

**DOUGLAS COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
WORK SESSION**

**Tuesday, June 30, 2026**

**A G E N D A**

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**10:30 a.m.**

- John Adams Academy Douglas County Application for Funding
- 2026 Philip S. Miller Grant Discussion
- Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration at Highland Heritage Regional Park
- Follow Up for a Potential Feasibility Study of Small Modular Reactor Nuclear Sites in Douglas County

# Agenda Item

**Date:** 6-30-2026  
**To:** Douglas County Board of County Commissioners  
**Through:** Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager  
**From:** Jennifer L. Eby, AICP, Director of Community Services  
**Subject:** John Adams Academy Douglas County Application for School Security Funding

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The staff requests direction from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) regarding an application submitted by John Adams Douglas County.

## Agenda Item

**Date:****To:** Douglas County Board of County Commissioners**Through:** Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager**From:** Jennifer L. Eby, AICP, Director of Community Services**CC:** Kim Smith, Community Programs Coordinator  
Allison E. Cutting, Community Services Supervisor  
Rand M. Clark, CCAP, NCRT, Assistant Director of Community Service**Subject:** **2026 Philip S. Miller Grant Discussion**

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**SUMMARY**

Douglas County Community Services staff requests direction from the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) regarding the division of the 2026 Philip S. Miller (PSM) grant amount of \$200,000.

**BACKGROUND**

PSM trust distributions are intended for charitable, scientific, literary or education purposes. Historically, the BCC has prioritized applicants offering services and outcomes that promote self-sufficiency, support at-risk youth, prevent suicide, assist older adults, and fill gaps in medical and mental health services.

Douglas County Community Services staff requests direction from the Board of County Commissioners regarding the division of the 2026 PSM grant amount of \$200,000. Historically, the funds have been split to provide funding for the competitive grant process and older adult services.

**DISCUSSION**

The PSM trust distribution for 2026 is \$200,000. In preparation for the 2026 grant process, staff requests BCC direction on how the 2026 PSM funds should be divided for competitive grants and older adult services. Following precedent, the grant would be divided as follows:

- \$90,000 for the older adult application process
- \$110,000 for the competitive grant application process

Staff are prepared to discuss any items in more detail, as needed.

## Memorandum

**Date:** June 20, 2026

**To:** Doug DeBord, County Manager

**Through:** Dan Avery, Deputy County Manager

**From:** Steve Shoultz, CPRE, Director of Parks and Recreation

**CC:** Nick Giauque, CPRP, Parks Programs Manager  
Michael Alexander, Director of Emergency Management

**Subject:** **Fourth of July Fireworks Celebration at Highland Heritage Regional Park**

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### SUMMARY

Highlands Ranch Community Association (HRCA) and Highlands Ranch Metropolitan District (HRMD) have decided to hold a community concert on July 2, 2026, instead of an annual fireworks display. Staff has begun contacting the vendors that typically provide fireworks, traffic and crowd-control devices, additional portable restrooms/hand-washing stations, and additional trash receptacles to check availability and anticipated costs should the Board decide to provide the Fourth of July Fireworks show at Highland Heritage Regional Park.

### BACKGROUND

Based on figures from HRCA and HRMD, the total cost for this event is estimated at approximately \$78,115. Currently, staff has obtained the following information in preparation for a discussion with the Board.

- **Night Musick Productions LLC** is the fireworks vendor. With a short timeline before the event date, the fireworks availability will be limited to what the vendor currently has in stock. However, they would be able to provide a fireworks show of the same length and intensity as last year. The cost for this show would be \$42,000.00. This vendor must be approved as a sole-source vendor due to their familiarity with this event.
- **Colorado Barricade** is the traffic and crowd control vendor that can provide all necessary equipment to implement the control plan used historically. The cost for their services is \$15,715.00. This vendor would need to be approved as a sole-source vendor, given their familiarity with this event and their past development of a traffic plan.
- **Douglas County Sheriff** would provide coverage for securing the fireworks fall zone, traffic control at park entrances and exits, and traffic control on streets and in

neighborhoods near the park. Total cost for Sheriff staffing would be approximately \$10,200

- **Honey Bucket**, a preferred vendor for the County, would provide thirty-two additional portable restrooms and 3 hand washing stations. Total cost would be approximately \$5,200.
- **Waste Connections**, a preferred vendor for the County, would provide twenty-two additional portable trash receptacles. Total cost would be approximately \$5,000
- **Event Staffing** would be covered using a combination of volunteers and Parks Staff, which is anticipated to be approximately forty hours total.

