owned by Basin Electric Power Cooperative, Bonneville Power Administration, Citizens Utilities, Detroit Edison Company, Eastern Maine Electric Cooperative, Joint Owners of the Highgate Project, Maine Electric Power Company, Maine Public Service Company, Minnesota Power and Light Company, Minnkota Power Cooperative, New York Power Authority, Niagara Mohawk Power Corporation, Northern States Power, and Vermont Electric Transmission Company. Each of these transmission facilities, as more fully described in the application, has previously been authorized by a Presidential permit issued pursuant to Executive Order 10485, as amended.

Procedural Matters

Any persons desiring to become a party to this proceeding or to be heard by filing comments or protests to this application should file a petition to intervene, comment or protest at the address provided above in accordance with §§ 385.211 or 385.214 of the FERC's Rules of Practice and Procedures (18 CFR 385.211, 385.214). Fifteen copies of such petitions, comments and protests should be filed with the DOE on or before the date listed above. Additional copies are to be filed directly with Stephen C. Smith, President, The Power Company of America, Two Greenwich Plaza, Greenwich, CT 06830 and Lynn H. Hargis, Robert F. Shapiro, Chadbourne & Parke LLP, 1200 New Hampshire Ave., N.W., Suite 300, Washington, DC 20036.

A final decision will be made on this application after the environmental impacts have been evaluated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and a determination is made by the DOE that the proposed action will not adversely impact on the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system.

Copies of this application will be made available, upon request, for public inspection and copying at the address provided above.

Issued in Washington, DC on January 23, 1998.

Anthony J. Como,

Manager, Electric Power Regulation, Office of Coal and Power Im/Ex, Office of Coal and Power Systems, Office of Fossil Energy.

[FR Doc. 98–2046 Filed 1–27–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Record of Decision on the Disposal of the S3G and D1G Prototype Reactor Plants

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Record of decision.

SUMMARY: This Record of Decision has been prepared on the Disposal of the S3G and D1G Prototype Reactor Plants, located at the Knolls Atomic Power Laboratory Kesselring Site (Kesselring Site) near West Milton, New York, pursuant to Section 102(2) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), and in accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality regulations implementing NEPA procedures (40 CFR parts 1500–1508), and Department of Energy (DOE) regulations implementing NEPA procedures (10 CFR part 1021). The DOE Office of Naval Reactors (Naval Reactors Program) has decided to promptly dismantle the defueled S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants. The project will be completed as soon as practicable subject to available appropriated funding. To the extent practical, the resulting low-level radioactive materials will be recycled at existing commercial facilities. The remaining low-level radioactive wastes will be disposed of at the DOE Savannah River Site in South Carolina. All non-radiological waste would be recycled or disposed of off-site at permitted facilities using licensed haulers.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Requests for further information should be directed to Mr. Andrew S. Baitinger, Chief, West Milton Field Office, Office of Naval Reactors, Department of Energy, PO Box 1069, Schenectady, NY 12301–1069, *telephone* (518) 884–1234.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants are located on the 65-acre Kesselring Site near West Milton, New York, approximately 17 miles north of Schenectady. The S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants first started operation in 1958 and 1962, respectively, and served for more than 30 years as facilities for testing reactor plant components and equipment and for training of U.S. Navy personnel. As a result of the end of the Cold War and the downsizing of the Navy, the S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants were shutdown in May 1991 and March 1996, respectively. Removal of the spent nuclear fuel from the S3G and D1G Prototype reactors and shipments of the spent nuclear fuel to the Expended Core Facility at the DOE's Idaho National Engineering and Environmental Laboratory were completed in July 1994 and February 1997, respectively. After defueling, the S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants were placed in a safe and stable protective storage condition. The Kesselring Site will not be released for other uses in the foreseeable future since two active prototype reactor plants continue to operate to perform training of U.S. Navy personnel and testing of naval nuclear propulsion plant equipment.

The alternatives analyzed in detail in the Final Environmental Impact Statement were the preferred alternative of prompt dismantlement, a deferred dismantlement alternative, and a no action alternative of keeping the defueled S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants in protective storage indefinitely.

DOE has selected prompt dismantlement of the S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants. All S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plant systems, components and structures will be removed from the Kesselring Site. To the extent practicable, the resulting low-level radioactive metals will be recycled at existing commercial facilities. The remaining low-level radioactive waste will be disposed of at the DOE Savannah River Site in South Carolina. There will be an estimated total of 60 radioactive material shipments from the Kesselring Site to either the Savannah River Site or to commercial recycling facilities. Two or three of the shipments will be by rail and the remainder will be by truck. The Savannah River Site currently receives low-level radioactive waste from Naval Reactors' sites in the eastern United States. Both the volume and radioactive content of the S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plant low-level waste fall within the projections of Naval Reactors' waste provided to the Savannah River Site, which are included and analyzed in the *Savannah River Site Waste Management Final Environmental Impact Statement*, dated July 1995. All nonradiological shipments would be by truck, and would be recycled or disposed of off-site at permitted facilities using licensed haulers.

The deferred dismantlement alternative would involve keeping the defueled S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants in protective storage for 30 years before dismantlement. Deferring dismantlement for 30 years would allow nearly all of the cobalt-60 radioactivity to decay. Nearly all of the gamma radiation within the reactor plant comes from cobalt-60. The very small amount of longer-lived radioisotopes, such as nickel-59, would remain and would

have to be addressed during dismantlement.

