

Diaz Toro, Diana

From: Diaz Toro, Diana
Sent: Friday, July 31, 2020 10:08 AM
To: EJohnson@scdah.sc.gov
Cc: KSchroer@scdah.sc.gov; Trefethen, Jean
Subject: Westinghouse Environmental Impact Statement Scoping Process Federal Register Notice
Attachments: Westinghouse EIS Scoping FRN.pdf

Good morning Mrs. Johnson,

I'm Diana Diaz-Toro, a Project Manager at the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC). The NRC is conducting an environmental review for the license renewal application from Westinghouse Electric Company, LLC (Westinghouse) for its Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility in Hopkins, South Carolina. My colleague, Jessie Quintero, had been leading this effort. While she is on a rotational assignment, I will be managing the environmental review efforts.

I am contacting you today to notify you of and invite you to participate in the NRC's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) scoping process for the Westinghouse project.

The NRC staff will be preparing an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the license renewal application from Westinghouse for its fuel fabrication facility. If the license renewal request is approved, the facility would continue making fuel assemblies for commercial nuclear power plants for an additional 40 years. The action being reviewed is the same considered for a 2018 draft environmental assessment (EA), on which the NRC and your office consulted.

On July 31, 2020, the NRC staff published a notice of intent, in the *Federal Register* ([85 FR 46193](#)), to prepare an EIS for Westinghouse's license renewal request and announced the beginning of the scoping process. The NRC is conducting the scoping process in accordance with section 51.29 of Title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR). The purpose of the scoping process is to determine the appropriate scope of the EIS, including significant environmental issues to be analyzed in depth, as well as those that should be eliminated from detailed study because they are peripheral or are not significant. After the close of the scoping comment period, the NRC staff will prepare a concise summary of its scoping process in accordance with 10 CFR 51.29(b). The scoping summary report will be sent to each participant in the scoping process for whom the staff has a physical or e-mail address.

The NRC staff is inviting the public, local, State, Tribal, and Federal government agencies to participate in the environmental scoping process by submitting written comments during the scoping comment period, which ends on August 31, 2020, via:

- Federal Rulemaking Web Site: Go to <https://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRC-2015-0039,
- E-mail comments to: WEC_CFFF_EIS.resource@nrc.gov, or
- Mail comments to: Office of Administration, Mail Stop: TWFN-7-A60M, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001.

Consultation History

Previously, the NRC staff consulted with the South Carolina State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO). On May 28, 2015, the SHPO concurred with the NRC's determination that no properties listed in or eligible for listing in the NRHP will be affected by the proposed action (ADAMS Accession No. [ML15161A537](#)). In July 2019, the NRC staff informed the SHPO of Westinghouse's additional site investigation activities, and requested the SHPO's concurrence on the NRC staff's determination that the 2015 no effects conclusion remained the same (ADAMS Accession No. [ML19219A242](#)). The NRC staff explained that Westinghouse would be conducting further investigation into water and soil contamination, including collecting lithographic samples and installing groundwater monitoring wells in previously undisturbed areas of the site. Installation of the wells would be short-term and involve minimal land disturbance; the wells would be sampled several times a year. Westinghouse's contractor would install the new groundwater wells and would follow procedures to avoid subsurface objects (e.g., human remains, underground utilities) and, thus, should be able to avoid digging in an area that might have remains or artifacts. Additionally, Westinghouse has a procedure in place to address inadvertent discoveries.

In October 2019, the NRC staff published the draft EA for Westinghouse's license renewal request for public review and comment. In November 2019, the SHPO provided comments to the NRC indicating that "Based on the description of the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and the identification of historic properties within the APE, our office concurs with the assessment that no properties listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places will be affected by this project." The SHPO also recommended that its "office be consulted for review and comment if any future expansion or additional ground disturbance in previously undisturbed areas is proposed," and provided additional technical comments on the draft EA (ADAMS Accession No. [ML19331A601](#)).

In March 2020, Westinghouse provided additional information to the NRC staff regarding its investigation into water and soil contamination. The new information revealed uncertainty about the source and extent of contamination onsite and the potential future migration pathways offsite, which precluded the NRC staff from making a finding of no significant impact or FONSI through the EA and, necessitated the NRC prepare an EIS in accordance with 10 CFR 51.31(a) (ADAMS Accession No. [ML20150A289](#)).

Next Steps

Preparation of an EIS is the next step in the NRC staff's environmental review process for the Westinghouse license renewal request and will include a discussion of NRC staff's historic and cultural resources effects determination. The EIS will also acknowledge and reflect the SHPO's input and comments on the draft EA. The proposed action has not changed, and Westinghouse continues to conduct investigation activities. Notwithstanding, the NRC staff finds that its previous no effects determination -no significant impacts to historic or cultural resources expected from continued operation of the facility - remains the same based on the same reasons discussed in the October 2019 draft EA. Once the draft EIS has been prepared, the NRC staff will publish it for public review and comment in accordance with 10 CFR 51.73.

As discussed above, comments on the scope of the EIS can be submitted through August 31, 2020. Additional information regarding the proposed action is publicly available in ADAMS, which can be accessed online at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. The ADAMS Accession Numbers have been provided for the documents referenced in this letter.

Should you need to discuss the information in this e-mail or any other matters related to this project, please reach out to me by phone at 301-415-0930 or email at diana.diaz-toro@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

Diana

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