### **FOLLOW UP**

During an Administration Meeting on June 9<sup>th</sup>, the Board directed staff to complete the following.

1. Move forward with plans to host a July 4<sup>th</sup> fireworks or drone show at Highland Heritage Regional Park, to include scheduling the vendors, working with the Sheriff to schedule staffing for crowd and traffic control, and providing additional portable restrooms and hand-washing facilities.
2. Consult the Sheriff and Emergency Management for concerns.
3. Contact HRCA and HRMD to gauge the possibility of a partnership with funding and/or staffing for a fireworks display.

Staff have the following updates concerning the above items.

1. Staff contacted drone vendors within the state, and none were available to provide a large-scale drone show. The fireworks vendor is available to provide a show similar to last year's 4<sup>th</sup> of July show. The contract with the fireworks vendor has been sent for signature. The Sheriff will use the same operational plan as last year's show. Traffic signage, barricades, and crowd control fencing have been scheduled. The portable restrooms and hand-washing stations are scheduled.
2. Neither HRCA nor HRMD can partner in staffing the event, as they will be working on their concert on July 2.
3. HRCA agreed not to use the Board-approved partnership funding for their canceled Fourth of July fireworks, so that it may be used for the fireworks show.

### **NEXT STEPS**

Staff are prepared to discuss event logistics and move forward with Board direction.

## Agenda Item

**Date:** June 30, 2026

**To:** Douglas County Board of County Commissioners

**Through:** Douglas J. DeBord, County Manager

**From:** Kati Carter, AICP, Director of Community Development *K C*  
Caroline Frizell, Director of Communication and Community Engagement *CF*

**CC:** DJ Beckwith, Principal Planner  
Sarah Packard, Communication Specialist  
Lauren Pulver, Planning Manager  
Steven E. Koster, AICP, Deputy Director of Community Development

**Subject:** **Follow Up for a Potential Feasibility Study of Small Modular Reactor Nuclear Sites in Douglas County**

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### SUMMARY

At a recent work session, the Board of County Commissioners (Board) requested that staff bring back further research on Small Modular Reactors (SMR). This memo includes additional information on the current landscape of nuclear power private sector investment in nuclear technology, and health and safety concerns of the public and the environment.

The federal regulatory framework for nuclear technology is rapidly changing, with regulations specific to SMR and other small nuclear technology expected to be released by the end of 2026. Under the current regulations based on traditional nuclear power plants, much of the County is restricted from nuclear power site development. As a result, any feasibility the Board may want to consider will be better informed once the new regulations are finalized and it is better understood the impact they will have in Douglas County.

### CURRENT LANDSCAPE OF NUCLEAR POWER GENERATION

The current federal administration and the private sector are making massive investments into nuclear energy. Health and safety impacts of nuclear power are being weighed in light of the demand for increased energy. Technological advances in nuclear power production are aimed at providing a more stable and safe means of energy production. As technology allows nuclear reactors to develop smaller, contained systems, the opportunity for commercial use has increased.

There are three main categories of reactors: Large-scale reactors, SMRs, and microreactors.

- Large-scale reactors are the older, traditional power plants. They produce anywhere from 300 to over 1,000 Megawatts of power and are generally water cooled, requiring large amounts of water. These sites require from 640 to 1,000 acres or more.
- SMRs are self-contained reactors that produce anywhere between 20 and 300 Megawatts of power. SMRs allow for mass production leading to lower costs and a streamlined process for nuclear site development. There are many different types and models of SMRs, each attempting to respond to specific issues, such as reducing water usage. An SMR site requires 10 to 300 acres or more.
- Microreactors are new to the market with the original concepts derived from military use, such as those used to power navy ships. Microreactors produce 1 to 20 Megawatts of power that can be transported on a truck. Microreactors use lower dosages of uranium fuel, and an internal cooling system, reducing the risk of radiation leaks. The future of microreactors will likely lead to no nuclear waste being stored on the site of the reactor. Microreactors are created to be entirely self-contained and will not need to be connected to a local water supply, with some models not using any water at all. Multiple microreactors can fit within one acre.

