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6.0 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND COORDINATION EFFORTS

Public participation and interagency coordination/review are part of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process during the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The public and appropriate federal, state, and local agencies were invited to provide input during the scoping process and the Draft Supplemental EIS (SEIS) was made available for review and comment. Section 6.1 describes the scoping process to determine the content of the SEIS and Section 6.2 describes the public participation and agency review of the Draft SEIS. Section 6.3 defines the role of lead and cooperating agencies in the preparation of this SEIS.

6.1 TVA Scoping and Public Participation Process

One activity in EIS preparation is the description of what the evaluation will cover, or rather, the scope of the EIS. An important part of this “scoping” process is the solicitation of public participation in the determination of the issues to be evaluated and the inclusion of that information in the evaluation process. This section summarizes TVA’s efforts to solicit public comments which helped to define the content of the EIS.

6.1.1 Public Involvement

On Thursday, February 15, 2001, a Notice of Intent (NOI) was published in the *Federal Register* (TVA, 2000a). The NOI provided a project summary, as well as details on the project description; TVA’s Integrated Resource Plan; the proposed issues to be addressed in the EIS; the alternatives to be evaluated; and a description of the scoping process. A copy of the NOI is provided in Appendix D.

TVA conducted a public meeting on March 6, 2001, in Decatur, Alabama, on the campus of Calhoun Community College to solicit comments on the scope of the SEIS. The meeting was announced via paid newspaper announcements in the March 4, 2001, Sunday editions of *The Decatur Daily*, *The Athens News-Courier*, *The Huntsville Times*, and *The Florence Times Daily*. The paid newspaper announcement also appeared on March 6, 2001, in *The Athens News-Courier*. In addition to the paid announcements, TVA provided a news release about the project and upcoming meeting to the local media on March 4 and 6, 2001. *The Athens News-Courier* carried an article about the project and the public scoping meeting in the February 25, 2001, Sunday edition. *The Decatur Daily* carried an article about the project and the public meeting in its Sunday edition on March 4, 2001. *The Florence Times Daily* also carried an article about the project and the public scoping meeting on March 5, 2001.

The paid announcements included a map which illustrated the location of Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant (BFN), as well as the location of the public meeting. The announcements and the news release stated that the meeting was being held to obtain public input on the proposed plans to apply for renewal of the operating licenses for Units 1, 2, and 3 at BFN. They further stated that written comments on the project would be received through March 23, 2001. Copies of the paid announcements and news releases are in Appendix D.

Approximately 80 persons attended the meeting, including representatives from the following newspapers: *The Huntsville Times*, *The Birmingham News*, *The Knoxville News-Sentinel*, *The Athens News-Courier*, *The Decatur Daily*, and *The Florence Times Daily*. Representatives from WVNN/WZYP radio and WVNN-TV, both from Athens, Alabama, were also present. A representative for TVA addressed those in attendance to provide information about the proposed project and to explain that the purpose for the scoping was to obtain input from the public regarding what issues should be included as part of the DSEIS. Following the public address, the attendees were divided into four different break-out groups to allow those in attendance to verbally express their ideas, concerns, and/or questions. Each of the break-out sessions was facilitated by a representative of TVA or a member of the faculty from Calhoun Community College.

Comments received during the public meeting were noted and later reviewed to help identify environmental issues that should be addressed in the DSEIS as well as those minor issues which do not warrant detailed evaluation. On March 7, 2001, several newspapers published follow-up articles. *The Knoxville News Sentinel* published a follow up article entitled, "TVA gets citizens' input on extending life of BFN." *The Birmingham News* published an article entitled, "High consumption TVA's woe, not power shortage, critic says." *The Florence Daily Times* published a follow up article entitled, "TVA plan gets mixed reaction from residents." *The Athens News-Courier* published an article entitled, "TVA looks at 20 more years." On March 8, 2001, *The Maryville Times* of Maryville, Tennessee, published a follow up article entitled "TVA's BFN restart proposal finds criticism, support." Also on March 8, 2001, Reuters released an article entitled, "TVA mulls reviving mothballed Alabama Nuclear power plant."

6.1.2 Major Issues of Public Concern

From comments received during the public meeting, received in responses to letters sent, and from internal TVA scoping of the project, environmental issues pertinent to the proposed actions and the comparison of alternatives and alternatives were identified. These are listed below and have been addressed in this SEIS:

- Air Quality,
- Surface Water Quality,
- Groundwater Quality,
- Floodplain Impacts and Flood Risk,
- Terrestrial Ecology,
- Aquatic Ecology,
- Threatened and Endangered Species,
- Wetlands,
- Socioeconomics,
- Land Use/Soils,
- Transportation Resources,
- Visual Resources,

- Aesthetics and Recreation,
- Cultural Resources,
- Environmental Noise, and
- Health and Safety

6.2 Public and Agency Review of the DSEIS

The Draft SEIS was issued for public review on December 5, 2001. A copy of the Draft SEIS and a letter were formally transmitted to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) on December 6, 2001. On December 14, 2001, the EPA issued a Notice of Availability (NOA) for the document in the Federal Register (Volume 66, Number 241, Pages 64818 through 64819; EIS No. 010519). The issuance of the NOA formally opened a 45-day period for receiving public comments on the Draft SEIS. The comment period officially closed on January 30, 2002. The NOA listed the name of the document, the closing date for the comment period, as well as a TVA point of contact. A copy of the NOA is included in Appendix D.

