycle not to exceed 25 MREM per
19 year.

20 To put the above radiation exposure into
21 perspective, the average dose to an individual in the
22 United States from natural background sources, cosmic
23 radiation, naturally occurring radioactive material in
24 the soil, and building materials is around 310 MREM per
25 year. NRC regulated limit is less than 10 percent of

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1 the total from natural background resource.

2 The impacts on all three groups, doses to
3 a member of the public, plant workers, and wildlife,
4 would be small, since PPL must comply with stringent
5 NRC and EPA regulatory limits.

6 Next slide, please.

7 In chapter 9 the review team evaluated
8 energy alternative sources, alternative sites, and
9 alternative system designs, as well as no action
10 alternatives.

11 In the alternative energy analysis, the
12 review team evaluated generations of base load power,
13 which is when the power is continuously producing 24
14 hours a day, 7 days a week. For base load power, we
15 examined sources such as coal, natural gas, and
16 combination sources such as natural gas, solar, wind,
17 biomass, and additional conservation in demand
18 side -- side management program. The review team
19 determined that none of these feasible base load
20 energies would be environmentally preferable.

21 As stated, conservation demand side
22 management, solar, and wind were also considered but
23 could not individually meet the need for base loading
24 power.

25 The review team also compared the proposed

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1 Bell Bend site to three other alternative sites in
2 Pennsylvania. This includes sites in Montour,
3 Humboldt, and Seedco. The NRC staff determined that
4 none of these alternative sites would be
5 environmentally preferable to Bell Bend site.

6 Next slide, please.

7 In chapter 10 of the EIS, the NRC made a
8 preliminary recommendation to the Commission that the
9 COL should be issued. This recommendation was based on
10 the mostly small to moderate environmental impacts,
11 mitigation measures, and the NRC staff's conclusion
12 that no alternative sites or alternative base load
13 energy sources would be environmentally preferable.
14 The recommendation is considered preliminary until we
15 evaluate your comments on the draft EIS.

16 In addition, this recommendation is for
17 the environmental review only. As mentioned at the
18 beginning of this presentation, there are two
19 concurrent NRC reviews associated with the combined
20 license application; an environmental review and a
21 safety review.

22 Next slide, please.

23 If you don't already have a copy and want
24 to take a look at the draft EIS, we have CDs available
25 in the back of the readers guide out in the lobby. Or

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1 you can call me or Pat Vokoun to request a copy, our
2 contact information provided on our slides, on the
3 slides. Also, Amy Elliott's information on the slide
4 in case you need to contact her as well. You can also
5 find it online at the NRC website page provided on the
6 slide. Or you can go to the local library that is listed
7 on the slides. They have a hard and electronic copy
8 of the draft EIS on file.

9 Next slide, please.

10 As stated earlier, the main purpose of
11 today's meeting is to listen to you to gather your
12 comments on the draft EIS. Many of you have already
13 signed up to speak during today's meeting. However, if
14 you think of something later and want to submit your
15 comments, there are several other ways to make your
16 comments before the July 7 deadline. First, you can
17 hand write a comment and mail it in. In addition, you
18 can submit electronic email to the email address, which
19 is BBNP.COLEIS@nrc.gov, or submit it through the
20 website regulatory -- regulations.gov.

21 Please note the comment period of the draft
22 EIS is open until July the 7th.

23 And with that, that concludes my
24 presentation. I appreciate your time today. We're
25 looking forward to hearing your comments.

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1 I'll turn it back over to you.

2 MR. CAMERON: Thank you very much, Tomeka.

3 Tomeka mentioned her colleague,
4 Environmental Project Manager Pat Vokoun, I just wanted
5 to introduce her back here.

6 We have time for some -- some clarifying
7 questions, and I wondered, does anybody have a question
8 before we go to the comments?

9 (No response)

10 MR. CAMERON: Okay. Thank you, Tomeka. And
11 Jennifer and Wade.

12 Our first commenter, and, I think maybe we
13 should turn the lights up so there's light at the
14 podium. Our first commenter is Eric Epstein from TMI
15 Alert.