### **Current Regulatory Framework**

The current federal administration has prioritized investment into nuclear technology and streamlining the approval process for nuclear projects, resulting in the ADVANCE Act and Presidential Executive Order 14300 that attempt to modernize and encourage the further development of nuclear technology in the U.S. The ADVANCE Act requires the Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) to shorten application time and establish a new regulatory framework around advanced reactors, such as SMR and microreactors, and fusion technologies by the end of 2026. The NRC released new guidance on microreactors for public review in May 2026. Once the new regulations are finalized and released the process for how SMRs and microgenerators are approved and where they can be located is likely to be revised from current regulations, based on their more limited impacts to surrounding areas.

Under the current regulations based on traditional nuclear power plants, much of the County is restricted from nuclear power site development. A feasibility study will better inform the potential use of new nuclear power technologies in the County once the new and updated regulations are finalized at the end of 2026.

### **ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF NUCLEAR POWER**

Traditional nuclear power plants are a reliable source of jobs for communities, employing up to 800 workers in high salary positions. The TerraPower site, called the Kemmerer Unit, in southeast Wyoming will be the first commercial SMR in the U.S. and is expected to employ 250 permanent staff once it is fully operational. The Oklahoma Corporation Commission's feasibility study found that the aerospace industry workforce overlaps largely with the nuclear sector,

potentially making Douglas County a strong candidate for the nuclear sector. There are many companies who are working to develop both SMRs and microreactors. The industry of nuclear reactor manufacturing is also rapidly expanding. A County feasibility study could also include economic impact should economic development partners choose to recruit SMR manufacturing to the County.

Given current power development constraints, the data center, microchip, and advanced manufacturing industries are looking to nuclear energy to power the future. Companies such as Amazon, Google, Microsoft, and Meta are all funding nuclear technologies to meet their growing need for power. Bill Gates has invested \$1 billion in the TerraPower project in Wyoming. Google and Microsoft are working to reopen decommissioned reactors, Duane Arnold Nuclear Plant in Iowa and Three Mile Island Nuclear Plant in Pennsylvania, to power data centers. Many are investing in new SMR and microreactor technologies as well.

Recently, Buckley Space Force Base in Aurora was chosen to house a microreactor as part of the Advanced Nuclear Power for Installations program. It is working with Radiant Industries to build the Kaleidos reactor, which is the first mass produced nuclear microreactor. It will produce 1 Megawatt and is expected to be delivered to the base in 2028. The cost of the Kaleidos microreactor is estimated to be between \$10 and \$20 Million dollars.

### **ENVIRONMENTAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH IMPACTS**

Nuclear power is a highly regulated power source. The NRC is tasked with ensuring the safety of nuclear power. The NRC determines whether it is safe to build and operate a proposed nuclear reactor site, evaluates the environmental impact of the building and operation at the proposed site, inspects construction and safe operation, licenses reactor control room operators, and issues the permits to build and operate a nuclear facility. The NRC conducts intensive studies for each stage including the environmental impacts of the proposed site and region's ecological resources, cultural resources, hydrology, socioeconomics, geological resources, infrastructure, traffic, transportation, accidents and hazards. This list of site impacts may be revised with updated regulations and analysis should be included in a feasibility study to help a company or utility provider understand relevant site impacts based on locations in the County.

The Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health published a study in February of 2026, finding "...that U.S. counties located closer to nuclear power plants experienced higher cancer mortality rates, even after accounting for socioeconomic, environmental, and health care factors." This study is attached. The health impacts of commercial SMR and microreactors are not yet known, given the new technology.

Radioactive waste created from nuclear reactors can also present health concerns. Currently the public sector does not have an effective way to dispose of nuclear waste, long term. Many facilities contain waste onsite. Radioactive waste continues to be radioactive at harmful levels for thousands of years. The owner of the nuclear site is responsible for disposal of nuclear waste, but it can result in the site becoming unusable for many years. The Rocky Flats Site is an

example of this. Despite the site having undergone a major cleanup it remains closed off for future development.

