circuits are independent from the fire areas which require access to the 4160V Bus 14H enclosure, Intake Structure, or RWST Pipe Chase. Consistent with the defense in depth approach to fire protection, portable lighting equipment is also available and can be relied upon for use in the event of a fire.

Based on the availability and reliability of the security lighting of sufficient duration and the availability of portable lighting, there is reasonable assurance that the access/egress routes through the yard area that are relied on for safe shutdown of the facility can be accessed in the event of a fire.

On the basis of its evaluation, the staff concluded that the application of the regulation in this circumstance is not necessary to satisfy the underlying purpose of the rule.

VIII

Conclusions

Intake Structure

On the basis of its evaluation, the staff finds that special circumstances are present in that the application of the regulation in this circumstance is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The licensee's request for an exemption from the requirements of Section III.G.3 of Appendix R, to the extent that it requires the installation of a fixed fire suppression system, is granted pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii) for fire area R–16, the Intake Structure, provided the factors the licensee used to justify its exemption request are maintained. The staff concludes that the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security.

East 480 Volt Switchgear Room

On the basis of its evaluation, the staff finds that special circumstances are present in that the application of the regulation in this circumstance is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The licensee's request for an exemption from the requirements of Section III.G.3 of Appendix R, to the extent that it requires the installation of a fixed fire suppression system, is granted pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii) for fire area R–11, the East 480 Volt Switchgear Room, provided the factors the licensee used to justify its exemption request are maintained. The staff concludes that the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security.

Charging Pump Room

On the basis of its evaluation, the staff finds that special circumstances are present in that the application of the regulation in this circumstance is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The licensee's request for an exemption from the requirements of Section III.G.2 of Appendix R, to the extent that it requires the licensee to meet one of the three applicable options (Section III.G.2.a, b, or c), is granted pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii) for fire area R–4, the charging pump room, provided the factors the licensee used to justify its exemption request, including rerouting the charging pump cables, are maintained. The staff concludes that the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security.

Yard Area

On the basis of its evaluation, the staff finds that special circumstances are present in that the application of the regulation in this circumstance is not necessary to achieve the underlying purpose of the rule. The licensee's request for an exemption from the requirements of Section III.J of Appendix R, to the extent that it requires emergency lighting with an 8-hour battery supply for access and egress routes to safe shutdown equipment, is granted pursuant to 10 CFR 50.12(a)(2)(ii) for the yard area, provided the factors the licensee used to justify its exemption request are maintained. The staff concludes that the exemption is authorized by law, will not present an undue risk to the public health and safety, and is consistent with the common defense and security.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 16th day of March 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Roy P. Zimmerman,

Acting Director, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 99–7029 Filed 3–22–99; 8:45 am]

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket Nos. 50–424 and 50–425]

Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al.; (Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2); Environmental Assessment and Finding of No Significant Impact

The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (the Commission) is considering issuance of amendments to Facility Operating License Nos. NPF–68 and NPF–81, issued to Southern Nuclear Operating Company, Inc., et al. (the licensee), for operation of the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2, located in Burke County, Georgia.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of Proposed Action

The proposed action would amend the Facility Operating Licenses (FOLs) for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant (Vogtle), Units 1 and 2, to delete or modify certain license conditions, which have become obsolete or inappropriate. In addition, the Technical Specifications would be reconstituted to reflect revised word processing software. No change in technical requirements would be involved; however, the font would be changed to Arial 11 point; page numbers would be revised to a limiting condition for operation specific numbering scheme; and intentional blank pages would be deleted.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendments dated October 15, 1998, as supplemented by letter dated November 11, 1998.

The Need for the Proposed Action

When the FOLs, NPF–68 and NPF–81, were issued to the licensee, the NRC staff deemed certain issues essential to safety and/or essential to meeting certain regulatory interests. Other issues were associated with adoption of the Improved Standard Technical Specifications in License Amendment Nos. 96 and 74, for Vogtle Units 1 and 2, on September 25, 1996. These issues were imposed as license conditions in the FOLs, with deadlines for their implementation. Since the units were licensed to operate in the 1980s, most of these license conditions have been fulfilled. For the license conditions that have been fulfilled, the licensee proposed to have them deleted from the FOLs. The licensee is also proposing a minor change to a license reporting requirement.