The no action alternative would involve keeping the defueled S3G and D1G Prototype reactor plants in protective storage indefinitely. Since there is some residual radioactivity with long half-lives, such as nickel-59, in the defueled reactor plant, this alternative would leave some radioactivity at the Kesselring Site indefinitely.

The Naval Reactors Program distributed the Draft Environmental Impact Statement on the Disposal of the S3G and D1G Prototype Reactor Plants in July 1997. Comments from 14 individuals and agencies were received in either oral or written statements at a public hearing or in comment letters. Approximately one-third of the commenters expressed a preference for the Naval Reactors' preferred alternative, prompt dismantlement. Based on U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) review of the Draft Environmental Impact Statement, EPA rated the proposed project as ''LO'' (Lack of Objection). All of the comments and Naval Reactors' responses are included in an appendix to the Final Environmental Impact Statement, distributed in November 1997.

From an environmental perspective, no single alternative stands out as environmentally preferable. The radiation exposure to the general public would be small and comparable for all three alternatives. Occupational exposure would be higher for the prompt dismantlement alternative, however, this expected exposure would be comparable in magnitude to the radiation exposure routinely received during current operation and maintenance activities of Naval prototype reactor plants. Non-radiological environmental, health and safety impacts associated with all of the alternatives would also be small and consistent with ongoing Kesselring Site operations. Based on current conditions, any of the alternatives could be accomplished within Federal and State requirements, in both the short term and the long term. However, 30 years from now, changing conditions associated with the regulatory environment, and the availability of trained personnel and waste disposal facilities could result in unforeseeable complications or delays. Such future unforeseeable conditions cause additional uncertainty in the impacts associated with the deferred dismantlement and no action alternatives. Naval Reactors has identified the prompt dismantlement alternative as the preferred alternative since it is consistent with the Naval Reactors' record of managing waste efficiently and minimizing its generation. Prompt dismantlement would allow Naval Reactors to utilize an experienced work force that is presently located at the Kesselring Site. Prompt dismantlement can be accomplished safely, economically, and with a high degree of certainty that the environmental impacts would be small.

As discussed in the Final Environmental Impact Statement, the Naval Reactors Program implements a large number of conservative engineering practices in its operations. These conservative engineering practices will serve to ensure that environmental impacts will be very small. No additional mitigative measures have been identified which are needed to further reduce the small impacts which were described in the Final Environmental Impact Statement. Accordingly, all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm from the preferred alternative have been adopted.

Issued at Arlington, VA, this 20th day of January 1998.

F.L. Bowman,

Admiral, U.S. Navy, Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program.

[FR Doc. 98–1946 Filed 1–27–98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Record of Decision, Shutdown of the River Water System at the Savannah River Site, Savannah River Operations Office, Aiken, South Carolina

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy.

ACTION: Record of Decision.

SUMMARY: The U.S. DOE has decided to implement the No Action alternative identified in the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Shutdown of the River Water System (RWEIS) at the Savannah River Site (SRS). Under this alternative, DOE will continue to operate and maintain the system and maintain the water level of L-Lake.

DOE will assess the need for future environmental remediation alternatives for L-Lake under existing Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA) commitments. Characterization activities associated with CERCLA closure are expected to begin in the year 2000 and be completed in several years. This characterization will inform any required remedial action. Pending these activities, DOE will continue to operate the RWS. If during continued operation of the RWS a system component fails, DOE will take appropriate emergency actions. DOE will then determine if the system is too costly to repair (by comparing this cost to estimated shutdown costs and future possible remediation costs under the CERCLA). If DOE determines that the RWS is too costly to repair, it will reevaluate all relevant commitments and the information in the RWEIS, to determine necessary actions to shut down the RWS. However, the RWS is in good condition and not expected to fail over this period of time.

This RWEIS evaluates three alternatives for the disposition of the RWS at the SRS. The RWS is a 50-mile underground concrete piping structure and pumping system that was built in the early 1950s to provide cooling water for the SRS' five nuclear production reactors. The RWEIS alternatives cover the spectrum of reasonable options as follows:

(1) Continue operation of the RWS (No Action Alternative);

(2) Shut down and maintain the RWS for potential restart (Preferred Alternative); and

(3) Shut down and deactivate the RWS with no maintenance for potential restart.

Based on the RWEIS evaluation of the potential environmental impacts, as well as the costs, energy consumption, and regulatory implications of the alternatives, DOE has selected the No Action alternative and will continue to operate the RWS. Other than potential CERCLA remediation activities, if DOE continued to operate and maintain the RWS indefinitely the No-Action Alternative would require the greatest commitment of money and energy resources. The RWS would continue to supply 5,000 gpm to L-Lake from the Savannah River. To do so, DOE would spend approximately $1,084,000 annually to provide RWS surveillance and maintenance and $494,000 annually for electrical energy to pump the water uphill from the river. Finally, DOE would continue to dredge the RWS intake canal to keep it clear of debris. However, there is great uncertainty regarding the cost of remedial action under CERCLA. Therefore, until characterization is completed, it will not be evident whether shutting down or continuing to operate and maintain the RWS is economically the most prudent course of action.

In its present configuration, the RWS circulates water from the Savannah River to a 1000 acre man-made lake known as L-Lake. L-Lake no longer serves to mitigate thermal effluents from L-Reactor because it no longer operates. RWS flow is necessary to maintain the full pool water level of L-Lake.