## **NUCLEAR FEASIBILITY STUDY REVIEW**

Most feasibility studies for the public sector are being conducted at either the state level, usually through state utility agencies, or by utility providers. In Colorado, Colorado Springs Utilities (CSU) has been actively researching nuclear power production. In 2025, CSU's Utilities Policy Advisory Committee did a broad information gathering study on nuclear power generation. This resulted in recommendations to the CSU Board to conduct a year-long feasibility study, as well as hiring a nuclear physicist to help facilitate nuclear implementation. Last year, Denver International Airport (DEN) issued a request for proposal (RFP) for a feasibility study to develop an SMR to assist in powering the airport. The RFP has since been postponed due to backlash on lack of public outreach, resulting in a public outreach campaign that is ongoing.

The memo includes an attached draft scope of work for a County feasibility study. The scope of work includes review of the following items:

- Land citing criteria for nuclear generation.
- Environmental and community health impacts.
- Localized grid connectivity of a nuclear site.
- The types of nuclear reactors and which would be best fit for the County.
- Water requirements for nuclear power generation.
- Economic impact of the nuclear power industry.
- Identification of State and Federal safety criteria and regulations.

Due to the NRC's active review and amending of regulations, it would be prudent to wait for the full release of the updated regulation set to take place at the end of the year. This will ensure that the feasibility study collects the most accurate and up to date information on nuclear power generation regulations and impacts.

### **Feasibility Study Costs**

The cost of a feasibility study on nuclear power will be determined by scale and depth of the study. North Dakota and Oklahoma have provided between \$300,000 to \$375,000 for feasibility studies. Oklahoma's study was completed by the Oklahoma Corporation Commission in March 2026. The CSU feasibility study will be in-depth and specific to identifying the most practical SMR models and site locations, including investigating the replacement of aging coal power plants. DEN's feasibility study was projected to cost \$1.25 million prior to being postponed. The Kemmerer Unit site in Wyoming did not have a public feasibility study conducted by the local government. TerraPower instead conducted its own site evaluations and determined where the best site would be to develop.

The County would not require the same statewide scale of a feasibility study as those in North Dakota and Oklahoma. Nor is the County a utility provider like CSU, requiring in-depth study of a specific site location and grid coordination. The cost of CSU’s feasibility study has not been shared publicly, but the Department of Energy is supporting it through the Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear (GAIN) program. GAIN vouchers are available for businesses or utility companies. However, GAIN supported the North Dakota and Oklahoma studies so it may be possible to explore if GAIN could be a source of financial support for the County to conduct a feasibility study.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT**

In partnership with the Department of Communication and Community Engagement, staff will take a structured approach to support informed, transparent dialogue as the County explores the potential role of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). Early communication will focus on the Board’s broader goals for exploring energy resiliency options, including SMRs, and will emphasize that the County is evaluating potential opportunities, no decisions have been made, and the process remains exploratory.

Given the technical complexity of SMRs, the evolving regulatory environment, and the level of public interest surrounding nuclear technologies, any future feasibility study should include a consultant with both nuclear subject matter expertise and experience supporting public engagement on complex energy topics. Incorporating community engagement into the feasibility study scope would help ensure residents receive clear, consistent, and technically accurate information throughout the process, while also supporting the County in identifying and synthesizing key community questions and concerns.

This approach could include targeted engagement tactics such as an online education hub, a public open house, and an online feedback form. Community input will help identify recurring themes, refine educational materials, inform ongoing communication, and support the County’s evaluation of SMR-related opportunities.

**NEXT STEPS**

Staff is prepared to discuss this further with the Board.

**ATTACHMENTS**

Draft Scope of Work for a Feasibility Study..... 6  
Nuclear Reactor Size Comparison Visual..... 8  
US NRC Environmental Impact Study Overview Graphic..... 9  
Harvard Article on Cancer Risks from Proximity to Nuclear Power Plants ..... 10

## **Draft – Scope of Work for a Request for Proposal on Feasibility of Small Modular Reactor Nuclear Sites**

### Summary/Scope of Work/Explanation of Project:

The County is looking to understand the feasibility of hosting a Small Modular Reactor (SMR) site and/or Microreactor(s) within the County. The following scope of work is intended to guide a consultant in assessing where in the County a nuclear power site could be located, the impacts of having a nuclear power plant, and how the County could play a role in supporting such projects. Proposal responses must include, but are not limited to, the following information.

