

environmental issues. By this Notice of Intent, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues it will address in the EA. All comments received are considered during the preparation of the EA. State and local government representatives are encouraged to notify their constituents of this proposed action and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

The EA will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed project under these general headings.

- Geology and soils.
- Water resources, fisheries, and wetlands.
- Vegetation and wildlife.
- Endangered and threatened species.
- Land use.
- Cultural resources.
- Air quality and noise.
- Public safety.

We will also evaluate possible alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be in the EA. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, the EA may be published and mailed to Federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, interested individuals, affected landowners, newspapers, libraries, and the Commission's official service list for this proceeding. A comment period will be allotted for review if the EA is published. We will consider all comments on the EA before we recommend that the Commission approve or not approve the project.

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified one issue that we think deserves attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by NGPL. Keep in mind that this is a preliminary list:

- Noise impact on the nearest residence located 1,320 feet to the north of Station No. 346.

The list of issues may be added to, subtracted from, or changed based on your comments and our analysis.

Public Participation

You can make a difference by sending a letter addressing your specific comments or concerns about the project. You should focus on the potential environmental effects of the proposal, alternatives to the proposal, and

measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. Please follow the instructions below to ensure that your comments are received and properly recorded:

- Address your letter to: Lois Cashell, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426;
- Reference Docket No. CP96-720-000;
- Send a copy of your letter to: Ms. Mary Hertling, EA Project Manager, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., N.E., PR-11.1, Washington, D.C. 20426; and
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, D.C. on or before November 7, 1996.

If you wish to receive a copy of the EA, you should request one from Ms. Hertling at the above address.

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an official party to the proceeding or become an "intervenor". Among other things, intervenors have the right to receive copies of case-related Commission documents and filings by other intervenors. Likewise, each intervenor must provide copies of its filings to all other parties. If you want to become an intervenor you must file a motion to intervene according to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214) (see appendix 2).

The date for filing timely motions to intervene in this proceeding has passed. Therefore, parties now seeking to file late interventions must show good cause, as required by section 385.214(b)(3), why this time limitations should be waived. Environmental issues have been viewed as good cause for late intervention. You do not need intervenor status to have your scoping comments considered.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from Ms. Mary Hertling, EA Project Manager, at (202) 208-0874.

Lois D. Cashell,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-25573 Filed 10-4-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

Western Area Power Administration

Notice of Availability of the Navajo Transmission Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement

AGENCY: Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of availability and notice of public hearings.

SUMMARY: Western Area Power Administration's (Western) Colorado River Storage Project Customer Service Center (CRSP CSC) announces that the Navajo Transmission Project (NTP) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (draft EIS) is available for public review and comment. Western will hold public hearings to receive formal comments on the draft EIS according to the schedule below. The Din^o Power Authority (DPA), an enterprise of the Navajo Nation, is proposing the construction and operation of a 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between northwestern New Mexico and southern Nevada, called the NTP. The draft EIS describes a range of alternatives considered and the potential environmental consequences and has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the DOE regulations for compliance with NEPA (10 CFR Part 1021). Western's CRSP CSC is the lead Federal agency to the NTP draft EIS.

DATES: Western will accept written and oral comments during the public review period. Written comments on the draft EIS should be sent to the Project Manager by December 6, 1996, of the EPA FR Notice at the following address: Mr. Tony Morton, EIS Manager, Western Area Power Administration, Colorado River Storage Project Customer Service Center, 257 East 200 South, Suite 475, P.O. Box 11606, Salt Lake City, Utah 84147-0606, telephone 801-524-5636.

Those wishing to make oral comments may do so at the scheduled public hearings. Speakers will be asked to register at the door prior to the beginning of the hearing. A court reporter will record the proceedings at each hearing. Interpreters for Navajo, Hopi or Hualapai Indians will be available at the appropriate sessions. Representatives will be responsible for recording comments and concerns of the public. Western will respond to all comments, both written and oral, in the final EIS.

The hearings will be held according to the following schedule. Western intends

to conduct open house information sessions for one hour prior to each hearing session to field questions and provide information to the public.

