

support cutting-edge science and education.

NSF remains deeply concerned about the impacts from recent hurricanes on Arecibo Observatory staff, the facility, and all citizens of Puerto Rico. The ROD arrives at a challenging time, but is necessary for the agency to secure a future for the Observatory, as it will allow negotiations to begin with potential collaborators who may take over management and operations as NSF funding is reduced.

Prior to issuance of the ROD, a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was prepared in compliance with the Federal National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. 4321, *et seq.* (NEPA), dated July 27, 2017, and availability of it was noticed in the **Federal Register** on August 4, 2017. As detailed in the FEIS, five Action Alternatives and a No-Action Alternative, were considered for the proposed change in operations of Arecibo Observatory. These Alternatives include:

- *Alternative 1:* Collaboration with Interested Parties for Continued Science-focused Operations (Agency-preferred Alternative)
- *Alternative 2:* Collaboration with Interested Parties for Transition to Education-focused Operations
- *Alternative 3:* Mothballing of Facilities
- *Alternative 4:* Partial Demolition and Site Restoration
- *Alternative 5:* Complete Demolition and Site Restoration
- *No-Action Alternative:* Continued NSF Investment for Science-focused Operations

The Preferred Alternative, which is also the environmentally preferable action alternative, was selected in the ROD. The ROD also reflected NSF's consideration of the outcomes of its compliance obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the Endangered Species Act.

The ROD is now available in both English and Spanish on the internet at: https://www.nsf.gov/mps/ast/env_impact_reviews/env_rev_arecibo.jsp in Adobe® portable document format (PDF). Limited hard copies of the ROD are also available, on a first request basis, by contacting the NSF contact, Elizabeth A. Pentecost, Project Administrator, National Science Foundation, Division of Astronomical Sciences, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Room W 9152, Alexandria, VA 22314, Telephone: 703-292-4907, Email: epenteco@nsf.gov.

Dated: December 20, 2017.

Suzanne H. Plimpton,
Reports Clearance Officer, National Science Foundation.

[FR Doc. 2017-27723 Filed 12-22-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-P

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

Notice of Permits Issued Under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978

AGENCY: National Science Foundation.

ACTION: Notice of permit issued.

SUMMARY: The National Science Foundation (NSF) is required to publish notice of permits issued under the Antarctic Conservation Act of 1978. This is the required notice.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Nature McGinn, ACA Permit Officer, Office of Polar Programs, National Science Foundation, 2415 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria, VA 22314; 703-292-8030; email: ACApermits@nsf.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: On November 16, 2017, the National Science Foundation published a notice in the **Federal Register** of a permit application received. The permit was issued on December 18, 2017 to:

1. Kasey Stewart, Permit No. 2018-026.

Nadene G. Kennedy,

Polar Coordination Specialist, Office of Polar Programs.

[FR Doc. 2017-27721 Filed 12-22-17; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7555-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[NRC-2017-0001]

Sunshine Act Meeting Notice

DATE: Weeks of December 25, 2017, January 1, 8, 15, 22, 29, 2018.

PLACE: Commissioners' Conference Room, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland.

STATUS: Public and Closed.

Week of December 25, 2017

There are no meetings scheduled for the week of December 25, 2017.

Week of January 1, 2018—Tentative

There are no meetings scheduled for the week of January 1, 2018.

Week of January 8, 2018—Tentative

There are no meetings scheduled for the week of January 8, 2018.

Week of January 15, 2018—Tentative

Thursday, January 18, 2018

9:00 a.m. Strategic Programmatic Overview of the Decommissioning and Low-Level Waste and Spent Fuel Storage and Transportation Business Lines (Public Meeting) (Contact: Damaris Marcano: 301-415-7328)

This meeting will be webcast live at the Web address—<http://www.nrc.gov/>.

Week of January 22, 2018—Tentative

Tuesday, January 23, 2018

9:00 a.m. Hearing on Construction Permit for Northwest Medical Isotopes Production Facility: Section 189a of the Atomic Energy Act Proceeding (Public Meeting) (Contact: Michael Balazik: 301-415-2856)

This meeting will be webcast live at the Web address—<http://www.nrc.gov/>.

Thursday, January 25, 2018

10:00 a.m. Strategic Programmatic Overview of the New Reactors Business Line (Public Meeting) (Contact: Donna Williams: 301-415-1322)

This meeting will be webcast live at the Web address—<http://www.nrc.gov/>.

Week of January 29, 2018—Tentative

There are no meetings scheduled for the week of January 29, 2018.

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The schedule for Commission meetings is subject to change on short notice. For more information or to verify the status of meetings, contact Denise McGovern at 301-415-0681 or via email at Denise.McGovern@nrc.gov.

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The NRC Commission Meeting Schedule can be found on the internet at: <http://www.nrc.gov/public-involve/public-meetings/schedule.html>.

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The NRC provides reasonable accommodation to individuals with disabilities where appropriate. If you need a reasonable accommodation to participate in these public meetings, or need this meeting notice or the transcript or other information from the public meetings in another format (*e.g.*, braille, large print), please notify Kimberly Meyer, NRC Disability Program Manager, at 301-287-0739, by videophone at 240-428-3217, or by email at Kimberly.Meyer-Chambers@nrc.gov. Determinations on requests for reasonable accommodation will be made on a case-by-case basis.