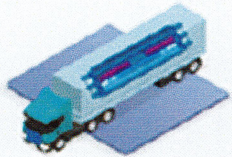
### Mandatory Information to be Included in Feasibility Study:

1. Land and siting criteria, including specific geographic areas that are best suited for new nuclear generation based on updated federal regulations and land use zoning regulations.
2. Potential environmental and community health impacts, review of regulations for proximity to infrastructure and residential communities, public sentiment towards nuclear power, and proposed mitigation strategies.
3. Electric grid connectivity, including the capacity of the electrical grid and integration of a nuclear power plant, necessary upgrades and expansions to ensure reliability, the ability for and willingness of local utility providers to partner in such a project, and recommendations adhering to national and state standards and regulations.
4. The types of SMR and Microreactors, identifying what type of reactor would be best for the County, including the feasibility of constructing and operating the reactor to generate power in the County and the ability to provide off-grid power to the County in emergencies.
5. Water demands of SMRs and Microreactors, connectivity to water providers in the County, and the County's water resource capability to support nuclear power.
6. Economic impacts, including potential tax revenue for the County, job creation during construction and operation of a nuclear facility, types of jobs SMRs would need and attract to the area, potential industries that would use SMRs and the secondary economic growth impacts that the development of a SMR would have in the County.
7. Identify what makes an ideal location for modular reactor manufacturers. What regulations apply to manufacturing site locations. Determining what benefits (economic impacts) and what harm (public and environmental concerns) would come with such a company locating in Douglas County.

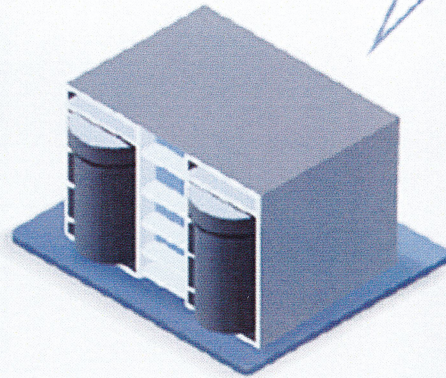
8. Policy recommendations and investment opportunities the County can make to support nuclear energy generation, including a survey of federal programs to financially assist the development of a nuclear project in the County.
9. Identification of both State and Federal safety criteria and regulations, to include those introduced recently by the NRC, for development of SMR and use of Microreactors including the logistics of storage and disposal of nuclear waste from SMR sites.