1. Monday, October 7, 10 a.m.—Sanostee Chapter
2. Monday, October 7, 10 a.m.—Coalmine Mesa Chapter
3. Monday, October 7, 6 p.m.—Beclabito Chapter
4. Tuesday, October 8, 10 a.m.—TeecNos Pos Chapter
5. Tuesday, October 8, 6 p.m.—Red Mesa Chapter
6. Thursday, October 10, 10 a.m.—Sweet Water Chapter
7. Thursday, October 10, 6 p.m.—Mexican Water Chapter
8. Monday, October 14, 10 a.m.—Nenahnezad Chapter
9. Monday, October 14, 2 p.m.—Whippoorwill Chapter
10. Monday, October 14, 6 p.m.—Farmington, NM, Civic Center, 200 West Arrington
11. Monday, October 14, 6 p.m.—TaChee/Blue Gap Chapter
12. Tuesday, October 15, 10 a.m.—San Juan Chapter
13. Tuesday, October 15, 10 a.m.—Pinon Chapter
14. Tuesday, October 15, 6 p.m.—Hogback Chapter
15. Tuesday, October 15, 6 p.m.—Hard Rock Chapter
16. Wednesday, October 16, 10 a.m.—Shiprock Chapter
17. Wednesday, October 16, 10 a.m.—Round Rock Chapter
18. Wednesday, October 16, 6 p.m.—Cudeii Chapter
19. Wednesday, October 16, 6 p.m.—Rock Point Chapter
20. Thursday, October 17, 10 a.m.—Red Valley Chapter
21. Thursday, October 17, 10 a.m.—Chilchinbeto Chapter
22. Thursday, October 17, 6 p.m.—Cove Chapter
23. Thursday, October 17, 6 p.m.—Shonto Chapter
24. Monday, October 21, 10 a.m.—St. Michaels Chapter
25. Monday, October 21, 10 a.m.—Cameron Chapter
26. Monday, October 21, 6 p.m.—Chinle Chapter
27. Monday, October 21, 6 p.m.—Bodaway Chapter
28. Tuesday, October 22, 10 a.m.—Tselani-Cottonwood Springs Chapter
29. Tuesday, October 22, 10 a.m.—Tuba City Chapter
30. Tuesday, October 22, 6 p.m.—Rough Rock Chapter
31. Tuesday, October 22, 6 p.m.—Tonalea Chapter
32. Wednesday, October 23, 10 a.m.—Many Farms Chapter
33. Wednesday, October 23, 10 a.m.—Inscription House Chapter
34. Wednesday, October 23, 6 p.m.—Lukachukai Chapter
35. Wednesday, October 23, 6 p.m.—Kaibeto Chapter

36. Thursday, October 24, 10 a.m.—Kayenta Chapter
37. Thursday, October 24, 10 a.m.—LeChee Chapter
38. Thursday, October 24, 6 p.m.—Dennehotso Chapter
39. Thursday, October 24, 6 p.m.—Coppermine Chapter
40. Tuesday, October 29, 10 a.m.—Flagstaff, AZ, Council Chambers
41. Tuesday, October 29, 6 p.m.—Hualapai Multi-Purpose Building, Hualapai Way and Diamond Creek, Peach Springs, AZ
42. Wednesday, October 30, 10 a.m.—Dolan Springs, AZ, Chamber Bldg, Pierce Ferry Road
43. Wednesday, October 30, 6 p.m.—Boulder City, NV, Super 8 Motel, 704 Nevada Hwy
44. Thursday, October 31, 6 p.m.—Hopi Cultural Center Motel, Second Mesa

Because there are so many hearings scheduled, there will be two hearings teams holding concurrent meetings throughout the project area. All chapter meetings will be held at the chapter houses on the Navajo Reservation, Arizona.

ADDRESSES: The CRSP CSC maintains a mailing list of those interested in the NTP EIS. Copies of the complete draft EIS, or a summary of the document (Introduction, Purpose and Need, and Description of the Alternatives) have been distributed to all persons and groups on the EIS mailing list, according to what each person/organization previously requested. A distribution has been made to various libraries and reading rooms in the project area. Copies of the draft EIS are available for public review at the Navajo chapter houses, the offices of the cooperating agencies, and other locations listed below:

Cooperating Agencies Offices

- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Phoenix Area Office, One North First Street, Phoenix, AZ 85001.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Navajo Area Office, 301 West Hill, Gallup, NM 87305.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Truxton Canon Agency, 13067 East Highway 66, Valentine, AZ 86437.
- Bureau of Indian Affairs, Hopi Agency, Main Street, Keams Canyon, AZ 86034.
- Glen Canyon National Recreation Area, 691 Scenic Drive, Page, AZ 86040.
- Lake Mead National Recreation Area, 601 Nevada Highway, Boulder City, NV 89005.
- Bureau of Land Management, 1235 LaPlata Highway, Farmington, NM 87401.
- Bureau of Land Management, 2475 Beverly Avenue, Kingman, AZ 86401.
- Bureau of Land Management, 4765 Vegas Drive, Las Vegas, NV 89108.

