impact. SNC concluded that the additional heat load to the Chattahoochee River associated with power uprate does not significantly impact the conclusions of the FES relative to thermal impact. Cooling tower makeup, which comes from the service water pond, has increased from 17,077 gallons per minute (gpm) to 18,093 gpm. This represents an approximate 1.6 percent increase over the FES value of 17,800 gpm. This corresponds to a increase in river water withdrawal for both units from 67,504 gpm to 69,536 gpm, which is bounded by the two-unit river water withdrawal of 90,000 gpm in the FES. Cooling tower evaporation has increased from 12,808 gpm to 13,570 gpm. This represents an approximate 20 percent increase over the FES value of 11,340 gpm and approximately a 6 percent increase over the present operating condition. The FES concluded that the potential for fogging associated with cooling tower operation was not significant and should merely augment the normal fogging situation by a relatively small amount. SNC has stated that studies conducted during the first year of operation confirmed this conclusion. No fogging problems have been noted to date and no significant impact associated with fogging is expected for the uprated condition. The staff expects that operation of the plant at uprated condition will result in only a minimal increase in the natural fog over that discussed in the FES. Cooling tower flowrate (692,000 gpm) does not change as a result of power uprate. However, the flowrate is approximately 9 percent higher than the FES value (635,000 gpm). This increase was a result of pump modifications to improve efficiency. Cooling tower drift, which is a function of flowrate, also does not change. SNC uses a chemical treatment program for the cooling towers in order to minimize microbial and fungal attacks. The bulk water is sampled for microbiological activity on a periodic basis to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. SNC has stated that no environmental problems associated with microorganisms have been noted since the beginning of plant operation. In addition, the effects of airborne pathogens in the cooling towers has been reviewed and a program is in place to ensure protection of workers performing work in the cooling towers. The change in heat load to the cooling towers associated with power uprate is not expected to have significant impact relative to environmental effects from microorganisms or airborne organisms.

In addition to the FES, SNC evaluated the thermal impact associated with power uprate relative to the Farley Nuclear Plant National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit issued by the Alabama Department of Environmental Management. A renewed permit was issued in 1995 based on a 1990 thermal study conducted in support of the renewal, and contains no limits for temperature. The slight increase in final discharge falls within the acceptance range determined in the 1990 study. No additional monitoring requirements or other changes relative to the NPDES permit are required as a result of power uprate. SNC has also indicated that implementation of the power uprate will not require laydown areas that would affect land use, erosion control, endangered species, or historic land sites.

SNC has concluded that, with the exception of the parameters mentioned above, the operating parameters evaluated with regard to potential for environmental impact associated with power uprate either retain the same values as the original values in the FES or are bounded by those values and do not result in significant adverse environmental impact.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does involve features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR Part 20. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts and would reduce the operational flexibility.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Joseph M. Farley Nuclear Plant, Units 1 and 2.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on February 26, 1998, the staff consulted with the Alabama State official, Kirk Whatley of the Office of Radiation Control, Alabama Department of Public Health, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's letter dated February 14, 1997, as supplemented on June 20, August 5, September 22, November 19, December 9, December 17, and December 31, 1997, January 23, February 12, February 26, March 3, March 6, March 16, April 3, April 13, and two letters on April 17, 1998, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the Houston-Love Memorial Library, 212 W. Burdeshaw Street, Post Office Box 1369, Dothan, Alabama.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of April 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Herbert N. Berkow,

Director, Project Directorate II–2, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 98–10844 Filed 4–22–98; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–289]

GPU Nuclear Corporation (Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station, Unit 1); Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of an amendment to Facility Operating License No. DPR–50, issued to GPU Nuclear Corporation (GPU, the licensee), for operation of the Three Mile Island Nuclear Generating Station, Unit 1 (TMI–1), located in Dauphin County, Pennsylvania.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The proposed action would revise the Facility Operating License No. DPR–50

and the Technical Specifications (TS) appended to Facility Operating License No. DPR–50 for the TMI–1 plant. Specifically, the proposed action would amend the license to reflect the change in the legal name of the operator from GPU Nuclear Corporation to GPU Nuclear, Inc. and to reflect the registered trade name of GPU Energy under which the owners of TMI–1 are now conducting business. In addition, the TMI–1 TSs would be revised to reflect the new legal name of the operator of TMI–1.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated December 16, 1996, as supplemented September 11, 1997 and March 25, 1998.