## Nuclear Reactor Size Comparison

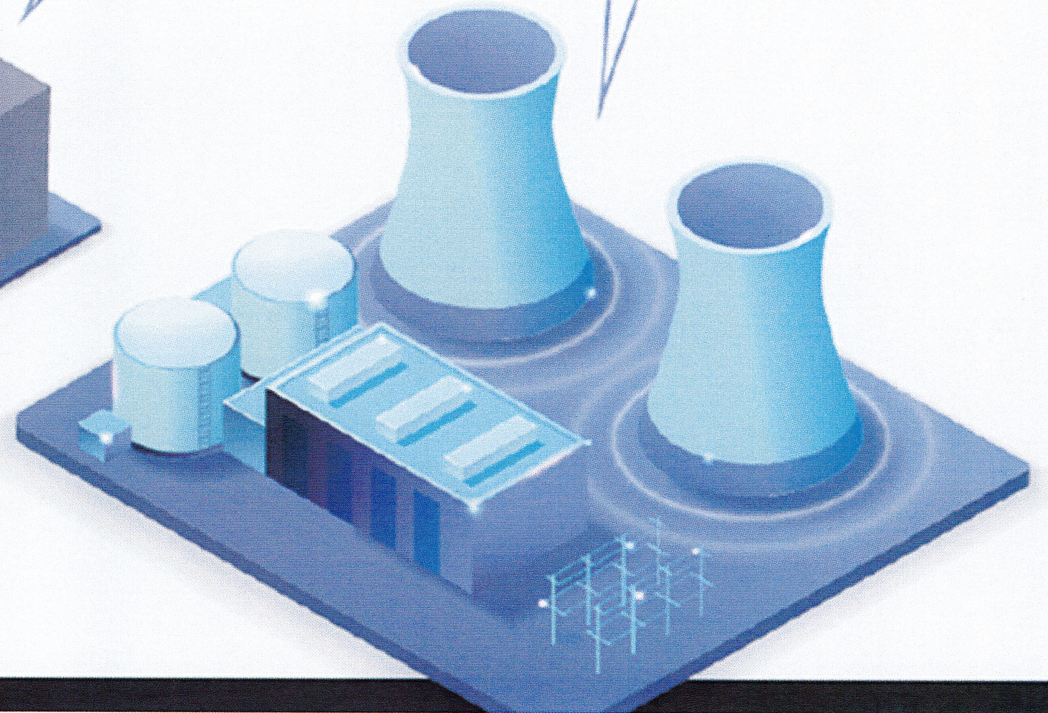
Microreactor  
1 MW – 20 MW



Small Modular  
Reactor  
20 MW – 300 MW

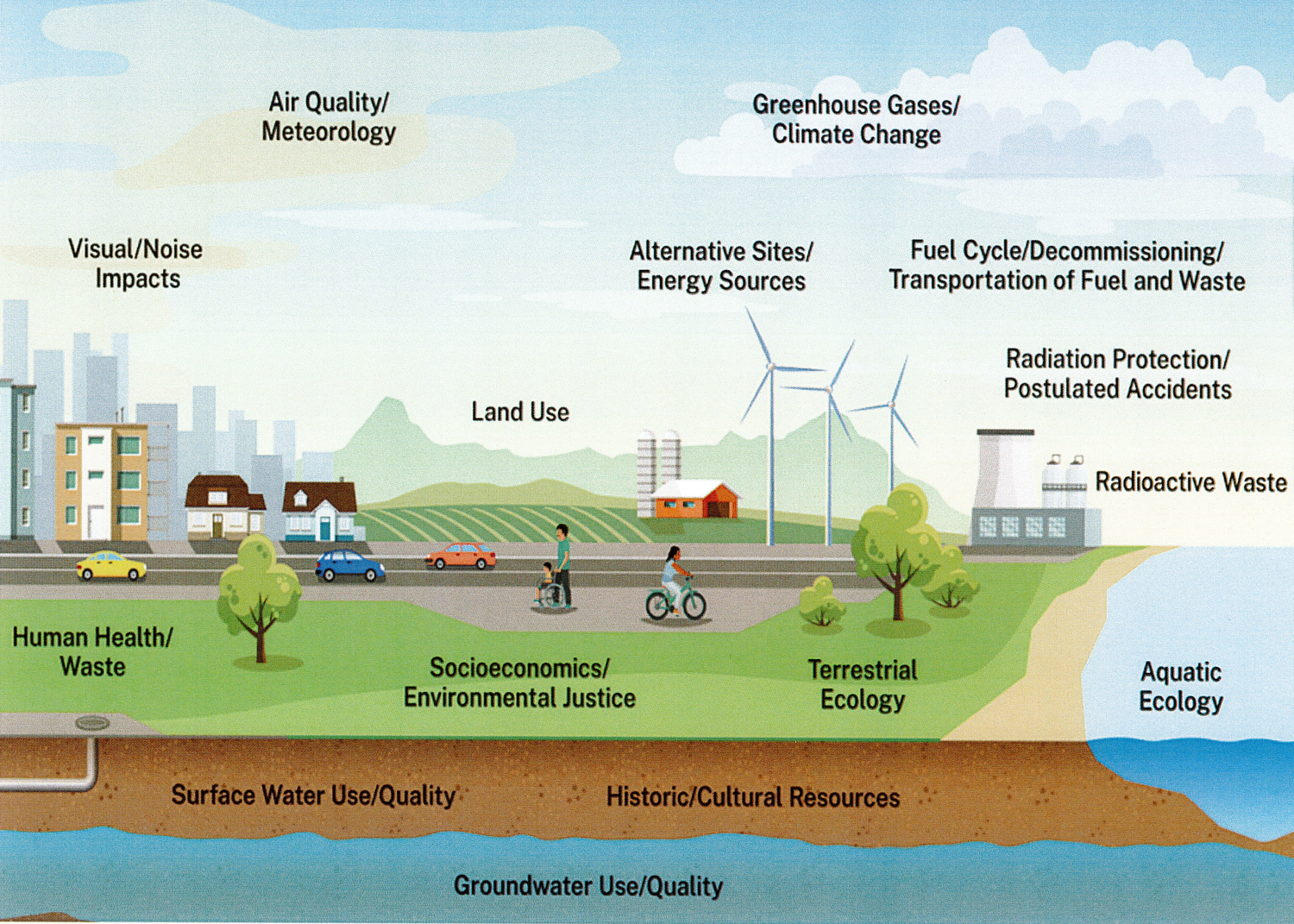


Large-Scale  
Reactor  
300 MW – 1,000+ MW



# Typical Resource Areas Analyzed in NRC's NEPA Reviews

## NRC NEPA Review Process



Describe the "need for the project" and the "affected environment" (baseline conditions) for each resource area.

Determine the consequences of the proposed action on resource areas (impact level).

Analyze "cumulative impacts" from past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions.

Analyze alternatives to the proposed action.

# Proximity to nuclear power plants associated with increased cancer mortality

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[Cancer](#)

February 23, 2026



*vlastas / iStock*

For immediate release: February 23, 2026

Boston, MA—U.S. counties located closer to operational nuclear power plants (NPPs) have higher rates of cancer mortality than those located farther away, according to a new study led by Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health.

The study is the first of the 21st century to analyze proximity to NPPs and cancer mortality across all NPPs and every U.S. county. The researchers emphasized that the findings are not enough to establish causality but do highlight the need for further research into nuclear power's health impacts.

The study was published Feb. 23, 2026, in Nature Communications.

Numerous studies on the potential link between NPPs and cancer have been conducted around the world, with conflicting results. In the U.S., these studies have been rare and limited in their scope, focused on a single NPP and its surrounding community.

To expand the evidence base, the researchers conducted a national assessment of NPPs and cancer mortality between 2000 and 2018 using “continuous proximity.” They used advanced statistical modeling that captured the cumulative impact of all nearby NPPs, rather than just one. The locations and dates of operation of U.S. NPPs—as well as some nearby in Canada—were obtained from the U.S. Energy Information Administration, and county-level data on cancer mortality was obtained from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The researchers controlled for potential confounders in each county, including educational attainment, median household income, racial composition, average temperature and relative humidity, smoking prevalence, BMI, and proximity to the nearest hospital.

