



UNITED STATES
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 4, 2021

MEMORANDUM TO: Jacob I. Zimmerman, Chief
Fuel Facility Licensing Branch
Division of Fuel Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

FROM: David H. Tiktinsky, Senior Project Manager
Fuel Facility Licensing Branch
Division of Fuel Management
Office of Nuclear Material Safety
and Safeguards

SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 4, 2021 PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS
THE STATUS OF THE WESTINGHOUSE COLUMBIA FUEL
FABRICATION FACILITY LICENSE RENEWAL

On February 4, 2021, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff held a Category 1 public meeting with Westinghouse regarding the status of the renewal of the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility.

The purpose of this meeting was for Westinghouse to inform the NRC staff of its environmental improvements at its Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility in Hopkins, South Carolina. The NRC staff also provided a status update of its review of Westinghouse's application to renew its license for the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility for an additional 40 years of operation.

Docket: 70-1151
License: SNM-1107

Enclosures:
Meeting Summary

cc: westinghouse_ff@listmgr.nrc.gov

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SUBJECT: SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY 4, 2021 PUBLIC MEETING TO DISCUSS THE STATUS OF THE WESTINGHOUSE COLUMBIA FUEL FABRICATION FACILITY LICENSE RENEWAL

DOCUMENT DATE: March 4, 2021

DISTRIBUTION: DFM r/f TVukovinsky, RII

ADAMS Accession No.: ML21054A092

***via email**

OFFICE	NMSS/DFM/FFLB/PM*	NMSS/DFM/FFLB/LA*	NMSS/DFM/FFLB/BC*
NAME	DTiktinsky	ELee	JZimmerman
DATE	02/25/2021	03/01/2021	03/03/2021

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SUMMARY OF PUBLIC MEETING

DATE: February 04, 2021

TIME: 2:00 PM to 03:20 PM ET

LOCATION: MS Teams

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this meeting was for Westinghouse to inform the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) staff of its environmental improvements at its Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility in Hopkins, South Carolina. The NRC staff also provided a status update of its review of Westinghouse's application to renew its license for the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility for an additional 40 years of operation.

SUMMARY:

After welcoming all participants, the NRC staff described the purpose of the Category 1 public meeting, the agenda, and the opportunity for members of the public to communicate with the NRC staff after the business portion of the meeting. Additionally, the NRC staff carefully explained how to manage the Microsoft Teams platform for those who wished to ask questions and share information.

Westinghouse provided a detailed overview of risk reduction activities and environmental improvements for its Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility (Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS) Accession No. [ML21026A021](#)). Specifically, Westinghouse discussed the programs and activities being carried out to address legacy issues, including the development of a conceptual site model, remediation strategy, and improvements to programs, systems, and equipment. Examples of risk reduction activities described included the execution of the Consent Agreement with the State implementing a remediation strategy document, reducing collective radiation exposure, and improving the margin of items relied on for safety, the industrial safety and fire programs, and environmental health and safety systems and equipment. Some of the environmental improvements that Westinghouse discussed included removal of sources of potential stormwater contamination from retired roof equipment, removal of the Sealand container storage containing radioactive materials, elimination of the use of perchloroethylene in the solvent extraction process, and upgrades to the wastewater treatment plant. In March 2021, Westinghouse will modify the hydrofluoric acid spiking station number 1 and plans to complete the characterization of the Sanitary Lagoon sludge in April 2021. Remediation and closure of the East Lagoon is anticipated in June 2021. Westinghouse anticipates completing the remedial investigation under the Consent Agreement by June 2021.

The NRC staff provided a status update of the National Environmental Policy Act Environmental (NEPA) review of Westinghouse's license renewal application and the safety review (ADAMS Accession No. [ML21029A185](#)). The NRC staff decided to reopen its environmental review after Westinghouse's July 2018 report of a leak that released uranium and hydrofluoric acid into the subsurface environment, Westinghouse's investigations into past leaks from buried piping, and the public's concerns about the releases. In October 2019, the NRC concurrently withdrew the 2018 environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) and published a draft EA and FONSI for public review and comment (84 FR 57777).

Enclosure

In June 2020, the NRC staff decided to prepare an EIS for the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility license renewal application because it was not able to reach FONSI. This decision was informed by (1) the impact analysis documented in the October 2019 draft EA, (2) new information in Westinghouse's February 2020 Interim Remedial Investigation Data Summary Report revealing uncertainties related to the source and extent of the contamination onsite and the potential migration pathways, and (3) comments submitted during the October 2019 draft EA public comment period. The EIS is, therefore, the next step in the NRC's environmental review process.

On July 31, 2020, the NRC staff published a notice of intent to prepare an EIS and began the scoping process (85 FR 46193). The NRC staff anticipates publishing the scoping summary report in February 2021. The scoping summary report will also address the public comments on the October 2019 draft EA.

