

public from construction and operation of the NIF because of the possible presence of buried hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials in the areas in the northeastern quadrant of the LLNL as stipulated in the Order.

Results of Phase I and Phase II investigations show that there is a low likelihood that significant quantities of buried hazardous, toxic, or radioactive materials remain in the stipulated areas. This conclusion is based on the results of the series of increasingly detailed inquiries conducted to identify and investigate suspected areas. This approach ensured wide coverage while providing convincing evidence of the absence of any further undocumented buried hazardous, toxic, or radioactive objects in likely areas. A comprehensive review was made of the current data from the existing 450 groundwater monitoring wells and extensive soil borings. A total of four magnetometer surveys, two electrical conductivity surveys and one ground penetrating radar survey was conducted. Six new groundwater monitoring wells were installed, 31 soil boreholes were drilled, and 11 test excavations were performed. The results of the Phase I and II investigations were presented in the SEIS.

On the basis of the above findings, DOE has concluded that the only significant source of previously unknown or undiscovered buried hazardous, toxic, or radioactive waste existing in the northeastern quadrant at the time NIF construction began was the capacitor landfill, discovered in September 1997. The elevated concentrations of residual PCBs discovered in soil in the ETC area in 1998 were from a known former waste disposal site. Both the capacitor landfill area at the NIF construction site and the residual PCB contamination in the ETC area were cleaned up to action levels agreed upon by the CERCLA RPMs, thereby reducing the actual or potential contamination in these areas.

DOE's analysis of soil and groundwater data, including data collected in support of the capacitor landfill removal and Phase I and II investigations, concluded that levels of contamination are well below those that would impact human health and the environment. Current and future levels of PCB contamination in groundwater are calculated to be well below levels considered to present a risk to the public. Construction and operation of NIF would not adversely affect groundwater because no groundwater withdrawals or discharges would occur from this facility. Ongoing remediation activities will continue to improve

groundwater quality for both no action alternatives—(1) continuing construction and operation of NIF and (2) ceasing construction of NIF. Potential impacts on the human environment at LLNL are below any level of concern.

Environmentally Preferable Alternative. Environmental impacts were estimated to be small for both no action alternatives as the levels of contamination found at LLNL in the NIF site are well below those that would impact human health and the environment. The no action alternative of stopping NIF construction without relocation to another site would impair the ability of NNSA to meet the purpose and need for which NIF is being constructed, and is not considered a reasonable alternative. Nonetheless, a decision to cease construction of NIF at LLNL, if followed by activities to place the facility in a condition that would permanently protect workers, the public, and the environment, or to use the facility for another program with less environmental impacts than NIF operation, would be the environmentally preferable alternative, albeit an unreasonable alternative from NNSA's standpoint.

Comments on the Final SEIS. During the 30-day period following notice that the Final SEIS had been filed on February 23, 2001, the NNSA received no comments on the Final SEIS.

Other Considerations. Cost and technical considerations have been taken into account in the selection of the preferred alternative. NNSA reviewed the mission need for NIF in a "30-Day Review," a review by the NIF Programs' Target Physics Review Committee and a report focused upon the role of NIF in the Stockpile Stewardship Program. NIF is one of a set of essential capabilities that is needed to address the significant technical challenges associated with developing a science-based understanding of the nuclear stockpile. Given the continuing requirement for NIF, the cost considerations relate to continuing the construction at the existing site or starting the construction at a new site. Accordingly, completing the construction at LLNL offers a significant cost advantage.

Decision. NNSA has decided to continue the current activities to construct and eventually to operate NIF, as analyzed in Appendix I of the SSM PEIS and the SEIS. This decision was analyzed in the SEIS as the no action alternative of continuing to construct and eventually to operate NIF, which is NNSA's preferred alternative, and the only reasonable alternative analyzed in

the SEIS. Under this action, NNSA would make no changes in the design of NIF, would undertake no deviations in construction techniques, and would impose no operational changes in response to the information regarding site contamination obtained during the characterization studies completed pursuant to the Joint Stipulation and Order.

NNSA prepared this Record of Decision pursuant to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (40 CFR parts 1500–1508) and the Department of Energy Regulations implementing NEPA (10 CFR part 1021). In making this ROD for the NIF SEIS, the Department considered the analysis in the NIF SEIS and the SSM PEIS, along with other factors such as the NNSA statutory mission requirements and national security policy.

Issued in Washington, D.C. this 30th day of March, 2001.

Spencer Abraham,

Secretary of Energy.

[FR Doc. 01–8396 Filed 4–4–01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. IC01–556–001, FERC Form 556]

Information Collection Submitted for Review and Request for Comments

March 30, 2001.

AGENCY: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

ACTION: Notice of submission for review by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) has submitted the energy information collection listed in this notice to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review under provisions of section 3507 of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104–13). Any interested person may file comments on the collection of information directly with OMB and should address a copy of those comments to the Commission as explained below. The Commission received no comments in response to an earlier **Federal Register** notice of January 24, 2001 (66 FR 7635). The Commission has noted this fact in its submission to OMB.

