Alternatives Creating Additional Storage Capacity

A variety of alternatives to increase the storage capacity of the FitzPatrick SFP were considered. Fuel rod consolidation was considered as a potential alternative and was eliminated because of the limited industry experience in disassembling irradiated fuel and because of the potential for fission product release due to rod breakage during disassembly. Additionally, because DOE considers consolidated fuel to be a non-standard waste form, the licensee could be concerned that the presence of fuel in this form would cause DOE to delay its acceptance of waste from FitzPatrick.

The early implementation of dry cask storage for irradiated fuel at FitzPatrick was also considered. Dry cask storage involves transferring irradiated fuel, after several years of storage in the FitzPatrick SFP, to high capacity casks with passive heat dissipation features. After loading, these casks would be placed on a concrete pad at an outdoor location on the FitzPatrick site. Although dry cask storage is planned by the licensee as a long-term storage option for FitzPatrick, the early implementation of this alternative was rejected by the licensee because the 442 storage locations provide needed irradiated fuel storage with less environmental impact and at lower cost.

As a result, the licensee concluded that none of the alternative technologies that could create additional spent fuel storage capacity at FitzPatrick could do so with less environmental impact than the impacts associated with the chosen option.

Reduction of Spent Fuel Generation

To minimize the quantities of irradiated fuel generated during full power operation at FitzPatrick, the licensee has developed efficient fuel loading patterns that seek to maximize the utilization of each assembly consistent with limits on the integrated fuel rod exposure. Batch discharge burnups for FitzPatrick fuel currently exceed 40 GWD/MT with peak assembly burnups reaching 46 GWD/MT by the time of discharge. The licensee expects batch average discharge exposure to exceed 43 GWD/MT after the current cycle and to increase to 45 GWD/MT thereafter. FitzPatrick depletes fuel assemblies to these burnups with minimal cladding perforations so that the fission product inventory present in the SFP water remains low. The high values of batch average and peak assembly discharge burnup ensure that the electricity generated by FitzPatrick yields the minimum possible amount of spent fuel.

The fuel assembly design used at FitzPatrick is not compatible with the IP3 core. As a result, partially irradiated fuel from other PASNY nuclear units cannot be used at FitzPatrick (or vice versa) to reduce the rate of spent fuel discharge.

Operation of FitzPatrick at a reduced power level for long periods of time would extend the existing SFP storage capacity. However, to compensate for the reduced generation by FitzPatrick another power generation facility would be required to increase its power output, possibly resulting in an increase in airborne pollution and greenhouse gas emissions. The adverse environmental impact of increased airborne pollution and greenhouse gas omissions resulting from a long-term derate of FitzPatrick generating capacity is significantly greater than the environmental impact associated with increasing the storage capacity of the existing FitzPatrick SPF.

The No-Action Alternative

As an alternative to the proposed action, the NRC staff considered denial of the proposed action (*i.e.*, the ''no-action'' alternative). Denial of the application would result in no significant 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 FitzPatrick.

Agencies and Persons Consulted

In accordance with its stated policy, on May 24, 1999, the NRC staff consulted with the New York State official, Mr. Jack Spath, of the New York State Research and Development Authority, 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 14, 1997, as supplemented by letters dated July 23, 1998, December 3, 1998, February 25, 1999, and September 29, 1999, which are available for public inspection at the Commission's Public Document Room, The Gelman Building, 2120 L Street, NW., Washington, DC, and accessible electronically through the ADAMS Public Electronic Reading Room link at the NRC Web site (http://www.NRC.gov).

Dated at Rockville, MD., this 3rd day of November, 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Sheri R. Peterson,

Chief, Section I, Project Directorate I, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

Notice of Correction to Biweekly Notice Applications and Amendments to Operating Licenses Involving No Significant Hazards Considerations

On November 3, 1999, the **Federal Register** published the Biweekly Notice of Applications and Amendments to Operating Licenses Involving No Significant Hazards Consideration. On page 59797 the 30-day date for hearing request should be corrected from ''December 10, 1999,'' to read ''By December 3, 1999, the licensee may file a request for a hearing. * * *''

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 3rd day of November 1999.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John A. Zwolinski,

Director, Division of Licensing Project Management, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

[FR Doc. 99–29316 Filed 11–8–99; 8:45 am]

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SOCIAL SECURITY ADMINISTRATION

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Request and Comment Request

In compliance with Public Law 104–13, the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, SSA is providing notice of its information collections that require submission to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). SSA is soliciting comments on the accuracy of the agency's burden estimate; the need for the information; its practical utility; ways to enhance its quality, utility and clarity; and on ways to minimize burden on respondents, including the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.