The study found that U.S. counties located closer to nuclear power plants experienced higher cancer mortality rates, even after accounting for socioeconomic, environmental, and health care factors. The researchers estimated that over the course of the study period, roughly 115,000 cancer deaths across the U.S. (or about 6,400 deaths per year) were attributable to proximity to NPPs. The association was strongest among older adults.

“Our study suggests that living near a NPP may carry a measurable cancer risk—one that lessens with distance,” said senior author [Petros Koutrakis](#), Akira Yamaguchi Professor of Environmental Health and Human Habitation. “We recommend that more studies be done that address the issue of NPPs and health impacts, particularly at a time when nuclear power is being promoted as a clean solution to climate change.”

The researchers noted that the results are consistent with the results of a similar [study](#) they conducted in Massachusetts, which identified elevated cancer incidence among populations living closer to NPPs.

They also noted some limitations to the study, including that it did not incorporate direct radiation measurements and instead assumed equal impact by all NPPs.

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## Article information

“National Analysis of Cancer Mortality and Proximity to Nuclear Power Plants in the United States,” Yazan Alwadi, Barrak Alahmad, Carolina L. Zilli Vieira, Philip J. Landrigan, David C. Christiani, Eric Garshick, Marco Kaltofen, Brent Coull, Joel Schwartz, John S. Evans, Petros Koutrakis, Nature Communications, February 23, 2026, doi: 10.1038/s41467-026-69285-4

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## About The Author

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### Last Updated

February 23, 2026

### Featured in this article

#### **Petros Koutrakis**

Akira Yamaguchi Professor of Environmental Health and Human Habitation

