



February 7, 2008

David M. Ratcliffe, CEO
Southern Company
30 Ivan Allen Jr. Blvd. NW
Atlanta, GA 30308

Re: Request that Southern Company withdraw the Early Site Permit Application for nuclear power expansion at Plant Vogtle.

Dear Mr. Ratcliffe:

On behalf of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League, Atlanta WAND (Women's Action for New Directions), Center for a Sustainable Coast, Savannah Riverkeeper, and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy, we write to request that you withdraw your license application for an early site permit and abandon your plans to expand Plant Vogtle. We make this request for the following reasons:

- The negative impacts of nuclear power, especially on our water resources, which we have raised in our license challenge of the proposed Plant Vogtle expansion, are credible and sound. As you know, a recent decision by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board rejected Southern Company's motion to dismiss the case and upheld our concerns about water issues and nuclear power.
- The high cost of prospective nuclear power plant systems and components will lead to cost overruns and uncertainty in the marketplace. Already, Georgia Power has delayed submitting its cost estimate for Plant Vogtle to the Georgia Public Service Commission perhaps because Westinghouse reactors have tripled in price and proposed nuclear power expansions in Idaho and South Carolina have been shelved.
- Withdrawal of the license application at this time would support Southern Company's financial stability and signify its integrity. Southern Company's business model commits the company to "earn unquestionable trust, dedication to superior performance throughout our business, and a total commitment to the success of our employees, customers, shareholders, and the communities we serve."

We make this request with due consideration of the many factors associated with electric power economics, safety and reliability. We view the risks, costs and water supply issues as vital.

The uncertainties associated with new nuclear power plants continue to escalate, putting shareholders, Georgia ratepayers, taxpayers, and the environment at increasing risk. We strongly recommend that Southern Company and its utility partners aggressively pursue energy efficiency and conservation along with renewable energy options. These measures would save consumers money, preserve our imperiled water resources, and offer economic development opportunities not only for Southern Company but also for the region.

In terms of water issues, the southeast region, and Georgia in particular, are dealing with a devastating drought that calls attention to the fact that the electric infrastructure has significant impacts on our water supplies. The media, policy makers, and the public are all aware that electricity use is directly tied to water use. Nuclear power plants rely on huge amounts of surface water for cooling and southeastern lakes are approaching the minimum levels required by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. In North Carolina, Lake Norman has dropped 4½ feet in one year and is now within a foot of the level required by the license for Duke Power's McGuire nuclear plant. South Carolina faces similar prospects. Last year, drought forced a temporary shutdown of a nuclear power plant in Alabama. More drought-related shut downs are in the forecast for 2008.

Power plants are the largest water consumers in Georgia. Plant Vogtle is the largest water user on the Savannah River; two-thirds of what it withdraws is lost as vapor in cooling and is not returned to the river. Southern Company's doubling of Vogtle's size will make this situation worse. The practical alternatives of energy efficiency, conservation and renewable energy are much less water intensive and would help us cope with the drought far better than building more nuclear or coal power plants.

As you are aware, our organizations are plaintiffs in a legal case challenging the early site permit application for Plant Vogtle. Because of the recent decision by the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's Atomic Safety and Licensing Board, we believe that Southern Company and its partners should drop their pursuit of expanding Plant Vogtle. The judges rejected the company's argument that impacts under minimum flow conditions to the Savannah River are beyond the scope of our contentions. Similarly, the Atomic Safety and Licensing Board rejected the company's effort to eliminate consideration of alternative cooling technology. Dry cooling would virtually eliminate plant water use. The legal setbacks the company has experienced in this case add to the overall risk of the project.

Another major risk is that the poor economics of nuclear power continue to plague the industry. Financial concerns nearly led to its demise decades ago. Subsidies and loan guarantees approved by Congress in 2005 and 2007 indicate that the economics of nuclear power have not changed much since then. Wall Street continues to have serious doubts about nuclear power. These financial realities undermine nuclear utilities as cost estimates soar. Based on cost factors alone, we believe it is prudent to halt the expansion of additional nuclear reactors at Plant Vogtle.

We know that Georgia Power planned to have reliable cost figures for Vogtle from Westinghouse by the end of 2007. Reports in the trade press and other media suggest that contract negotiations between Southern Company and Westinghouse may have broken down. We know that the escalation of costs for new nuclear plants is underway. For example, in Florida the cost for new nuclear plants has risen by two to three times the estimates from just one year ago. A proposed Progress Energy nuclear venture in Levy County escalated from an estimated range of \$5-7 billion in 2006 to over \$10 billion. A Florida Power and Light project, also using the Westinghouse AP1000 design, now ranges from \$12 to \$18 billion. Because of increased reactor cost estimates, South Carolina Electric & Gas (SCE&G) has apparently reconsidered its plan for more reactors at the V.C. Summer plant near Columbia, SC. We believe that that the companies involved with the proposed Vogtle expansion will fare no better.

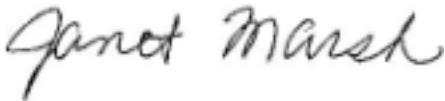
In closing, we request that you withdraw the pursuit of high-risk and water-intensive energy choices such as building more nuclear and coal plants. Specifically, we ask you to stop your efforts to expand nuclear Plant Vogtle near Waynesboro, Georgia along the Savannah River.

Respectfully,



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cc: J. Barnie Beasley Jr., Chairman, President, and CEO Southern Nuclear
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Michael D. Garrett, President and CEO, Georgia Power Company
Georgia Public Service Commission
Bob Johnston, MEAG CEO/President (Municipal Electric Authority of Georgia)
Tom Smith, CEO Oglethorpe Power