16 Eric, would you like to come up? Come up
17 and talk to us?

18 Can you see?

19 MR. EPSTEIN: Yeah, I can see, there's a
20 police officer in the back. Looks like Mace? Don't Tas
21 me, Bro.

22 MR. CAMERON: All right.

23 MR. EPSTEIN: Can you hear me back there?
24 That's what's important.

25 I first want to begin, if you want, up in

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1 the seat I have extensive comments in the folder, we
2 have extra copies. And then next to the seat are our
3 comments that are not -- that don't include our expert
4 testimony.

5 Also, if you go to our website, our
6 comments are on the web. We've been tracking -- well,
7 the testimony's 22 pages today, and our expert
8 testimony is 23 pages.

9 I'm -- I'm going to begin out just to chide
10 whoever organized this just a little. Today is also
11 the SRBC quarterly meeting in Baltimore. It seems we
12 could have found a better date to hold the meeting than
13 on the date that conflicts with some of the major
14 stakeholders, especially since that meeting's taking
15 place in Baltimore.

16 I would also note as being involved with
17 this process that I would disagree that our concerns
18 or questions are addressed. I've been doing this for
19 over 30 years, and I don't remember the last time I
20 testified at the NRC proceeding where my concerns have
21 been addressed. They've been answered, and they usually
22 refer to an index in the back of a book that exists near
23 a place that's hard to find, so. I hope you're here to
24 listen, but more importantly to me I hope you're here
25 to address concerns, because none of our concerns which

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1 we've raised throughout the process in 2008 have been
2 addressed.

3 And I hate to get off on such a wrong note.
4 But I just got to be honest with you. We monitor three
5 nuclear power plants; Susquehanna 1 and 2, Three Mile
6 Island 1 and 2; Three Mile Island 2 is still not
7 decommissioned; and we also monitor Peach Bottom 1,
8 Peach Bottom 2, Peach Bottom 3; Peach Bottom 3 is not
9 decommissioned. So we focus solely on nuclear power
10 plants on the Susquehanna River.

11 I am not going to read my entire testimony,
12 although I'm sure you would find it riveting. Instead
13 what I'm going to do is read the executive summary,
14 which is what most people will likely read anyway.

15 And just a little history, because
16 this -- this whole process to me is puzzling. I don't
17 think this plant's ever going to be built. I think
18 today's a circus, I think it's a farce. And I'll tell
19 you why. And I don't think there's a lot -- there's a
20 lot of people in the industry wondering what the hell
21 we're doing here.

22 PPL submitted the application on October
23 10th, 2008 for the construction of Bell Bend. It's my
24 understanding that they're a hundred percent owner, as
25 compared to Susquehanna Steam Electric Station in which

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1 they own 90 percent. 10 percent is owned by Allegheny
2 Electric Cooperative. I'm not aware that they know
3 that.

4 At any rate, the proposal calls for the use
5 of a single evolutionary power reactor, which is
6 interesting, because that reactor was renamed, it's
7 actually the European power reactor. The design has not
8 yet been approved. So we're talking today about a
9 plant that doesn't have a reactor. You'd think you'd
10 need one. I don't know if I'd buy a car without an
11 engine. That's me.

12 On September 7th, 2012 the NRC staff
13 informed PPL they did not have sufficient information
14 on the draft EIS sections regarding consumptive water
15 use. So there are RAIs, which are requests for
16 additional information, November 28th, 2012, February
17 19th, 2014 which we reviewed. There was an audit held
18 on March 17th, 2014. Frankly, I believe that -- and we
19 disagree vehemently with this, is there was a
20 conclusion reached by the Carnot before the NRC that
21 they could approve water use issues, which I think is
22 not only wrong but, man, borderlining on pushing the
23 truth.