The FOLs also included exemptions from Commission regulations. The licensee stated that some exemptions have either expired, or are no longer needed since the units are in full compliance with the respective regulations. The licensee proposed to delete these exemptions from the FOLs.

The licensee also proposed to reissue the Technical Specifications without changes, to implement a change to its word processing computer software.

The proposed amendments involve reformatting and removal of conditions

that have been satisfied or that are obsolete. No actual plant equipment, regulatory requirements, operating practices, or analyses are affected by these proposed amendments.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

The Commission has completed its evaluation of the proposed action and concludes that there is no significant environmental impact if the amendments are approved. No changes will be made to the design and licensing bases, and applicable procedures at Vogtle Units 1 and 2 will remain the same. Other than the recordkeeping, reporting, or administrative procedures or requirements, no other changes will be made to the FOLs, including the Technical Specifications.

The proposed action will not increase the probability or consequences of accidents, no changes are being made in the types of any effluents that may be released off site, and there is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historical sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and has no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternatives to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the ''no-action'' alternative). 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 did not involve the use of any resources not previously considered in the Final Environmental Statement for the Vogtle Electric Generating Plant, Units 1 and 2.

Agencies and Persons Contacted

In accordance with its stated policy, on March 17, 1999, the staff consulted with the Georgia State official, Mr. J. Setzer of the Department of Natural Resources, regarding the environmental impact of the proposed action. The State official had no comments.

Finding of No Significant Impact

On the basis of 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 October 15, 1998, as supplemented by letter dated November 11, 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 Burke County Library, 412 Fourth Street, Waynesboro, Georgia.

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 17th day of March 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Herbert N. Berkow,

Director, Project Directorate II–2, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50–482]

Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (Wolf Creek Generating Station); 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. NPF–42, issued to Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (the licensee), for operation of the Wolf Creek Generating Station located in Coffey County, Kansas.

Environmental Assessment

Identification of the Proposed Action

The amendment would revise Technical Specification (TS) 4.7.3b, ''Plant Systems—Component Cooling Water System—Surveillance Requirements,'' by deleting the requirement to perform the specified surveillances during shutdown. A change to the applicable Bases would also be included.

The proposed action is in accordance with the licensee's application for amendment dated May 15, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated June 30, August 5, August 28, September 24, October 16, October 23, November 24, December 2, December 17, and December 21, 1998, and January 15, 1999.

Need for the Proposed Action

By letter dated May 15, 1997, Wolf Creek Nuclear Operating Corporation (the licensee) proposed a conversion of the current TSs for Wolf Creek to the Improved Technical Specifications (ITSs). When the TS-required 18-month testing (during shutdown) of the component cooling water system (CCWS) was last conducted, a portion of the required testing was not completed for one pump in each train of the CCWS. The proposed action, an amendment to modify the TSs to allow testing during power operations, would avert a plant shutdown to complete this testing.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Action

With regard to potential radiological impacts to the general public, the amendment under consideration involves features located entirely within the restricted area as defined in 10 CFR part 20. It does not affect the potential for radiological accidents and does not affect radiological plant effluents. No safety limits will be changed or setpoints altered as a result of the TS revision. The proposed action 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 is no significant increase in occupational or public radiation exposure. Therefore, there are no significant radiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

With regard to potential nonradiological impacts, the proposed action does not involve any historic sites. It does not affect nonradiological plant effluents and would have no other environmental impact. Therefore, there are no significant nonradiological environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Accordingly, the Commission concludes that there are no significant environmental impacts associated with the proposed action.

Alternative to the Proposed Action

As an alternative to the proposed action, the staff considered denial of the proposed action (i.e., the ''no-action'' alternative). 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.