



**UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY
REGION 10**

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OFFICE OF
ECOSYSTEMS, TRIBAL AND
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

November 16, 2011

Cindy Bladey
Chief, Rules, Announcements, and Directives Branch
Office of Administration
Mail Stop: TWB-05-B01M
U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission
Washington, D.C. 20555-0001

Re: Comments on the Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for renewal of the Columbia Generating Station (CGS) license
EPA Project Number: 11-4122-NRC.

Dear Ms. Bladey:

In accordance with our responsibilities under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has reviewed the US Nuclear Regulatory Agency (NRC) Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (DSEIS) for the proposed relicense of the Columbia Generating Station (CGS) in the city of Richland, Benton County, Washington.

The EPA believes that the DSEIS provides adequate discussion of the potential environmental impacts associated with the proposed action and we have not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes. However, we do recommend that the final SEIS include updated information on the status of the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit application (p. C-5) and measures to protect water quality; and outcomes of consultations with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Marine Fisheries Service, including recommended measures to reduce risks and protect biota and habitat. Correspondingly, it will also be important to continue coordination with Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife throughout the license period to monitor risks to species and take corrective action.

The EPA has rated the DSEIS as LO - "Lack of Objections". An explanation of this rating is enclosed. We appreciate the opportunity to review this SEIS document and look forward to reviewing the final SEIS for the project.

SUNSI Review Complete
Temp file = AD01-013

E-KIDS = AD04-03
Add = D. Doyle (del)
S. Freeman (S2f1)

If you have questions about our comments, please contact me at (206) 553-1601 or by electronic mail at reichgott.christine@epa.gov, or you may contact Theo Mbabaliye of my staff at (206) 553-6322 or by electronic mail at mbabaliye.theogene@epa.gov.

Sincerely,



Christine B. Reichgott, Manager
Environmental Review and Sediment Management Unit

**U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Rating System for
Draft Environmental Impact Statements
Definitions and Follow-Up Action***

Environmental Impact of the Action

LO – Lack of Objections

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) review has not identified any potential environmental impacts requiring substantive changes to the proposal. The review may have disclosed opportunities for application of mitigation measures that could be accomplished with no more than minor changes to the proposal.

EC – Environmental Concerns

EPA review has identified environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment. Corrective measures may require changes to the preferred alternative or application of mitigation measures that can reduce these impacts.

EO – Environmental Objections

EPA review has identified significant environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to provide adequate protection for the environment. Corrective measures may require substantial changes to the preferred alternative or consideration of some other project alternative (including the no-action alternative or a new alternative). EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts.

EU – Environmentally Unsatisfactory

EPA review has identified adverse environmental impacts that are of sufficient magnitude that they are unsatisfactory from the standpoint of public health or welfare or environmental quality. EPA intends to work with the lead agency to reduce these impacts. If the potential unsatisfactory impacts are not corrected at the final EIS stage, this proposal will be recommended for referral to the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

Adequacy of the Impact Statement

Category 1 – Adequate

EPA believes the draft EIS adequately sets forth the environmental impact(s) of the preferred alternative and those of the alternatives reasonably available to the project or action. No further analysis of data collection is necessary, but the reviewer may suggest the addition of clarifying language or information.

Category 2 – Insufficient Information

The draft EIS does not contain sufficient information for EPA to fully assess environmental impacts that should be avoided in order to fully protect the environment, or the EPA reviewer has identified new reasonably available alternatives that are within the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which could reduce the environmental impacts of the action. The identified additional information, data, analyses or discussion should be included in the final EIS.

Category 3 – Inadequate

EPA does not believe that the draft EIS adequately assesses potentially significant environmental impacts of the action, or the EPA reviewer has identified new, reasonably available alternatives that are outside of the spectrum of alternatives analyzed in the draft EIS, which should be analyzed in order to reduce the potentially significant environmental impacts. EPA believes that the identified additional information, data, analyses, or discussions are of such a magnitude that they should have full public review at a draft stage. EPA does not believe that the draft EIS is adequate for the purposes of the National Environmental Policy Act and or Section 309 review, and thus should be formally revised and made available for public comment in a supplemental or revised draft EIS. On the basis of the potential significant impacts involved, this proposal could be a candidate for referral to the CEQ.

* From EPA Manual 1640 Policy and Procedures for the Review of Federal Actions Impacting the Environment. February, 1987.