

the affected environment. The GEIS will be used to evaluate the impacts of a reactor that fits within the bounds of the PPE on a site that fits within the bounds of the site parameter envelope.

The GEIS would specify which environmental impacts would be essentially the same for designs that fit within parameters set in the GEIS, and which environmental impacts require plant-specific analysis during an environmental review. The NRC plans to issue a draft GEIS for comment on May 1, 2021, and a final GEIS on May 1, 2022.

While the NRC anticipates that the environmental review process for an advanced reactor with a small environmental footprint could take 24 months or less to complete without a GEIS, using a GEIS could shorten that time frame by 25 percent, resulting in an environmental review process of less than 18 months for reactors that fit the PPE.

The NRC is seeking input from the public and stakeholders regarding the reactor and site parameters that should be included in the GEIS. Details about the public comment opportunity are included in the April 30 *Federal Register*. Submitted comments may be provided through the federal rulemaking website, at [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov), using Docket ID NRC-2020-0101.

FERC

## States request review of agency's MOPR ruling

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (NJBPU), along with the Public Service Commission of Maryland, on April 27 filed a petition with the U.S. Court of Appeals, requesting a review of an April 16 ruling by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission that largely upheld its December 2019 order regarding PJM Interconnection's forward-looking capacity auctions (*NN*, Jan. 2020, p. 9). The controversial order instructed PJM to expand its minimum offer price rule (MOPR) to include new and existing energy resources, including nuclear and renewables, that receive state subsidies. PJM operates the largest wholesale competitive electricity market in the country, covering 13 states and the District of Columbia.

The NJBPU contends that the MOPR will discourage clean-energy resources from entering the capacity market and that it will cost consumers in New Jersey and elsewhere significantly more money. "From day one, [New Jersey Gov. Phil Murphy's] administration has prioritized building New Jersey's renewable energy programs, which we all recognize are

critical to the state's economy, to building clean energy jobs, and to fighting back against climate change," said New Jersey Attorney General Gurbir Grewal in a press release. "But now the federal government is trying to undo those efforts and stack the deck in favor of fossil fuel companies instead. The federal government's order is as unlawful as it is illogical, and today we're challenging that action in court."

In May 2018, Murphy signed into law a bill that raised the target of the state's renewable energy portfolio standard to 50 percent by 2030, issued an executive order calling for state agencies to develop an updated plan to provide a path to 100 percent clean energy by 2050, and signed into law a bill designed to aid the state's nuclear power plants (*NN*, June 2018, p. 17). That measure—estimated to be worth about \$300 million in annual subsidies to Public Service Enterprise Group, owner of Hope Creek and co-owner, with Exelon, of Salem—directed the NJBPU to establish a zero-emission certificate program for nuclear plants, similar to the zero-emission credits programs implemented in Illinois and New York.

Also, in March of this year, the NJBPU initiated an investigation into possible alternatives to state participation in the PJM-administered regional capacity market. **N**

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