



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

June 5, 2020

Ms. Annette Pope  
Director Organizational Effectiveness  
Westinghouse Columbia Fuel Fabrication  
5801 Bluff Road  
Hopkins, SC 29061-9121 USA

**SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S DETERMINATION TO  
PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE LICENSE  
RENEWAL REVIEW OF THE COLUMBIA FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY**

Dear Ms. Pope:

I am writing to inform you that the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) related to its review of Westinghouse Electric Company, LLC's (Westinghouse's) application to renew its license, SNM-1107.

As part of its review of the license renewal application, the NRC must conduct an environmental review under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and NRC's NEPA-implementing regulations in Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR Part 51, "Environmental Protection Regulations for Domestic Licensing and Related Regulatory Functions"). The NRC staff prepared a draft environmental assessment (EA), and on October 28, 2019, the NRC staff published a *Federal Register* notice (84 FR 57777) that initiated a public comment period on the draft EA (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System [ADAMS] Accession No. ML19228A278).

In response to an NRC request for additional information dated February 12, 2020 (ADAMS Accession No. ML20029D259), Westinghouse submitted an Interim Remedial Investigation Data Summary Report (ADAMS Accession No. ML20063P321). In the Report, Westinghouse concluded there are still data gaps that require additional investigation, and the source of Technetium-99 contamination is still unknown and required more investigation. In addition, the NRC staff noted that the Report identifies (a) a new plume of uranium contamination in onsite groundwater, the source of which is unknown; (b) the detection of volatile organic compounds in floodplain wells downgradient of the Sunset Lakes; (c) potentiometric data indicating groundwater flow west of the sanitary lagoon; and (d) indications of possible connectivity between the upper and lower surficial aquifer. There are no operational safety concerns associated with the new information or the NRC's decision to conduct an EIS. However, collectively, this new information reveals uncertainty related to the source and extent of contamination onsite and the potential future migration pathways offsite that preclude the NRC staff from making a finding of no significant impact through the EA. Accordingly, based on the NRC's independent evaluation of the information you submitted, the NRC will prepare an EIS per 10 CFR 51.31(a).

The NRC staff will develop a schedule for the environmental review based on the EIS process, and will provide that schedule by June 30, 2020. In completing the EIS, the NRC staff will use the analysis conducted to date to the fullest extent possible, but staff must comply with the requirements for completing an EIS, including scoping. The NRC staff will issue a *Federal Register* notice to announce its intent to prepare an EIS and initiate the scoping process per 10 CFR 51.26. The scoping process will include accepting written comments from the public and interested stakeholders on the scope of the EIS review for a 30-day comment period.

The NRC staff acknowledges Westinghouse's work to further characterize on-site contamination. This new data informed the NRC staff's decision-making. We appreciate the transparency used to complete this work. If you have any questions regarding the license renewal review, please contact Marilyn Diaz at 301- 415-7110, or via e-mail to [Marilyn.Diazmaldonado@nrc.gov](mailto:Marilyn.Diazmaldonado@nrc.gov).

In accordance with 10 CFR Section 2.390, "Public inspections, exemptions, requests for withholding," of the NRC's "Agency Rules of Practice and Procedure," a copy of this communication will be available electronically for public inspection in the NRC Public Document Room, or from the NRC's ADAMS. ADAMS is accessible from the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/readingrm/adams.html>.

Sincerely,



Jacob I. Zimmerman, Chief  
Fuel Facility Licensing Branch  
Division of Fuel Management  
Office of Nuclear Material Safety  
and Safeguards

Docket No. 70-1151  
License No. SNM-1107

cc: N. Parr, Westinghouse  
K. Taylor, SCDHEC  
[westinghouse\\_ff@listmgr.nrc.gov](mailto:westinghouse_ff@listmgr.nrc.gov)

SUBJECT: U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION'S DETERMINATION TO PREPARE AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE LICENSE RENEWAL REVIEW OF THE COLUMBIA FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY (DOCKET NUMBER: 70-1151)

DATED: June 5, 2020

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**ADAMS Accession Number: ML20150A289**

**\*via email**

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