Coconino National Forest, Peaks Ranger District, 5075 North Highway 89, Flagstaff, AZ 86004.

Kaibab National Forest, Tusayan Ranger District, Highway 64, Admin Site, Grand Canyon, AZ 86023.

Navajo Nation, Historic Preservation Office, Navajo Nation Inn Office Building, 48 West Highway 264, Window Rock, AZ 86515.

Hopi Tribe, Cultural Preservation Office, Main Street, Kykotsmovi, AZ 86039.

Hualapai Tribe, Office of Cultural Resources, 215 Diamond Creek Road, Peach Springs, AZ 86434.

Other Locations

Arizona State University, Hayden Library, Tempe, AZ 85287.

Flagstaff Public Library, 300 West Aspen Street, Flagstaff, AZ 86001.

Mohave County District Library, 3269 Burbank, Kingman, AZ 86401.

Mohave County Library, 1170 East Hancock Road, Bullhead City, AZ 86442.

Northern Arizona University, Cline Library, Flagstaff, AZ 86011.

Page Public Library, 697 Vista Avenue, Page, AZ 86040.

Phoenix Public Library, 1221 North Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

Seligman Public Library, 325 North Main Street, P.O. Box 623, Seligman, AZ 86337.

University of Arizona, Main Library, Tucson, AZ 85721.

Window Rock Library, Window Rock Administrative Offices, Dean Jackson's Education Center, Morgan Boulevard, Window Rock, AZ 86515.

Williams Public Library, 113 South First Street, Williams, AZ 86046.

Winslow Public Library, 420 West Gilmore Street, Winslow, AZ 86047.

Farmington Public Library, Reference Department, 100 West Broadway, Farmington, NM 87401.

University of New Mexico, Zimmerman Library, University Hill Northeast, Albuquerque, NM 87131.

Gallup Public Library, 115 West Hill Avenue, Gallup, NM 87301.

Boulder City Library, 539 California Avenue, Boulder City, NV 89005.

Clark County Library, 1401 East Flamingo Road, Las Vegas, NV 89109.

Henderson Library, 55 Water Street, Henderson, NV 89015.

Las Vegas Public Library, 833 North Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV 89101.

University of Nevada-Las Vegas, James Dickerson Library, P.O. Box 7001, Las Vegas, NV 89154-7001.

West Charleston Public Library, 6301 West Charleston Boulevard, Las Vegas, NV 89102.

Copies of the draft EIS and all supporting documents are also available for public review at Western's offices at: Colorado River Storage Project,

Customer Service Center, 257 East 200 South, Suite 475, Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0606.

Corporate Services Office, 1627 Cole Boulevard, Building 18, Golden, CO 80401.

This information is also available at the DOE Reading Room at the following address: U.S. Department of Energy, Forrestal Building, Reading Room 1E-190, 1000 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20585.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, to submit written comments, or to request a copy or summary of the draft EIS, please call or write the CRSP CRC at the address shown above.

For general information on DOE's NEPA review process, please contact: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance, EH-42, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20585, (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: A surplus of electrical generation exists in the Four Corners region of the United States but there is insufficient capacity to transmit the power west, where it could be used to meet the needs of expanding load centers in Arizona, Nevada and California. The extra-high-voltage transmission system west of Four Corners consists of one 500-kV line and two 345-kV lines owned by Arizona Public Service (APS). There are restrictions on how much capacity each of the lines west of Four Corners may carry for reasons of safety and reliability. Since 1970, attempts to construct additional lines across the Navajo Reservation in northern Arizona have failed to gain approval of the Navajo Nation government.

The role of the Navajo Nation in the energy industry traditionally has been that of a passive resource owner. Nonrenewable resources from the Navajo Nation lands are exported to provide fuel for power for much of the western United States. The economy and self-sufficiency of the Navajo Nation depend heavily on the export of these resources. However, the businesses associated with the energy activities are typically non-Navajo. NTP is an opportunity for the Navajo Nation to own a majority of a transmission line that would be an integral part of a

regional electrical transmission system, thereby establishing a role for the Navajo in the electric industry.