The Need for the Proposed Action

The proposed actions are necessary because on or about August 1, 1996, the owners of TMI–1 registered to do business under the trade name of GPU Energy. Also on or about August 1, 1996, the legal name of the operator of TMI–1 was changed from GPU Nuclear Corporation to GPU Nuclear, Inc.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action. As stated by the licensee,

> The corporate existence of all three Owners and the operator of TMI–1 continues uninterrupted, and all legal characteristics remain the same. The name changes do not alter the state of incorporation, registered agent, registered office, directors, officers, rights or liabilities of the Owners of TMI–1 or the operator of TMI–1. Similarly, the name changes do not alter the function of either the Owners or the operator of TMI–1, or the way they do business. The Owner's financial responsibility for TMI–1 and their sources of funds to support the facility remain the same. These name changes do not impact the existing ownership of TMI–1 and do not alter any of the existing licensing conditions applicable to TMI–1. There is no change to GPU Nuclear, Inc.'s ability to comply with these licensing conditions or with any other obligation or responsibility under the license. Specifically, the Owners of TMI–1 remain regulated electric utilities. The funds accrued by the Owners continue to be available to fulfill all obligations related to TMI–1 as they were before the name changes.
>
> There will be no impact on the safe operation of TMI–1 as a result of the name changes. Access to funds necessary to safely operate TMI–1 to the end of the license is unaffected. Access to decommissioning trust funds to ensure that TMI–1 can be decommissioned in accordance with NRC regulations remains as it was prior to the name changes.

In light of the foregoing, the Commission concludes that the change will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released offsite, and there will be no significant increase in the allowable individual or cumulative occupational radiation exposure. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action is administrative in nature and does not involve any physical features of the plant. Thus, it does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

Since the Commission has concluded there is no measurable environmental impact associated with the proposed action, any alternatives with equal or greater environmental impact need not be evaluated. As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action. Denial of the application would result in no change in current environmental impacts. The environmental impacts of the proposed action and the alternative action are similar.

Alternative Use of Resources

This action does not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the TMI–1 plant.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on March 16, 1998, the staff consulted with the Pennsylvania State official, Mr. Stan J. Maingi, of the Bureau of Radiation Protection, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State Official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

Based upon the environmental assessment, the Commission concludes that the proposed action will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the Commission has determined not to prepare an environmental impact statement for the proposed action.

For further details with respect to the proposed action, see the licensee's submittals dated December 16, 1996, September 11, 1997 and March 25, 1998, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and at the local public document room located at the LAW/Government Publications Section, State Library of Pennsylvania, (Regional Dispository) Walnut Street and Commonwealth Avenue, P.O. Box 1601, Harrisburg, PA 17105.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of April 1998.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Cecil O. Thomas,

Director, Project Directorate I–3, Division of Reactor Projects—I/II, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Consolidated Guidance About Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance, Irradiator Licenses; Availability of Draft NUREG

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of availability and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Nuclear Regulatory Commission is announcing the availability of and requesting comment on draft NUREG–1556, Volume 6, ''Consolidated Guidance about Materials Licenses: Program-Specific Guidance about 10 CFR Part 36 Irradiator Licenses,'' dated March 1998.

NRC is using Business Process Redesign (BPR) techniques to redesign its materials licensing process, as described in NUREG–1539, ''Methodology and Findings of the NRC's Materials Licensing Process Redesign.'' A critical element of the new process is consolidating and updating numerous guidance documents into a NUREG-series of reports. This draft NUREG report is the sixth program-specific guidance developed to support an improved materials licensing process.

It is intended for use by applicants, licensees, NRC license reviewers, and other NRC personnel. It combines and updates the guidance for applicants and licensees previously found in Draft Regulatory Guide DG–0003, ''Guide for the Preparation of Applications for Licenses for Non-Self-Contained Irradiators,'' dated January 1994, and the guidance for licensing staff previously found in NMSS Policy and Guidance Directive, FC 84–23, ''Standard Review Plan for Licenses for