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[7590-01-P]

NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

[Docket No. 50-331; EAXX-429-00-000-1778044870; NRC-2026-1719]

NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC; Duane Arnold Energy Center; Draft Environmental Assessment and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact

AGENCY: Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice; request for comment.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) is issuing for public comment a draft environmental assessment (EA) and draft finding of no significant impact (FONSI) regarding the evaluation of the reasonably foreseeable environmental effects from proposed Federal actions related to reauthorizing power operations at Duane Arnold Energy Center (DAEC). Specifically, the NRC is considering issuance of an exemption and three license amendments, which were requested by NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC (NEDA) to support the potential reauthorization of power operations at DAEC. The U.S. Department of Energy Office of Energy Dominance Financing is a cooperating agency on the draft EA.

DATES: Submit comments by **[INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE *FEDERAL REGISTER*]**. Comments received after this date will be considered if it is practical to do so, but the NRC is able to ensure consideration only for comments received on or before this date.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments by any of the following methods; however, the NRC encourages electronic comment submission through the **Federal rulemaking website.**

- **Federal Rulemaking Website:** Go to https://www.regulations.gov and search for Docket ID NRC-2026-1719. Address questions about Docket IDs in Regulations.gov to Bridget Curran; telephone: 301-415-1003; email:

Bridget.Curran@nrc.gov. For technical questions, contact the individual(s) listed in the "For Further Information Contact" section of this document.

- **Email:** Comments may be submitted to the NRC electronically using the email address DAECRestartEnvironmental@nrc.gov.
- **Mail comments to:** Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards, Mail Stop: TWFN-5-A85, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555-0001, ATTN: Guidance and Publications Branch.

For additional direction on obtaining information and submitting comments, see "Obtaining Information and Submitting Comments" in the SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Kim Conway, telephone: 301-415-1335; email: Kimberly.Conway@nrc.gov, or Kevin Folk, telephone: 301-415-6944; email: Kevin.Folk@nrc.gov. Both are staff of the Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation, U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, Washington, DC 20555–0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Obtaining Information and Submitting Comments

A. Obtaining Information

Please refer to Docket ID NRC-2026-1719 when contacting the NRC about the availability of information for this action. You may obtain publicly available information related to this action by any of the following methods:

- **Federal Rulemaking Website:** Go to https://www.regulations.gov and search for Docket ID NRC-2026-1719.
- **NRC's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System (ADAMS):** You may obtain publicly available documents online in the ADAMS Public Documents collection at https://www.nrc.gov/reading-rm/adams.html. To begin the search, select "Begin ADAMS Public Search." For problems with ADAMS, please contact the NRC's Public Document Room (PDR) reference staff at 1-800-397-4209, at 301-415-4737, or by email to PDR.Resource@nrc.gov. For the convenience of the

reader, instructions about obtaining materials referenced in this document are provided in the “Availability of Documents” section.

- **NRC’s PDR:** The PDR, where you may examine and order copies of publicly available documents, is open by appointment. To make an appointment to visit the PDR, please send an email to PDR.Resource@nrc.gov or call 1-800-397-4209 or 301-415-4737, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. eastern time, Monday through Friday, except Federal holidays.

- **Public Library:** A copy of the draft EA and draft FONSI is available for public review at the following public library location: Hiawatha Public Library, 150 West Willman Street, Hiawatha, Iowa 52233.

- **NRC Public Project Website:** The draft EA and draft FONSI along with information regarding DAEC, including licensing, operation, decommissioning, and potential restart, is available at https://www.nrc.gov/info-finder/reactors/duan.

B. Submitting Comments

The NRC encourages electronic comment submission through the Federal rulemaking website (https://www.regulations.gov). Please include Docket ID NRC-2026-1719 in your comment submission.

The NRC cautions you not to include identifying or contact information that you do not want to be publicly disclosed in your comment submission. The NRC will post all comment submissions at https://www.regulations.gov as well as enter the comment submissions into ADAMS. The NRC does not routinely edit comment submissions to remove identifying or contact information.

If you are requesting or aggregating comments from other persons for submission to the NRC, then you should inform those persons not to include identifying or contact information that they do not want to be publicly disclosed in their comment submission. Your request should state that the NRC does not routinely edit comment submissions to remove such information before making the comment submissions available to the public or entering the comment into ADAMS.

II. Introduction

DAEC consists of a single boiling water nuclear reactor located in Linn County, Iowa. Originally licensed for operation on February 22, 1974, the NRC issued a renewed facility license (RFL) for DAEC on December 10, 2010, with the license term expiring on February 21, 2034.

On August 27, 2020, and October 12, 2020, NEDA submitted certifications that it had permanently ceased operations at DAEC and had permanently removed fuel from the reactor vessel, respectively, in accordance with paragraph 50.82(a)(1) of title 10 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (10 CFR). Upon the NRC's docketing of these certifications, the RFL no longer authorized operation of the reactor or emplacement or retention of fuel into the reactor vessel, as provided by 10 CFR 50.82(a)(2).

NEDA is seeking to return DAEC to power operations and has submitted for NRC approval an exemption request and three license amendment requests (LARs) in support of allowing the resumption of power operations through February 21, 2034, the previous expiration date of the facility's RFL.

A notice of opportunity to request a hearing and petition for leave to intervene was published in the *Federal Register* on April 22, 2026, regarding the three LARs. Consistent with the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, and the NRC's regulations, the NRC did not publish a notice of opportunity for hearing on the exemption request.

