

NRC to discuss Shoreline Fault near Diablo

David Sneed, San Luis Obispo Tribune, 1-4-11

The federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission will hold a public meeting Jan. 19 to discuss a PG&E report analyzing a newly discovered earthquake fault near Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant.

The public will be able to observe the discussion between PG&E and NRC officials and will have an opportunity to comment before the meeting adjourns.

Preliminary analysis of the Shoreline Fault by PG&E and NRC seismologists indicates that the plant could withstand the maximum ground motion the new fault could generate.

The Shoreline Fault was discovered in 2008 when PG&E and the U.S. Geological Survey were reviewing seismology data of the coastline near the plant.

The new fault is a half-mile offshore from the plant.

Discovery of the fault renewed public concerns about the safety of the plant in an area rife with earthquake faults.

Another larger fault, the Hosgri Fault, is three miles offshore from the plant.

Seismologists say a 6.5-magnitude quake is the strongest either fault could produce.

The plant is designed to withstand a 7.5-magnitude temblor.

Because of the earthquake threat, PG&E is required to maintain a seismic monitoring program to analyze any new information as part of its licensing requirements.