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Members of the public may request to receive this information electronically.

If you would like to be added to the distribution, please contact the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Office of the Secretary, Washington, DC 20555 (301-415-1969), or email Patricia.Jimenez@nrc.gov or Jennifer.BorgesRoman@nrc.gov.

Dated: December 20, 2017.

Denise L. McGovern,
Policy Coordinator, Office of the Secretary.
[FR Doc. 2017-27844 Filed 12-21-17; 11:15 am]
BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-271; NRC-2015-0157]

Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc.; Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Final environmental assessment and finding of no significant impact; issuance.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing a final environmental assessment (EA) and finding of no significant impact (FONSI) regarding the issuance of two exemptions in response to a January 6, 2015 request from Entergy Nuclear Operations, Inc. (Entergy or the licensee), on behalf of the owners of the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Station (VY). The exemptions allow the licensee to use funds from the VY decommissioning trust fund (the Trust) for irradiated fuel management activities.

DATES: The EA and FONSI referenced in this document are available on December 26, 2017.

ADDRESSES: Please refer to Docket ID NRC-2015-0157 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information regarding this document. You may obtain publicly-available information related to this document using any of the following methods:

- *Federal Rulemaking website:* Go to <http://www.regulations.gov> and search for Docket ID NRC-2015-0157. Address questions about NRC dockets to Carol Gallagher; telephone: 301-415-3463; email: Carol.Gallagher@nrc.gov. For technical questions, contact the individual listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this document.

- *NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):* You may obtain publicly-available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at

<http://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html>. To begin the search, select "ADAMS Public Documents" and then select "Begin Web-based ADAMS Search." For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, 301-415-4737, or by email to pdr.resource@nrc.gov. The ADAMS accession number for each document referenced (if it is available in ADAMS) is provided the first time that it is mentioned in this document.

- *NRC's PDR:* You may examine and purchase copies of public documents at the NRC's PDR, Room O1-F21, One White Flint North, 11555 Rockville Pike, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jack D. Parrott, Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001; telephone: 301-415-6634; email: Jack.Parrott@nrc.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

On June 23, 2015 (80 FR 35992), the NRC issued exemptions from sections 50.82(a)(8)(i)(A) and 50.75(h)(1)(iv) of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR) to Entergy, for VY's Renewed Facility Operating License No. DPR-28. The VY facility is located in Windham County, Vermont. The licensee requested the exemptions by letter dated January 6, 2015 (ADAMS Accession No. ML15013A171). The exemptions allow the licensee to use funds from the Trust for irradiated fuel management activities, in the similar manner that funds from the Trust are used under 10 CFR 50.82(a)(8) for decommissioning activities. As explained below, although the exemptions also exempted VY from the regulatory requirement for prior notification to the NRC of disbursements from the Trust for irradiated fuel management activities, the licensee is still required to provide such prior notification to the NRC because of a separate requirement in the VY Renewed Facility Operating License.

At the time of issuance, the NRC's approval of the exemptions referenced the categorical exclusion criteria under 10 CFR 51.22(c)(25). However, on November 4, 2015, the State of Vermont, the Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corporation, and Green Mountain Power Corporation (together, Petitioners) filed a petition (ADAMS Accession No. ML16137A554) with the Commission that, in part, challenged the NRC staff's use of a categorical exclusion in granting the exemption request. The Commission, in their

October 27, 2016 decision on the petition (ADAMS Accession No. ML16301A083), found that the exemptions were ineligible for a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and directed the staff to conduct an EA to examine the environmental impacts, if any, associated with the exemptions. Therefore, consistent with Commission direction and with 10 CFR 51.21, the NRC prepared a draft EA to document its environmental review for the exemption request, and published the draft EA for comment on March 8, 2017 (82 FR 13015). Comments were received from the Petitioners on April 7, 2017 (ADAMS Accession No. ML17107A145). After consideration of those comments, the staff has prepared this final EA. Based on the results of this final EA, the NRC has determined that it is not necessary to prepare an environmental impact statement and is therefore issuing this final FONSI.

II. Final Environmental Assessment

Description of the Action

The exemptions requested by Entergy on January 6, 2015, and granted by the NRC on June 23, 2015, exempt Entergy from the requirements set forth in 10 CFR 50.82(a)(8)(i)(A) and 50.75(h)(1)(iv). Specifically, the exemptions allow Entergy to use funds from the Trust for irradiated fuel management activities, not associated with radiological decommissioning.

Need for the Action

By letter dated January 12, 2015 (ADAMS Accession No. ML15013A426), Entergy informed the NRC that it had permanently ceased power operations at VY and that the VY reactor vessel had been permanently defueled.

In its January 6, 2015 exemption request, Entergy stated that it needed access to the funds in the Trust, in excess of those funds needed for radiological decommissioning, to support irradiated fuel management activities not associated with radiological decommissioning. As required by 10 CFR 50.82(a)(8)(i)(A), decommissioning trust funds may be used by a licensee if the withdrawals are for expenses for legitimate decommissioning activities consistent with the definition of decommissioning in 10 CFR 50.2. This definition addresses radiological decommissioning and does not include activities associated with irradiated fuel management. Similarly, the requirements of 10 CFR 50.75(h)(1)(iv) restrict decommissioning trust fund disbursements (other than for payments