In 1992, DPA began studies to determine the feasibility of constructing and operating a Navajo majority-owned 500-kV transmission line that would deliver bulk electricity west from the Four Corners region of New Mexico. The project was viewed as an opportunity to provide a steady source of revenue for the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation is the second largest American Indian tribe in the United States and, according to the 1990 U.S. Census Bureau statistics, approximately 57 percent of families live below the poverty level.

As NTP is currently envisioned, revenue would be generated by leasing the capacity of the transmission line to regional utilities. Annual revenues over the life of the project would provide funds to allow the Navajo Nation to invest in other long-range productive business opportunities. The amount of revenue received by the DPA would depend on its final percent of ownership; right-of-way costs; lease agreements; construction, operation and maintenance costs; and availability of capacity. In addition, the development of NTP would provide short-term employment opportunities for American Indian groups during construction in a region having an unemployment rate of about 30 percent (on the Navajo Reservation). Skills and experience gained from construction jobs would be useful for future employment. After construction, it is anticipated that there may be limited opportunities for long-term employment in aspects of operation and maintenance of the transmission line. NTP is expected to contribute to an increase in the income and standard of living for the Navajo Nation.

Studies conducted by DPA and Western have shown that NTP would provide the needed transfer path for bulk electrical power and increase the electrical transfer level west of the Four Corners area. The additional capacity would support the existing system and prevent or reduce damages from outages, thereby enhancing the existing transmission grid and contributing to increased reliability, efficiency, and capability in the southwestern United States. By removing the existing transmission restrictions and/or interconnecting with other regional systems in the Four Corners area, Arizona, California, and Nevada utilities would be able to increase economical transfer of seasonal surpluses of electrical generation from resources in the Rocky Mountain and Four Corners

areas and they would be able to support their peak load periods by importing power from existing hydro and coal-fired generation sources in the Rocky Mountain area. Such economic purchases reduce the use of more expensive generation.

More than 60 percent of Navajo Nation residences do not have electricity. Availability of electricity on the Navajo Reservation is critical to economic growth and infrastructure development of the Navajo Nation. NTP would allow Western an alternate path for firm-power deliveries across northern Arizona, thus reducing dependence and freeing capacity on Western's existing 230-kV transmission line for increased deliveries of electricity to the Kayenta and Long House Valley substations that currently provide service to the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA). That would provide NTUA with more flexibility to plan additional distribution on the Navajo Reservation. Because of vast distances between available transmission and low-density populations of consumers on Navajo Nation lands, it is not economically feasible for NTUA alone to construct a high-voltage transmission line solely to accommodate the small number of business and residential consumers in the area. Also, NTP would allow access by the utility participants to the Western Systems Coordinating Council's (WSCC) southern 500-kV transmission grid, which covers the states of New Mexico, Arizona, and southern California. This would provide the opportunity for NTUA to buy less expensive power that may be available through regional and seasonal diversity, or due to the new Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) transmission open access guidelines.

DPA approached Western in 1992 about participating in the proposed project. Western agreed to be the lead Federal agency for the project, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act, and agreed to take the responsibility for ensuring compliance with applicable regulations of other affected agencies. On May 26, 1993, Western announced in the Federal Register its intention to prepare an EIS on NTP. Western and DPA initiated extensive public involvement in the project, which has resulted in over 40 meetings with the public, and many meetings with a variety of state, tribal, county and local agencies and representatives. The effort was assisted by the cooperating agencies, consisting of representatives from units of the National Park Service; the U.S. Forest Service; the Bureau of Land

Management; and Bureau of Indian Affairs in Arizona, New Mexico, and Nevada; and three Tribes (Hopi, Hualapai, and Navajo). In addition, work on a Programmatic Agreement for the purposes of compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act resulted in contacts and comments from the Historic Preservation Officers of Nevada, New Mexico and Arizona, and 14 other area tribes.

This draft EIS was prepared to analyze and describe the environmental consequences of a range of alternatives. Western and DPA developed six alternatives for analysis in the draft EIS which are structured around the purpose and need. Four alternatives were removed from further analysis because they did not meet all of the requirements of the purpose and need, i.e., energy conservation and electric load management, new generation facilities, alternate transmission systems, and alternative transmission methods. The remaining two alternatives studied in depth in the EIS are identified as No Action and the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action included analysis of over 2,000 miles of routing alternatives. The draft EIS evaluates the potential impacts of the no action and proposed action alternatives on air quality, water resources (water quality and floodplain management), earth resources (geology, mineral resources, seismicity and faults, and soils and erosion potential), biological resources, paleontological resources, land use (linear features; jurisdictions; existing and future land use; and parks, preservation, and recreation), socioeconomic resources, visual resources, and cultural resources. Environmentally preferred options have been identified, however, no preferred construction route is identified in the draft EIS. A decision on the proposed action will be made after considering comments on the draft EIS. A final routing alternative will be recommended in the final EIS.

