

President of Utility Contracting, Citizens Power Sales, 160 Federal Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02110.

A final decision will be made on this application after the environmental impacts have been evaluated pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, and a determination is made by the DOE that the proposed action will not adversely impact on the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system.

Copies of this application will be made available, upon request, for public inspection and copying at the address provided above.

Issued in Washington, DC on March 24, 1998.

Anthony J. Como,

Manager, Electric Power Regulation, Office of Coal and Power Im/Ex, Office of Coal and Power Systems, Office of Fossil Energy.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Bonneville Power Administration

Bonneville Power Administration South Oregon Coast Reinforcement Project

AGENCY: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS).

SUMMARY: Bonneville Power Administration proposes to build a 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and new substation to reinforce electrical service to the southern coast of the state of Oregon. Nucor Steel, a division of Nucor Corporation, may build a new steel mill in the Coos Bay/North Bend, Oregon, area. This plant would require a peak load of 150 megawatts (MW) and an instantaneous peak of 225 MW. The existing transmission system to the area does not have the capacity to serve this potential load and other anticipated load growth on the south coast of Oregon. This project will look at providing a transmission path to serve this load. The power supplier for this load is subject to state utility regulations.

The State of Oregon has agreed to provide BPA funding to investigate solutions to reinforce the transmission system to the South Oregon Coast area and to support industrial development. If Nucor Steel decides not to build the steel mill, BPA will stop pre-proposal activities and inform the public and

agencies that the environmental process has been suspended.

Potential Federal cooperating agencies include the U.S. Department of Interior, U.S. Bureau of Land Management; the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Forest Service; and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. In accordance with National Environmental Policy Act requirements, BPA and the cooperating agencies will prepare an EIS to inform decisionmakers about potential environmental effects of the proposal. The environmental analysis will cover the proposed transmission line, a new BPA substation, and related actions including: construction of the Nucor Steel plant; a 230-kV transmission line that would connect the new BPA substation to PacifiCorp's Isthmus Substation south of Coos Bay; and two new 230-kV transmission lines connecting the new BPA substation to a new substation at the plant site.

DATES: Interested and affected members of the public such as landowners, special interest groups, tribes, state and local governments, utilities, and community groups are invited to help BPA and the cooperating agencies identify alternatives, environmental resources, and issues to be addressed in the draft EIS. Information to explain the proposal, the environmental process, and how to participate will be sent to interested or potentially affected members of the public at the beginning of the scoping period. Three BPA-sponsored scoping meetings will be held: Tuesday, April 14, at the Creswell Community Center, 99 South First, Creswell, Oregon; Wednesday, April 15, at the Masonic Lodge Hall, 247 First Street, in Elkton, Oregon; and Thursday, April 16, at the North Bend Community Center, 2222 Broadway, North Bend, Oregon. Meetings will be held from 4-8 p.m. Meetings will have an open-house format, with project material available for public review. BPA, the cooperating agencies, the State of Oregon, Nucor Steel, and PacifiCorp staff will answer questions. BPA will accept verbal and written comments. The time and place of scoping meetings will be announced in information being sent to interested members of the public and local newspapers. Written comments before, during, or after scoping meetings should be sent to the Communications Office at the address below. The close of the comment period will be announced in the pre-meeting information and at the public meetings.

BPA, in conjunction with the cooperating agencies, plans to file and distribute a draft EIS for public review in August 1998. BPA, the cooperating

agencies, and the State of Oregon will hold public meetings in local communities to give the public an opportunity to review and comment on the draft EIS.

ADDRESSES: BPA invites participation, comments, and suggestions on the proposed scope of the draft EIS. Send comment letters, requests to be placed on the project mail list, and requests for more information to the Communications Office, Bonneville Power Administration—ACS, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, Oregon, 97212, or call 503-230-3478, toll-free 1-800-622-4519, or fax 503-230-3984. Comments may also be sent to the BPA Internet address: comment@bpa.gov. Documents can be requested by calling toll-free 1-800-622-4520.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Laurens Driessen, Project Manager, Bonneville Power Administration—TNF-3, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, Oregon, 97208-3621. E-mail requests or questions should be sent to lcdriessen@bpa.gov, or call toll-free 1-800-662-6963. You may also contact Ken Barnhart, Environmental Project Manager, Bonneville Power Administration—EC, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, Oregon, 97208-3621. E-mail requests or questions should be sent to kabarnhart@bpa.gov, or call toll-free 1-800-662-6963.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The southern Oregon coast (from south of Newport, Oregon, to the California-Oregon border and west of Eugene and Roseburg, Oregon) is served from a 115-kV and a 230-kV transmission line out of Lane Substation (near Eugene, Oregon), a 230-kV transmission line from Santiam Substation (south of Salem, Oregon), and a 230-kV transmission line from Dixonville (near Roseburg, Oregon). The critical operating period for the Oregon coast is winter. Normal winter load forecasts for the southern Oregon coast in the year 2000 show about 720 MW of flow to the coast on these transmission lines to support the area's winter load. With all lines in service, the existing transmission system can support about 835 MW of flow on these lines. If the Dixonville 230-kV transmission line is lost for any reason, the system capacity is about 765 MW. Assuming 1.5 percent annual load growth for this area (without the added load of the steel mill), a transmission project may be required in the year 2004 to support the southern Oregon coast for the loss of the Dixonville-Reston 230-kV transmission line. According to existing BPA planning criteria, all load must be served for the loss of a single

transmission line or transformer for all load conditions to maintain reliable service.