24 The schedule's principally been impacted
25 by technical challenge but there is no resolution to

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1 consumptive water use, surface water withdrawals, or
2 a plan for compensatory measures. That's an issue we've
3 been litigating since the beginning. And frankly, I've
4 looked at PPL's applications, as we do at Peach Bottoms
5 for their EPU, or whatever. I can tell you right now
6 that was the worst application I've ever seen, straight
7 out. I don't know where it is, but that -- if it's SRBC,
8 but I doubt that in its current form that those plans
9 are going anywhere.

10 Now, apparently, from what I've received,
11 is on April 24th the NRC Army Corps issued a draft
12 environmental impact statement, and that was based,
13 apparently, on information they mostly garnered from
14 the NRC. Or from PPL.

15 I'll just come to the point. We happen to
16 think that the conclusions by both the NRC and the Army
17 Corps are fatally flawed. They're cursory, they border
18 on regulatory negligence. There is no approved
19 reactor design. Let's get that straight. There is no
20 presume -- there is no approved consumptive water use.
21 There ain't no money.

22 It's really hard to build a plant without
23 a reactor, without water, and without money.

24 That's where we're at right now. Frankly,
25 we will be filing a request for the Government

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1 Accountability Office to look into this process as
2 related to your slide number 12, slide number 13, and
3 also slide number 15.

4 Slide number 12 had to do with water use.
5 Again, I don't know how you would approve a draft EIS
6 when the SRBC has not granted water approval. The
7 ecological impact issue obviously should have
8 considered 316A, 316B, thermal impacts, and also the
9 impact of invasive species. Which it didn't do. Or
10 thermal pollution.

11 And your slide 15 is actually in conflict
12 with Pennsylvania law, flat out violates Act 129.

13 So we could continue to go down this road,
14 but it's very confusing for me, again, why we're even
15 here.

16 To get back to the reactor design that's
17 not approved, and just so we're clear here, which was
18 designed by AREVA, AREVA requested on February 25th,
19 AREVA, the people that produce the reactor design, that
20 they suspend the process. And that is despite receiving
21 almost 8 billion in Federal loan guarantees from the
22 U.S. Department of Energy, which I -- I happen to find
23 troubling.

24 Anybody who follows energy on a regular
25 basis knows that both AREVA and EDF are economically

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1 on their backs. And it's unlikely they're going to be
2 putting any more research into this. This is just the
3 reality of the situation. If you don't believe me, why
4 don't you put into Google tonight AREVA, EDF, and see
5 how many jobs they've cut and also see where the French
6 Government is. The French Government is now reducing
7 their dependency on nuclear power from 80 to 50.

8 The UniStar, which was supposed to be built
9 at Nine Mile Point, they've withdrawn the application.
10 Ameren has suspended their application for their EPR
11 in Missouri. PPL has suspended their application
12 likewise.

13 And again, I can't stress enough that I
14 find it very difficult to understand why we're here,
15 when the nuclear power plant that theoretically is
16 going to be built has no approved reactor design.

17 In terms of water; I looked at the
18 application, and again maybe I'm missing something. PPL
19 has never completed their final application for
20 consumptive water use, surface water withdrawals, or
21 provided an approved plan for compensatory measures.
22 Now, the plan they have is interesting and novel, not
23 reality, in my mind; it's a pro forma sketch that's not
24 even close to being in final format. In fact, during
25 low flows, which was mentioned today, water would have

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1 to come from upstream. And there's just not enough water
2 to accommodate the plant, and hopefully PPL is aware
3 that the regulatory protocol has changed. In
4 Pennsylvania we don't do money in lieu like we used to,
5 where if you didn't have the water you could just pay
6 a fee. We need the water. The times have changed.

7 Already we're talking about a plant which
8 is owned by PP and L that draws 40 million gallons of
9 water a day. And it returns the water to the river at
10 elevated temperatures, and most of it is evaporated.
11 As of May 26, 27 counties in the state were in drought,
12 including Luzerne. Well, nuclear power plants are
13 exempted from drought regulations. Got to wonder about
14 that.