Issued at Golden, Colorado, September 23, 1996.

J. M. Shafer,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 96-25613 Filed 10-4-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

[Rate Order No. WAPA-73]

Colorado River Storage—Confirming and Approving an Extension of the Firm Transmission Service Rate

AGENCY: Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of a rate order.

SUMMARY: The purpose of Rate Order No. WAPA-73 is to extend Rate Schedule SP-FT4 until September 30, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr. David Sabo, CRSP Manager, CRSP Customer Service Center, Western Area Power Administration, P.O. Box 11606, Salt Lake City, UT 84147-0606, (801) 524-5493.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: By Amendment No. 3 to Delegation Order No. 0204-108, published November 10, 1993 (58 FR 59716), the Secretary of Energy redelegated (1) the authority to develop long-term power and transmission rates on a nonexclusive basis to the Administrator of Western; (2) the authority to confirm, approve, and place such rates into effect on an interim basis to the Deputy Secretary; and (3) the authority to confirm, approve, and place into effect on a final basis, to remand, or to disapprove such rates to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Existing Department of Energy procedures for public participation in power rate adjustments (10 CFR Part 903) became effective on September 18, 1985 (50 FR 37835).

Pursuant to Delegation Order No. 0204-108, Western's Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) firm transmission rate case was submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for confirmation and approval on August 13, 1992. On February 18, 1993, in Docket Nos. EF92-5172-000 and EF92-5172-001, at 62 FERC ¶ 61,159, FERC issued an order confirming, approving, and placing in effect on a final basis Rate Schedule SP-FT4 for firm transmission service over the CRSP transmission system. The rate was approved for the 4-year period beginning October 1, 1992, and ending September 30, 1996.

Western proposes to extend the existing CRSP firm transmission rate until September 30, 1997. During the last firm-power rate adjustment for the Salt Lake Integrated Projects, placed into effect on December 1, 1994 (SLIP-F5), the CRSP firm transmission rate was examined. It was determined that the existing firm transmission rate was still adequate to meet revenue requirements. The costs associated with the Salt Lake City Integrated Projects' firm power rate increase were offset in the CRSP firm transmission rate study by an increase in transmission revenues not associated with the firm transmission rate.

Issued in Washington, D.C., September 27, 1996.

Charles B. Curtis,
Deputy Secretary.

Order Confirming and Approving an Extension of the Colorado River Storage Project Firm Transmission Rate

October 1, 1996.

These power rates were established pursuant to Section 302(a) of the Department of Energy (DOE) Organization Act, 42 U.S.C. 7152(a), through which the power marketing functions of the Secretary of the Interior and the Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) under the Reclamation Act of 1902, ch. 1093, 32 Stat. 388, as amended and supplemented by subsequent enactments, particularly section 9(c) of the Reclamation Project Act of 1939, 43 U.S.C. 485h(c), and other acts specifically applicable to the project system involved, were transferred to and vested in the Secretary of Energy (Secretary).

By Amendment No. 3 to Delegation Order No. 0204-108, published November 10, 1993 (58 FR 59716), the Secretary redelegated (1) the authority to develop long-term power and transmission rates on a nonexclusive basis to the Administrator of the Western Area Power Administration (Western); (2) the authority to confirm, approve, and place such rates into effect on an interim basis to the Deputy Secretary; and (3) the authority to confirm, approve, and place into effect on a final basis, to remand, or to disapprove such rates to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Existing DOE procedures for public participation in power rate adjustments (10 CFR Part 903) became effective on September 18, 1985 (50 FR 37835). This rate extension is issued pursuant to the Delegation Order and the rate extension procedures in 10 CFR Part 903.

Background

Pursuant to Delegation Order No. 0204-108, in the order issued February 18, 1993, at 62 FERC ¶ 61,159, in Docket Nos. EF92-5172-000 and EF92-5172-001, the FERC confirmed, approved, and placed in effect on a final basis Rate Schedule SP-FT4 for firm transmission service over the Colorado River Storage Project (CRSP) transmission system. The rate was approved for the period from October 1, 1992, through September 30, 1996.

Discussion

On September 30, 1996, Western's CRSP firm transmission rate will expire. This makes it necessary to extend the