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NRC TO HOLD PUBLIC MEETINGS ON DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR PILGRIM NUCLEAR PLANT LICENSE RENEWAL APPLICATION

Members of the public will have an opportunity on Wednesday, Jan. 24, to comment on a draft report that assesses the environmental impact of extending the operating license for the Pilgrim nuclear power plant in Plymouth, Mass. On Jan. 25, 2006, Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc., which operates the plant, submitted an application to renew the license for an additional 20 years.

The NRC report, known as the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement, was issued on Dec. 8, 2006.

As part of its license renewal application, the company submitted an environmental report. The NRC staff reviewed the report and performed an on-site audit. The staff also considered comments made during the environmental scoping process, including comments offered at public meetings held by the NRC on May 17, 2006, in Plymouth.

Based on its review, the NRC staff has prepared and issued its draft environmental impact statement, which preliminarily recommends that the Commission determine the adverse environmental impacts of license renewal for the Pilgrim plant are not so great that preserving the option of license renewal for energy planning decision-makers would be unreasonable. This recommendation is based on: 1) the analysis and findings in the Generic Environmental Impact Statement used for license renewal reviews; 2) the plant-specific environmental report submitted by Entergy; 3) NRC consultation with other federal, state and local agencies; 4) the NRC staff's own independent review; and 5) the NRC staff's consideration of public comments received during the environmental scoping process.

The NRC will hold two meetings on Jan. 24 to accept comments on the report. The first session will begin at 1:30 p.m. A second session will get under way at 7 p.m. Both meetings will take place at the Radisson Plymouth Harbor Ballroom, 180 Water St., Plymouth. NRC staff will be available for an hour prior to the start of each meeting for informal, one-on-one discussions of the report.

Those interested may pre-register to attend or speak at the meetings by contacting Alicia

Williamson, NRC Environmental Project Manager for the Pilgrim application, at 1-800-368-5642, ext. 1878, or by sending an e-mail to PilgrimEIS@nrc.gov by Jan.17. Members of the public may also register 15 minutes before each session to provide oral comments. The duration of individual comments may be limited by the time available, depending on the number of speakers who register.

Written comments on the draft report will also be considered by the NRC staff. Comments can be submitted by mail to the Chief, Rules and Directives Branch, Division of Administrative Services, Mail Stop T-6 D59, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20555-0001. They can also be submitted electronically to PilgrimEIS@nrc.gov . The public comment period ends on Feb. 28, 2007.

Under NRC regulations, the original operating license for a nuclear power plant has a term of 40 years. The license may be renewed for up to an additional 20 years if NRC requirements are met. The current operating license for the Pilgrim plant is due to expire on June 8, 2012.

The draft report is posted on the NRC web page at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1437/supplement29/> . The Pilgrim license renewal application is posted at:
<http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal/applications/pilgrim.html#appls> . Additional information about the license renewal process is available at:
www.nrc.gov/reactors/operating/licensing/renewal.html .

The draft report is also available for review at the following libraries:

- The Plymouth Public Library, 132 South St., Plymouth;
- The Duxbury Free Library, 77 Alden St., Duxbury, Mass.; and
- The Kingston Public Library, 6 Green St., Kingston, Mass.

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