15 If you look at the plant that's about to
16 be built, we're talking about 15 billion gallons a year.
17 15 billion. That's a lot of water, all right. 11 billion
18 will be vaporized, 4 billion will either be returned
19 into the river, heated, or superheated. You guys say
20 there's no impact, I believe there is. It would be nice
21 if you answered our questions.

22 There's no money. Here's what we're
23 looking at when it comes down to it, and I deal with
24 the budget on a regular basis. I'm coming from
25 Harrisburg, and anybody who lives here knows that we're

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1 probably not going to have a budget done on time. I don't
2 know where you think you're going to get the money from.

3 But in order to build a reactor, they
4 originally proposed they would need 80 percent of the
5 project to come from tax payers, 4.58 billion.
6 Apparently I'm living in a different world where I don't
7 know the politicians who are likely to give out that
8 kind of money. It's a loan, really doesn't have to be
9 paid back.

10 The real cost, if you look at the
11 experiments in Florida and Texas, is closer to about
12 15 billion. Actually I went on the website; I think PPL
13 has acknowledged that their plant which initially was
14 supposed to be 4.5 billion, we're at around 15, 15
15 billion right now. And this begs the question, and this
16 is what I always wanted to ask PPL: Forbes Magazine
17 said back in 2007 you were one of the best managed and
18 most profitable utilities. You paid out a hundred
19 eighty-one percent in dividend increases in the last
20 12 years. Pay for the plant yourself. It's America. It's
21 capitalism. It's a free market, baby. If you can't run
22 with the big dogs, don't get off the porch.

23 I mean I'm getting tired of someone, as
24 someone who looks at this issue, time and time again,
25 you guys are always coming looking for the money. Just

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1 to give you an example of what's happening right now
2 in Georgia, with people that are trying to build a
3 nuclear power plant, this is -- this is -- this is a
4 summary from last week. Georgia Power local nuclear
5 power plant will likely be deployed even further,
6 months behind the three-year delay.

7 So the first new plant we're building is
8 already three years behind.

9 A report by staff and engineers to Georgia
10 Public Service Commission -- by the way the rate payers
11 there were lucky, they got to pay for the plant ahead
12 of the plant ever generating electricity.

13 Okay. They extended the deadline for this
14 plant two to three more months. That costs about \$2
15 million a day, just so that you know what you're looking
16 forward to. This was going to be the first new reactor
17 which was supposed to begin operation in April 2016,
18 according to the company. With another to follow after.
19 Now the earliest that plant will open is 2019 and 2020.

20 So put etiology aside; put the fact you
21 don't have the water aside; put the fact you don't have
22 a license aside; this is a tremendous financial
23 undertaking. It's a lot of money. It's got to come from
24 somewhere. And the company is not going to provide the
25 money.

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1 Now, just to give you a sense of history,
2 anybody who knows me knows I'm a former college
3 professor, I think history's important. I think we
4 should have learned from the anthracite experience that
5 we had here. The waste that's here ain't going
6 anywhere. It's going to stay. It's going to be a legacy
7 issue. They build a new plant, the waste is going to
8 stay.

9 When they first came to us, and us being
10 the rate payers of Pennsylvania, said they wanted to
11 build their first nuclear power plant, they said the
12 cost would be 2.1 billion. The final cost was 4.1
13 billion. In 1997 and '98 I was part of the team that
14 negotiated a settlement, we bailed them out for 2.86
15 billion. 2.86 billion in stranded costs.

16 So it doesn't matter how you feel about
17 nuclear power; on this particular issue what matters
18 is who's going to wind up paying for a source that we
19 were originally promised was too cheap to meter.

20 We have three recommendations. The first
21 recommendation would be, and we submitted it to
22 actually respond to Arnie Gundersen's testimony, who
23 happens to be a nuclear engineer and an expert in the
24 field. We spent a lot of time, he spent a lot of time
25 outlining questions. The first time around both the

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1 Corps and the NRC evaded responding to the questions.

