

United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Office of Public Affairs
Washington, DC 20555
Phone 301-415-8200 Fax 301-415-2234
Internet:opa@nrc.gov

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NRC COMPLETES ITS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF APPLICATION TO RENEW OPERATING LICENSE FOR OCONEE NUCLEAR STATION

The Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff has concluded that the adverse environmental impacts of renewal of the operating licenses for Oconee Nuclear Station Units 1, 2, and 3 in Oconee County, South Carolina are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal for energy planning decision makers would be unreasonable.

These conclusions are spelled out in a newly published supplement specific to Oconee to the final generic environmental impact statement for license renewal.

NRC has had renewal of the Oconee licenses under consideration since Duke Energy, which operates the plants, filed an application in July 1998. Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant was issued for up to 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current operating licenses for Oconee will expire on February 6 and October 6, 2013, and July 19, 2014, for Units 1, 2, and 3, respectively. The environmental impact is a key element in the NRC staff's review of the application, which is also undergoing scrutiny in a number of technical areas.

The final environmental statement just issued is an Oconee-specific supplement to an existing document, "Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Plants," (NUREG-1437), which assesses the environmental effects associated with license renewal at any nuclear power plant site. In preparing the supplement, the NRC staff considered comments received on the draft supplement, issued in May. As part of that process, public meetings were held in July in Clemson, South Carolina.

The final Supplement 2 to NUREG 1437 is available for public inspection and reproduction at the NRC Public Document Room at the Gelman Building, 2120 L Street NW Washington, D.C. The document will be posted on the NRC Internet web page at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/NRC/NUREGS/SR1437/S2/index.html>

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