The NRC staff has prepared a draft EA and draft FONSI documenting its environmental review of the proposed actions related to reauthorizing power operations at DAEC. Based on its environmental review, the NRC staff has made the preliminary determination that the proposed actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the NRC staff has made the preliminary determination that it will not prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed actions and that a FONSI is warranted.

The NRC staff will consider comments on the draft EA and draft FONSI received over a 30-day public comment period from Federal, State, local, and Tribal officials and

members of the public. After consideration of these comments, the NRC staff will make a final determination regarding whether it will prepare an EIS for the proposed actions or whether a FONSI is warranted.

The environmental review included fulfillment of the NRC's obligations related to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended (54 U.S.C. 300101, et seq.) (NHPA). The regulation in section 800.8 of title 36 of the *Code of Federal Regulations* (36 CFR), "Coordination with the National Environmental Policy Act," allows agencies to use their National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.) process to fulfill the requirements of Section 106 of the NHPA. Therefore, pursuant to 36 CFR 800.8(c), the NRC used its process for the preparation of the EA on the proposed actions to comply with Section 106 of the NHPA in lieu of the procedures set forth at 36 CFR 800.3 through 800.6.

III. Summary of Draft Environmental Assessment

Description of the Proposed Federal Actions and Need

The NRC's proposed actions are decisions on whether to grant or deny NEDA's interdependent, connected licensing and regulatory requests, including any revisions or supplements thereto or other regulatory or licensing requests submitted to the NRC, that are necessary to support the reauthorization of power operations and refueling of the DAEC reactor.

The need for the NRC's proposed actions, which would collectively support the reauthorization of power operations and refueling of the DAEC reactor under the existing RFL, is to provide 610 megawatts-electric of baseload power generation capability through February 21, 2034. In support of its decision to pursue the resumption of power operations at DAEC, NEDA cites a 25-year power purchase agreement signed in 2025 with Google to supply carbon-free energy from DAEC to Google's cloud and artificial intelligence infrastructure in Iowa.

Environmental Impacts of the Proposed Federal Actions

In the draft EA, the NRC staff assessed the potential reasonably foreseeable environmental effects (impacts) from the proposed actions associated with the following relevant resource areas: land use and visual resources; meteorology, air quality, and noise; surface water resources; groundwater resources, ecological resources (terrestrial and aquatic); Federally protected ecological resources, historic and cultural resources; socioeconomic conditions; radiological and nonradiological human health; waste management; uranium fuel cycle and transportation; and postulated accidents. The NRC staff also considered decommissioning impacts as well as greenhouse gas emissions and climate change effects. The NRC staff determined that the environmental impacts of the proposed actions would be NOT SIGNIFICANT for each potentially affected environmental resource area. In addition, the NRC staff determined that the projected effects of climate change would not alter any of the impact determinations described in the EA.

Environmental Impacts of Alternatives to the Proposed Federal Actions

The NRC staff considered a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed actions, including an analysis of any environmental impacts of not implementing the proposed actions (i.e., the no-action alternative). The NRC staff determined that there are no alternatives that meet the need for the proposed actions. For the no-action alternative, the NRC staff determined that the environmental impacts could potentially be SIGNIFICANT. In contrast, the potential environmental impacts from the proposed actions of reauthorizing power operations at the existing DAEC would be NOT SIGNIFICANT for each potentially affected environmental resource area. Therefore, the NRC staff concluded that there are no environmentally preferrable alternatives to the proposed actions.

IV. Draft Finding of No Significant Impact

The proposed Federal actions before the NRC are whether to grant requests for an exemption and license amendments to support reauthorizing power operations at DAEC through the remainder of its RFL term (to February 21, 2034). The NRC staff has

conducted an environmental review of these actions and prepared a draft EA. This draft FONSI incorporates by reference the draft EA summarized in Section III of this notice and referenced in Section V of this notice. Based on its preliminary determination in the draft EA that the environmental impacts of the proposed actions would be NOT SIGNIFICANT for each potentially affected resource area, the NRC staff is issuing a draft determination that the proposed Federal actions will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Accordingly, the NRC staff has made a draft determination not to prepare an EIS for the proposed Federal actions and that a FONSI is warranted.

This draft FONSI and the related environmental documents are available for public inspection as discussed in the draft EA and Section I of this notice. Before making its final determination, the NRC staff will consider comments on the draft EA and draft FONSI received over a 30-day public comment period from Federal, State, Tribal, and local officials and members of the public. Once the NRC staff makes its final determination, the NRC will publish the final EA and final FONSI or proceed to prepare an EIS.

V. Availability of Documents

The documents identified in the following table are available to interested parties through ADAMS, as indicated.

DOCUMENT DESCRIPTION	ADAMS ACCESSION NO. / *FEDERAL REGISTER* NOTICE
Draft Environmental Assessment and Draft Finding of No Significant Impact for the Duane Arnold Energy Center Reauthorization of Power Operations Project, dated July 27, 2026.	ML26159A001
NextEra Energy Duane Arnold, LLC; Duane Arnold Energy Center; Applications for Amendments to Renewed Facility License Involving Proposed No Significant Hazards Consideration Determination and Containing Safeguards Information and Order Imposing Procedures for Access to Safeguards Information; License amendment request; notice of opportunity to comment, request a hearing, and petition for leave to intervene; order imposing procedures,	ML26091A203; 91 FR 21514

dated April 22, 2026.	

Authority: 42 U.S.C. 2011 *et seq.*

Dated: July 28, 2026.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Stephen Koenick,
Chief,
License Renewal Environmental Branch,
Division of Licensing Projects II,
Office of Nuclear Reactor Regulation.

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