2 Number 2, we'd appreciate it if you would
3 respond to our questions that also have to deal with
4 aquatic impacts and also what happens to rusty pipes
5 and things of that nature as the plant ages, known as
6 aging management.

7 And we'd also ask you not to issue a final
8 environmental impact study until the Susquehanna River
9 Basin Commission settles whether or not they're going
10 to issue and support and approve PPL's applications for
11 mitigating measures, surface water withdrawals, and
12 consumptive use.

13 Finally, and I'll end here because I am
14 sure this was not the cheerleading speech you all
15 expected; it's real hard for me to get my arms around
16 this, but at the plants that we monitor, all those three
17 plants, Susquehanna, Three Mile Island, Peach Bottom,
18 empty into a river, the Susquehanna River, which
19 empties into the most productive estuary in North
20 America. It's known as the Chesapeake Bay. So it always
21 is disturbing to me when we do economic impacts and we
22 don't have a longitudinal view of what's getting
23 impacted. Whether it's water being diverted so people
24 can't farm, whether it's water being diverted so people
25 can't build homes, whether it's water being diverted

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1 for other and I believe sanitary and hygienic needs.

2 I still think the Achille heel here is the
3 nuclear waste. You know, if we're going to build another
4 plant, and I'm not really sure how much is at
5 Susquehanna now, I know they generate 60 metric tons
6 a year. The question I have is why are we building
7 another plant if we still haven't solved the issue of
8 where the current waste is going to go. I don't know
9 anybody that would buy a house and they would buy the
10 house and the builder would say look, you can flush for
11 30 years and then we'll put in a toilet. It just makes
12 no sense to me.

13 So that's my little advertisement for the
14 day. Sorry, Chip.

15 By the way, Chip's a great guy, I've known
16 him for a while. And I'm sure he will tell you this is
17 a lot mellower than doing Diablo Canyon or San Onofre.

18 MR. CAMERON: That's true.

19 MR. EPSTEIN: Thanks, Chip.

20 MR. CAMERON: All right, thank you. Thank
21 you, Eric.

22 Is there anybody else who wants to join us
23 up front to comment at all?

24 (No response)

25 MR. CAMERON: Okay. All right. We're going

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1 to be here for another meeting tonight. And Tomeka
2 explained how to submit written comments, if you want
3 to think about what you heard today and about what our
4 speaker, our commenter, has said.

5 And with that, Jennifer, are you ready to
6 close this out for this session?

7 MS. DIXON-HERRITY: I am.

8 Ladies and gentlemen, thank you for coming
9 this afternoon. We appreciate you taking the time to
10 review our document and to make us aware of any concerns
11 with the document and the project. It means a great deal
12 to us. We'll consider all the comments we heard and
13 any comments that are submitted to us in writing via
14 email. The more detail that you can give us, the easier
15 it will be for us to address them. We will do our best
16 to address all the comments we receive.

17 Our mission is to make sure that when
18 nuclear materials are used for commercial processes
19 that they're used safely, securely, and in an
20 environmentally appropriate manner. Our agency is led
21 by five presidentially appointed commissioners who are
22 approved by the Senate of the United States. Once our
23 review and the safety review are complete, we will make
24 our recommendations on licensing to those five
25 individuals, who will make the determination of whether

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1 or not a plant -- the plant should be licensed. We take
2 our role very seriously, and we can't do our jobs well
3 unless we hear from you and you keep us informed of
4 concerns in this area.

5 Thank you again for coming out and for
6 giving us this opportunity to meet with you. Good
7 afternoon, and have a safe trip home.

8 MR. CAMERON: And I just would point out
9 that the NRC staff and expert consultants are here, they
10 have white name tags on. Rocky and Todd from Talen are
11 here. Peggy may be here from the congressman's office.
12 Eric is here. You want to continue the conversation and
13 talk to people, please do so.

14 Thank you.

15 (Proceedings were adjourned at 4:02 p.m.)
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