Copies of the full Draft SEIS or a 28-page Executive Summary of the Draft SEIS were mailed to federal, state, and local officials, and members of the public, depending on expressed or anticipated interest. A list of the recipients of each document is provided in Chapter 8. More than 40 copies of the full Draft SEIS and more than 80 copies of the Executive Summary of the Draft SEIS were distributed. A full copy of the Draft SEIS, which contains the Executive Summary, was provided to each of the following libraries:

- Athens-Limestone Public Library - Athens, Alabama
- Florence-Lauderdale Public Library - Florence, Alabama
- Huntsville Times Library - Huntsville, Alabama
- Muscle Shoals Public Library - Muscle Shoals, Alabama

TVA issued a press release to the local and regional media on January 10, 2002, announcing the time and location of the public meeting scheduled for January 17, 2002, to receive public comments on the Draft SEIS. The news release also included a brief description of the project, the availability of the Draft SEIS, and a TVA point of contact. A copy of the press release is included in Appendix D.

In addition to the press release, TVA placed an advertisement regarding the Draft SEIS and the scheduled public meeting in the following newspapers with the corresponding publication dates:

- The Athens News-Courier, January 10 and 15, 2002
- The Decatur Daily, January 10 and 14, 2002
- The Huntsville Times, January 10 and 14, 2002
- The Florence Times Daily, January 10 and 14, 2002
- The Hartselle Enquirer, January 10 and 17 2002

The paid announcement provided the date and time of the public meeting, a map illustrating the location of the meeting and the plant site, and the availability of the Draft SEIS. It further stated

that written comments would be received through January 30, 2002, and provided appropriate points of contact. A copy of one of the advertisements is provided in Appendix D.

On January 17, 2002, TVA conducted a public meeting to receive comments on the draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for Operating License Renewal of the Browns Ferry Nuclear Plant. The meeting was held on the campus of Calhoun Community College near Decatur, Alabama, in the new Aerospace Technology Center. Forty-five people signed the attendance roster, including six newspaper reporters and several community leaders and union officials.

As people entered the building for the meeting, they were encouraged to register, to provide a record of their attendance. While registering, attendees were asked if they wanted to receive a copy of the Final SEIS or the Executive Summary (when published). They were also asked if they wished to speak during the comment forum portion of the meeting. The attendees included representatives of the City of Decatur, Decatur Chamber of Commerce, Morgan County Chamber of Commerce, Alabama Emergency Management Agency (EMA), Florence-Lauderdale County EMA, Morgan County EMA, Huntsville-Madison County EMA, Southern Nuclear, Calpine-Decatur Energy Center, Holiday Inn, and Stone & Webster. Union representatives included Alabama Carpenters Local 1274, IBEW, Laborers Local 366, and Painters Local 1293. Reporters from the Huntsville Times, Decatur Daily, Athens News-Courier, and the Florence Times Daily were also in attendance.

Approximately 35 TVA personnel supported the meeting, most of whom were subject matter experts who manned display tables during the “open house” portion of the meeting, representing the following topics addressed in the SEIS: License Renewal, Unit 1 Recovery, Air & Water Resources, Plant Effluents, Socioeconomics, Visual Resources & Environmental Noise, Aquatic & Terrestrial Ecology, Accident Analysis, Decommissioning & Spent Fuel Storage, and Overall SEIS.

During the concluding “discussion forum” portion of the meeting, three individuals spoke and all were in favor of the project, especially the option of restarting Unit 1. Four written comments were received at the meeting, and again all were favorable and supportive of Unit 1 recovery. These comments, as well as all other comments received during the 45-day comment period, have been identified and addressed in the Final SEIS. Appendix E lists the agencies and individuals who provided written comments to TVA regarding the Draft SEIS. Appendix F contains TVA’s responses to all comments received during the comment period, both written and oral.

Several articles appeared in local newspapers as follow-up stories to the news release and the public meeting.

- January 20, 2002 *The Decatur Daily* - “Nuclear power making comeback with public”
- January 20, 2002 *Athens News-Courier* - “Why wasn’t Athens present at hearing?”
- January 22, 2002 *Athens News-Courier* - “TVA still seeking input from public”
- January 18, 2002 *The Huntsville Times* - “Most at hearing favor relicensing nuclear reactors”
- January 18, 2002 *The Decatur Daily* - “TVA hears 3 people speak in favor of Unit 1 restart”
- January 18, 2002 *Florence Times Daily* - “Committee recommends Unit 1 restart”
- January 16, 2002 *The Decatur Daily* - “Shelby: Nuclear power safe”
- January 18, 2002 *Athens Post Athenian* - “TVA seeks input on Browns Ferry future”

6.3 Lead and Cooperating Agencies

TVA is the lead agency in preparing this SEIS. No cooperating agencies were identified. However, other federal, state, and local agencies were coordinated with during the DSEIS review period, as appropriate, including the following:

- Alabama Department of Environmental Management, Montgomery, Alabama
- Environmental Protection Agency, Region 4, Atlanta, Georgia
- Department of the Interior, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service