The proposed Nucor Steel mill would require an instantaneous peak load of 225 MW for its arc furnace. The expected annual load growth with the new mill is about 3 percent. The existing transmission system cannot serve the new plant and the expected load growth. Furthermore, the existing system is not capable of suppressing voltage changes induced by the arc furnace.

Alternatives Proposed for Consideration

BPA has been studying ways to reinforce the transmission system. Several options for adding new 230-kV transmission lines and series compensation were studied. These options cannot provide the system reliability requirements needed, and the costs for adding three 230-kV transmission lines and series compensation are comparable to a new 500-kV transmission line. A new 500-kV line is needed to eliminate flickers induced by the arc furnace.

Potential routes for a 500-kV transmission line have been developed in cooperation with PacifiCorp and Federal, state and local agencies. Three routes that parallel existing transmission lines are being studied. The first route would follow an existing BPA transmission line that begins at BPA's Alvey Substation near Goshen, Oregon, west to near Florence, Oregon, then would follow an existing BPA transmission line south through Reedsport to a proposed new substation site in the hills above Glasgow, Oregon. The second route would follow an existing BPA transmission line from BPA's Alvey Substation south to near Roseburg, Oregon, then west next to an existing BPA transmission line through Fairview, and then north to the proposed substation site. A third route would begin at PacifiCorp's Dixonville Substation and follow PacifiCorp's transmission line west to BPA's Reston Substation, then west following BPA's transmission line through Fairview, then north to the proposed substation site.

Two additional routes would parallel existing lines for part of the route, but would then require new right-of-way. The first route would follow an existing BPA transmission line from BPA's Alvey Substation southwest to near Drain, Oregon. From near Drain, new right-of-way would head southwest, cross the Umpqua River, then turn west and travel to the proposed substation site above Glasgow, Oregon. The second

route also starts at BPA's Alvey Substation and again follows the existing BPA transmission line to just south of Creswell, Oregon, then turns southwest on new right-of-way. This corridor heads west to near Elkton, crosses the Umpqua River, and ends at the same substation site.

The routes cross land in Lane, Douglas, and Coos counties, Oregon. A new 500-kV transmission line would be about 120 kilometers (75 miles) long and would require approximately 46 meters (150 feet) of new right-of-way width. A new substation would need to be constructed and would require about 2 hectares (5 acres). At this time, BPA believes the routes using some new right-of-way may be the preferred routes to study. BPA is also considering taking no action.

BPA is mandated by the Northwest Power Act to recover its costs. Each alternative will be evaluated to determine if the revenues generated cover the costs of the alternative, and if the alternative is consistent with sound business principles.

Identification of Environmental Issues

Potential issues presently identified for this proposal include: (1) Effects on fish, wildlife, and vegetation, including threatened and endangered species; (2) effects of economic development and socioeconomic effects of building a line and substation; (3) effects of construction and placement of electrical facilities in floodplains and wetlands; (4) concern over visual effects, noise, and other interference produced by electrical facilities in rural and populated areas; (5) impacts on range, forest, and agricultural resources due to construction and placement of electrical facilities; (6) concern over human exposure to electric and magnetic fields created by electrical facilities; (7) impacts to cultural resources; (8) impacts to recreational resources; (9) conflicting land use; (10) impact to property values; and (11) potential impacts to soils (erosion) and water quality. Additional issues identified through the scoping process may also be examined in the draft EIS.

Issued in Portland, Oregon, on March 23, 1998.

Steven G. Hickok,

Acting Administrator and Chief Executive Officer.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP98-292-000]

Florida Gas Transmission Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

March 25, 1998.

Take notice that on March 20, 1998, Florida Gas Transmission Company (FGT), 1400 Smith Street, Houston, Texas 77002, filed in Docket No. CP98-292-000, a request pursuant to Sections 157.205 and 157.216(b) for authorization to abandon approximately .9 of a mile of the 12-inch Ft. Lauderdale Lateral under FGT's blanket certificate issued in Docket No. CP82-553-000 pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act, all as more fully set forth in the request which is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

FGT states that it is required to remove or abandon the 12-inch Ft. Lauderdale Lateral due to the state road department's plan to widen Griffin Road into Ft. Lauderdale where the 12-inch Ft. Lauderdale Lateral is in the road right-of-way. It is further stated that FGT has determined that the 12-inch lateral is no longer needed to serve Florida Power & Light Company (FPL) since the construction of the new metering facilities currently being served through the 24-inch lateral and metering facilities constructed on the north side of the FPL power plant.

FGT proposes to abandon and remove four short sections totaling 45 feet, of the 12-inch Ft. Lauderdale pipeline, and filling the remaining portions with water or nitrogen. FGT states that the proposed abandonment would not result in the abandonment of any existing service to FGT's customers, nor would it disadvantage FGT's existing customers.

Any person or the Commission's staff may, within 45 days after issuance of the instant notice by the Commission, file pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Procedural Rules (18 CFR 385.214) a motion to intervene or notice of intervention and pursuant to Section 157.205 of the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205) a protest to the request. If no protest is filed within the time allowed therefor, the proposed activity shall be deemed to be authorized effective the day after the time allowed for filing a protest. If a protest is filed and not withdrawn within 30 days after the time allowed for filing a protest, the instant request shall be treated as an application for