

**Department of Environmental Conservation
Response to Comments**

For

Nikiski Combined Cycle Plant

APDES Permit No. AK0053619

Public Noticed April 30, 2024 – May 29, 2024

June 10, 2024



**Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation
Wastewater Discharge Authorization Program
555 Cordova Street
Anchorage, AK 99501**

1 Introduction

1.1 Summary of Facility / Permit

The Nikiski Combined Cycle (NCC) Plant, a combined cycle electric generation facility, is owned and operated by Alaska Energy and Electric Cooperative, Inc. (AEEC). AEEC is a member-owned, non-profit electric cooperative with a single member, Homer Electric Association (HEA). HEA is also a member-owned, non-profit electric cooperative, but it has numerous members consisting of electricity consumers. The NCC Plant supplies power to approximately 23,000 members located in the Southern Kenai Peninsula. Discharge from the NCC Plant consists of first-stage reverse osmosis reject, reverse osmosis cleaning waste, raw water filtration unit backwash, and wastewater from water treatment building sinks and drains. Discharge occurs intermittently to Cook Inlet at a daily maximum flow rate of 42,000 gallons per day.

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC or the Department) first issued an Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) permit for the NCC Plant in 2012. In 2018, DEC reissued the permit and established effective and expiration dates of October 1, 2018 and September 30, 2023. Under the Administrative Procedures Act and state regulations at 18 AAC 83.155(c), an APDES permit may be administratively extended (i.e., continues in force and effect) provided that the permittee submits a timely and complete application for a new permit prior to the expiration of the current permit. A timely application for a new permit was submitted by AEEC in April 2023; therefore, the 2018 permit is administratively extended until such time a new permit is reissued.

1.2 Opportunities for Public Participation

The Department proposed to issue an APDES wastewater discharge permit for the NCC Plant. To ensure public, agency, local governments and tribal notification and opportunities for participation, the Department:

- identified the permit on the annual Permit Issuance Plan posted online at: [Permit Issuance Plan \(alaska.gov\)](https://www.alaska.gov/dec/permit-issuance-plan)
- notified local governments and potentially affected tribes that the Department would be working on this permit via letter, fax and/or email
- posted a preliminary draft of the permit on-line for a 10-day applicant review April 11, 2024 and notified tribes and other agencies

- posted the draft of the permit online for a 30-day public comment period on April 30, 2024.
- provided the applicant a five-day applicant review opportunity. The applicant waived the five-day review on May 31, 2024.
- sent email notifications via the APDES Program List Serve when the preliminary draft and draft permits were available for review

The Department did not receive any comments during the public notice of the draft permit.

1.3 Final Permit

The final permit was adopted by the Department on June 10, 2024. There were no changes made to the final permit from the publicly noticed draft permit.