On December 18, 2020, Westinghouse responded to NRC's RAIs. The RAIs were developed by the NRC staff after reviewing Westinghouse's July 2020 Phase I Remedial Investigation Report, the Hydrofluoric Acid Spiking Station Report, the Tc-99 Source Investigation Report, and comments received during the scoping comment period and the October 2019 draft EA comment period.

Several factors impacted staff's review of the license renewal application since it was submitted in 2014. In 2016, Westinghouse reported a near criticality event in the scrubber resulting in a plant shutdown, which resulted in NRC issuing a Confirmatory Order. The license renewal review was placed on hold while Westinghouse focused its efforts on the safe restart of operations. Subsequently, Westinghouse requested an indirect transfer of control, which NRC approved in 2018. During this time, Westinghouse requested that all NRC efforts focus on the transfer of control.

The NRC staff has also revised the schedule for its review of the Westinghouse's license renewal application. The NRC staff anticipates publishing the draft EIS in June 2021, the final EIS in January 2022, and the Record of Decision in February 2022. The decision to renew the operating license will be based on the staff's safety review, documented in a safety evaluation report, and the environmental review, documented in the EIS. Completion of the environmental protection and decommissioning review areas of the safety review would be completed after development of the EIS.

During the meeting, the public was given the opportunity to ask questions of the NRC staff. The public shared concerns about impacts to historic and cultural resources from the installation of monitoring wells at the site and the procedures referenced in Westinghouse's responses to RAIs addressing unanticipated discoveries and human remains. The NRC staff affirmed that the EIS would include a discussion of potential impacts to historic and cultural resources. The NRC staff also explained that the safety review will address compliance with the NRC regulatory requirements, which are protective of the public and workers' health and safety in light of concerns about the safety of archaeologist conducting work nearby the site. The NRC staff will also reach out separately to the Pine Hill Tribe for additional discussion regarding their comment that they think a Cultural Preservation Committee is needed and how NRC will consider the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act in the EIS.

Members of the public shared concerns about the proposed length of the license renewal term considering the facility's history of leaks and events and onsite contamination, and asked whether NRC could renew the license for less than 40 years (e.g., 10 years). As part of the safety review, the NRC staff is evaluating whether Westinghouse's safety programs are adequate to ensure safe operation for the maximum 40-year renewal period or whether a shorter renewal period is appropriate.

Members of the public also recommended that NRC enhance its communications and outreach activities to better engage the environmental justice communities in the vicinity of the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility. Specifically, it was recommended that direct mail advertisement be used to inform the communities about the publication of documents, public comment periods, etc. The NRC staff explained that there is a dedicated NRC web page for the Columbia Fuel Fabrication Facility at <https://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/fc/westinghouse-fuel-fab-fac-sc-lc.html> that is kept up-to-date. In addition, the NRC staff has been keeping individuals informed through the email resource, WEC_CFFF_EIS@nrc.gov. The NRC staff has used this email resource to announce the scoping process, the license renewal review schedule, issuance of the RAIs, Westinghouse's responses to RAIs, public meetings, and NRC and Westinghouse's February 4, 2021 presentations.

In response to a question, the NRC staff did not have information about the Federal oversight of WesDyne, but clarified that the EIS will consider cumulative impacts from past, present, and reasonably foreseeable actions. The NRC staff also explained that information resulting from Westinghouse's investigations into the source of the Tc-99 contamination will be considered in the development of the EIS. Upon publication of Westinghouse's Phase II Remedial Investigation Report, anticipated in September 2021, the NRC staff will review the results to understand impacts to the development of the EIS, and determine next steps, as appropriate.

RESULTS:

The NRC staff discussed the status of the CFFF Environmental Impact Statement development and the license renewal. The meeting also provided the public an opportunity to ask the NRC staff questions with regard to the ongoing review. No regulatory decisions were made at the meeting.

The public meeting adjourned at 3:20pm ET.

The meeting agenda can be found in ADAMS at Accession No. ML21021A120. The staff presentation can be found in ML21026A021 and the Westinghouse CFFF presentation can be found in ML21029A185.

PARTICIPANTS:

Public*		
Pat Threatt	Ray Kuyler	Cassandra Fralix
Amanda Spalding	Chief Michelle Mitchum	Karen Gay
Issac Serratos	Bill Stangler, Congaree Riverkeeper	Sarah Casella
Jeffrey Ferguson	James Fuller	Ken Taylor
Chris Judge	Pamela Greenlaw	James Berresford
Brenda Murphy	Evonne Bennett	Laura Cummings Balgari
Luis W. Reyes	Cody Sims	Virginia Sanders
John		
*Approximately 4 individuals participated via teleconference		

NRC		
Diana Diaz-Toro	Kevin Coyne	Andrea Kock
David Tiktinsky	Lynnea Wilkins	David McIntyre
Jacob Zimmerman	Tim Mossman	Eric Michel
Thomas Vukovinsky	Jessie Quintero	Eric Stamm
Jean Trefethen	Diane Screnci	Roland Womack

Westinghouse		
Michael Annacone	Douglas Weaver	Patrick Donnelly
Elise Malek		