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NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20555

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DEQ-Office of Environmental
Impact Review

June 30, 2011

Ms. Ellie Irons
Virginia Department of
Environmental Quality
P.O. Box 1105
Richmond, VA 23218

SUBJECT: PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED BY VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY RELATED TO THE FEDERAL CONSISTENCY CERTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSED NUCLEAR UNIT 3 AT THE NORTH ANNA POWER STATION

Dear Ms. Irons:

On April 11, 2011, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) received your memorandum containing a summary of comments submitted to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) regarding the proposed North Anna Power Station Unit 3. These comments were received during VDEQ's public comment period associated with the Commonwealth's review of a federal consistency certification (FCC) submitted by Dominion Virginia Power (Dominion) per the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972. The FCC is related to Dominion's application to the NRC for a combined license (COL) to construct and operate a third nuclear reactor at their North Anna Power Station (NAPS). Your memorandum states that some of the comments you received are not within the scope of your review and that members of the public requested that you forward any such comments to the appropriate agencies.

A review of your comment summary indicates that many of the comments you received relate to the NRC's licensing action. Many of the issues addressed in your memorandum have been evaluated and documented in two environmental impact statements (EISs) prepared by the NRC for the NAPS, Unit 3 Project. In addition, some comments appear to be directed toward matters of nuclear safety and emergency preparedness. Those matters are evaluated as part of the NRC's safety review which is a separate but parallel process to the environmental review. Some safety issues were addressed as part of the Early Site Permit (ESP) review and other issues are still under evaluation. The NRC web page from which to access the publicly available information related to the ongoing NAPS, Unit 3 safety and environmental reviews can be viewed at <http://www.nrc.gov/reactors/new-reactors/col/north-anna.html>.

Specifically, those comments related to hydrology (normal plant cooling; thermal discharges; water quality), socioeconomics (impacts to infrastructure, aesthetics, and growth), air quality, and environmental impacts of waste storage are addressed in the two previously mentioned EISs. The EIS prepared during the ESP review (NUREG-1811) can be viewed at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1811>. A supplemental EIS has also been published as part of the ongoing COL review (NUREG-1917) and can be accessed at <http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1917>. For siting issues related to the safety review (site seismology, and emergency preparedness addressed in ESP),

commenters are referred to the Safety Evaluation Report prepared during the ESP review (NUREG-1835) at

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/doc-collections/nuregs/staff/sr1835>. Those safety issues not addressed during the ESP, including loss of offsite power emergency cooling, and portions of emergency preparedness are currently being evaluated as part of the COL review. Dominion's Final Safety Analysis Report (FSAR), which is part of their COL application, can be found at <http://adamswebsearch2.nrc.gov/idmws/ViewDocByAccession.asp?AccessionNumber=ML102040544>.

As part of the NRC's current review of Dominion's COL application, (revised in June 2010 to reference the U.S. Advanced Pressurized-Water Reactor design), the staff will determine, among other things, if the design of the design of the facility falls within the site characteristics and design parameters specified in the ESP, and whether the revised application contains new and significant information for issues related to the impacts of construction and operation of the proposed facility. The comments in your memorandum will be considered for new and significant information to inform the ongoing review. This evaluation will be documented in a draft supplemental EIS which will be available for public comment for 75 days immediately following its issuance.

Your memorandum indicates that commenters also expressed concern regarding the events in Japan. The NRC is undertaking a number of actions in response to the events in Japan. The NRC staff will analyze the events in Japan and develop lessons learned and recommendations to improve plant safety, as appropriate. The review may involve other Federal departments and agencies, as necessary. Lessons learned will be used to develop longer-term agency actions.

For more information on the Japan nuclear accident and NRC's actions, please visit <http://www.nrc.gov/japan/japan-info.html>.

E. Irons

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If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Ms. Tamsen Dozier at 301-415-2272 or via e-mail to tamsen.dozier@nrc.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Brent Clayton".

Brent Clayton, Acting Chief
Environmental Projects Branch 1
Division of Site and Environmental Reviews
Office of New Reactors

Docket No.: 52-017

cc: See next page