



NRC NEWS

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NRC SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR PRAIRIE ISLAND LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION

Nuclear Regulatory Commission staff will conduct public meetings on Wednesday, July 30, to solicit public comments on possible environmental impacts of 20 additional years of operation at the Prairie Island nuclear power plant, Units 1 and 2.

The Prairie Island Nuclear Generating Station has two pressurized water reactors, located 28 miles southeast of Minneapolis. The plant's operator, Nuclear Management Co., submitted its license renewal application April 15.

Two meetings will be held at the Red Wing Public Library, 225 East Ave., in Red Wing, Minn. The first session will run from 1:30 p.m. to 4:30 p.m., and the second session from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. Both sessions will follow the same agenda. An NRC "open house" will be held an hour prior to the start of each meeting to provide interested members of the public with an opportunity to talk informally with agency staff. However, formal comments must be expressed during the transcribed meetings.

Both sessions will start with an overview and an NRC staff presentation on the agency's review of license renewal applications, with special emphasis on the environmental review process. Following the presentation, audience members will be able to offer their comments on environmental issues they consider worthy of review as the agency reviews the Prairie Island application.

"There will be several opportunities for public participation during the course of our evaluation of the application. This is one such opportunity," said Rani Franovich, a Branch Chief in the NRC's Division of License Renewal. "All of the comments we receive will be considered as we move forward with our review."

Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years. This license term was selected on the basis of economic and anti-trust considerations, not technical limitations. The license may be renewed for an additional 20 years, provided that NRC requirements are met. The current operating

licenses for Prairie Island are due to expire on Aug. 9, 2013, for Unit 1 and Oct 29, 2014, for Unit 2.

The Prairie Island license renewal application is available on the NRC Web site at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/prairie-island.html>.

The environmental report for the Prairie Island application will be a supplement to an existing NRC document, “Generic Environmental Impact Statement for License Renewal of Nuclear Power Plants” (NUREG-1437), which assesses the scope and impact of environmental effects that would be associated with license renewal at any nuclear power plant site. The Prairie Island supplement will examine environmental impacts specific to the application and the locale.

The NRC staff will subsequently prepare a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) supplement for public comment and will hold public meetings at a future date to solicit comments. After consideration of comments on the draft report, the NRC will prepare a final EIS supplement.

Additional information on the license renewal process is available on the NRC’s web site at: <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/fact-sheets/license-renewal-bg.html> and <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html> .

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