DATES: Comments regarding this collection of information are best assured of having their full effect if received on or before May 7, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Address comments to Office of Management and Budget, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Attention: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Desk Officer, 725 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20503. A copy of the comments should also be sent to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Office of the Chief Information Officer, Attention: Mr. Michael Miller, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Michael Miller may be reached by telephone at (202) 208-1415, by fax at (202) 273-0873, and by e-mail: mike.miller@ferc.fed.us.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Description

The energy information collection submitted to OMB for review contains:

1. *Collection of Information:* FERC Form 556 "Cogeneration and Small Power Production".

2. *Sponsor:* Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

3. *Control No.:* OMB No. 1902-0075. The Commission is now requesting that OMB approve a three-year extension of the current expiration date, with no changes to the existing collection. This is a mandatory information collection requirement.

4. *Necessity of Collection of Information:* Submission of the information is necessary to fulfill the requirements of section 3 of the Federal Power Act (FPA), and sections 201 and 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (PURPA). The reporting requirements associated with FERC Form 556 are codified at 18 CFR 131.80 and Part 292 of the Commission's regulations.

FERC Form 556 requires owners and/or operators of small power production or cogeneration facilities who seek qualifying status for their facilities, to file the information requested in Form 556 either as an application to the Commission for certification as a qualifying facility (QF) or to use Form 556 as a notice of self certification.

A primary objective of PURPA is conservation of energy through the efficient use of resources in the generation of electric power. One means of achieving this objective is to encourage electric power production by cogeneration facilities which make use of reject heat associated with commercial and industrial processes, and by small power production facilities

which use waste and renewable resources as fuel. PURPA, through the establishment of various regulatory benefits, encourages the development of small power production facilities which meet certain technical and corporate criteria. PURPA benefits afforded QFs include exemption from certain corporate, accounting, reporting and rate regulation under the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 (PUHCA), certain state laws, and in certain instances, regulation under the FPA. Additionally, other benefits afforded to QFs are in the form of requirements for electric utilities to: (1) Make avoided cost information and system capacity needs available to the public; (2) purchase energy and capacity from QFs at the utility's avoided cost of power (ie. the cost to the purchasing utility to generate the power itself or as the cost to purchase it from another source; (3) sell backup, maintenance and other power services to QFs at rates based on the cost of rendering the services; (4) provide certain interconnection and transmission services priced on a nondiscriminatory basis; and (5) operate in "parallel" with interconnected QFs so that they may be electronically synchronized with electric utility grids. The information submitted enables the Commission to carry out its responsibilities in implementing the statutory provisions of both the EPA and PURPA by determining whether a facility meets the necessary requirements and is entitled to various PURPA benefits.

Respondent Description: The respondent universe currently comprises on average, 100 entities subject to the Commission's jurisdiction.

6. *Estimated Burden:* 400 total burden hours, 100 respondents, 1 response annually, 4 hours per response (average).

7. *Estimated Cost Burden to Respondents:* 400 hours ÷ 2,080 hours per year × \$115,357 per year = \$22,184 average cost per respondent \$222.

Statutory Authority: Sections 201 and 210 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978 (PURPA) (16 U.S.C. 796 as amended and 16 U.S.C. 824a-3) and sections 3 of the Federal Power Act (16 U.S.C. 796).

David P. Boergers,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 01-8377 Filed 4-4-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. RP98-53-000]

Kinder Morgan Interstate Gas Transmission, LLC; Notice of Informal Settlement Conference

March 30, 2001.

An informal settlement conference in the above docket will be held on Tuesday, April 10, 2001, to address the outstanding ad valorem tax issues on the Kinder Morgan Interstate Gas Transmission, LLC system. The conference will be held in the offices of Kinder Morgan, 370 Van Gordon Street, Lakewood, Colorado 80228. The informal settlement conference will begin at 10:30 a.m.

All interested parties in the above docket are requested to attend the informal settlement conference. If a party has any questions regarding the conference, please call Richard Miles, the Director of the Commission's Dispute Resolution Service. His telephone number is 1 877 FERC ADR (337-2237) or 202/208-0702 and his e-mail address is richard.miles@ferc.fed.us. If you plan on attending the conference, please contact Ben Breland at Kinder Morgan by fax at 303-763-3116.

David P. Boergers,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 01-8381 Filed 4-4-01; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 2031-046]

Springville City, UT; Notice of Public Scoping for the Environmental Assessment Evaluating Issuance of a New License for the Bartholomew Hydroelectric Project in Utah County, UT

March 30, 2001.

Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and procedures of the Federal Regulatory Commission, the Commission staff intends to prepare an Environmental Assessment (EA) that evaluates the environmental impacts of issuing a new license for the constructed and operating Bartholomew Project, No. 2031-046, located within Bartholomew Canyon and on Hobbie Creek, in Utah County, Utah. The subject project is