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**Note:** The official version of this document is the document published in the **Federal Register**.

**Program Authority:** 42 U.S.C. 2756b.

Dated: March 16, 1999.

**Greg Woods,**

*Chief Operating Officer, Office of Student Financial Assistance.*

[FR Doc. 99-6801 Filed 3-18-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4000-01-U

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Availability of the Commercial Light Water Reactor Final Environmental Impact Statement, the Accelerator Production of Tritium Final Environmental Impact Statement, and the Tritium Extraction Facility Final Environmental Impact Statement

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy (DOE) announces the availability of three Final Environmental Impact Statements (EISs): (1) the Commercial Light Water Reactor (CLWR) EIS, DOE/EIS-0288; (2) the Accelerator Production of Tritium (APT) EIS, DOE/EIS-0270; and, (3) the Tritium Extraction Facility (TEF) EIS, DOE/EIS-0271. The CLWR EIS evaluates the environmental impacts associated with producing tritium at one or more of five commercial light water reactors operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority. The APT EIS evaluates the environmental impacts associated with constructing and operating a linear accelerator at the Savannah River Site, near Aiken, South Carolina, for the production of tritium. The TEF EIS evaluates the environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of a tritium extraction facility,

at the Savannah River Site, to extract tritium from commercial light water reactor targets and targets of similar design.

**ADDRESSES:** A copy of the CLWR Final EIS, or its Summary may be obtained by calling 1-800-776-2765, or writing to: Mr. Jay Rose, Office of Technical and Environmental Support, DP-45, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585.

A copy of the APT Final EIS, and/or the TEF Final EIS, or their Summaries may be obtained by calling 1-800-881-7292, or writing to: Andrew Grainger, U.S. Department of Energy, Savannah River Operations, Office, Building 742A, Room 122, Aiken, South Carolina 29802.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For general information on the DOE NEPA 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:** The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is responsible for providing the nation with nuclear weapons and ensuring those weapons remain safe and reliable. Tritium, a radioactive isotope of hydrogen, is an essential component of every weapon in the current and projected U.S. nuclear stockpile.

Unlike other nuclear materials used in nuclear weapons, tritium decays at a rate of 5.5 percent per year. Accordingly, as long as the nation relies on a nuclear deterrent, the tritium in each nuclear weapon must be replenished periodically.

At present, the U.S. nuclear weapons complex does not have the capability to produce the amounts of tritium that will be required to support the nation's future stockpile. In 1995, DOE prepared the Tritium Supply and Recycling Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS). In that PEIS, DOE considered a range of reasonable alternatives for obtaining the required quantities of tritium. In the December 1995 Record of Decision for the Tritium Supply and Recycling PEIS, DOE decided to pursue a dual-track approach on the two most promising tritium-supply alternatives: (1) to initiate purchase of an existing commercial reactor (operating or partially complete) or irradiation services with an option to purchase the reactor for conversion to a defense facility; and (2) to design, build, and test critical components of an accelerator system for tritium

production (the Savannah River Site was selected as the location for an accelerator, should one be built).

On December 22, 1998, Secretary Bill Richardson announced that commercial light water reactors will be the primary tritium supply technology. The Secretary designated the Watts Bar Unit 1 nuclear reactor near Spring City, Tennessee, and the Sequoyah Unit 1 and 2 nuclear reactors near Soddy-Daisy, Tennessee, as the preferred CLWRs for tritium production. Each of these reactors is operated by the Tennessee Valley Authority. In his December 22, 1998 announcement, the Secretary also designated the APT as the backup technology for tritium supply. As a backup, DOE will continue with developmental activities and preliminary design, but will not construct the accelerator. Finally, in selecting the CLWR as the primary tritium supply technology, the Secretary reaffirmed a prior decision that a new tritium extraction capability will be constructed and operated at the Savannah River Site.

The final CLWR Final EIS is a stand alone document, which incorporates comments on the draft CLWR EIS received from the public. Because there were only minor changes to the APT and TEF draft EISs, DOE will not prepare completely revised documents as final EISs. Rather, DOE finalized the EISs by reference to the draft EISs and have issued these documents as records of changes to the draft EIS. Persons desiring copies of the APT and TEF draft EISs should contact Mr. Grainger at the above address.

No sooner than 30 days after publication of the Environmental Protection Agency's Notice of Availability in the **Federal Register**, DOE intends to issue a consolidated Record of Decision to formalize the December programmatic announcement and complete project-specific decisions for the three EIS.

Signed in Washington, DC this 15th day of March 1999, for the United States Department of Energy.

**Victor H. Reis,**

*Assistant Secretary for Defense Programs.*

[FR Doc. 99-6776 Filed 3-18-99; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[FE Docket No. PP-197]

### Notice Extending the Public Scoping Period Public Service Company of New Mexico

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy (DOE) announces the extension of the scoping period for the environmental impact statement (EIS) that is being prepared in connection with an application for a Presidential permit filed by Public Service Company of New Mexico. An EIS is being prepared because DOE has determined that the issuance of the Presidential permit would constitute a major Federal action that may have a significant impact upon the environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA).

**DATES:** The scoping period on the EIS is extended until April 14, 1999.

**ADDRESSES:** Written questions and comments should be submitted to: Mrs. Ellen Russell, NEPA Document Manager, Office of Fossil Energy (FE-27), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 20585-0350; Telephone (202) 586-9624; Facsimile: 202-287-5736; or electronic mail at Ellen.Russell@hq.doe.gov.

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

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** Public Service Company of New Mexico has applied to DOE for a Presidential permit to construct an electric transmission line across the U.S.-Mexico border. The proposed transmission line would originate at the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station Switchyard located west of Phoenix, Arizona, and extend to the town of Santa Ana in the Mexican State of Sonora. On February 12, 1999, DOE published a notice in the **Federal Register**, (64 FR 7173) announcing its intent to prepare an EIS and to conduct public scoping meetings in the vicinity of the proposed line. The public scoping period was to continue until March 15, 1999. To ensure that the public has ample opportunity to provide comments, DOE is extending until April 14, 1999, the period during which it will receive comments for consideration in establishing the scope and content of the EIS. DOE has separately notified interested and affected stakeholders of the change in dates. Comments received after April 14, 1999, will be considered to the extent practicable. Further information on this proceeding is

contained in the previously published Notice of Intent.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 15, 1999.

**Anthony J. Como,**

*Manager, Electric Power Regulation, Office of Coal & Power Im/Ex, Office of Fossil Energy.*

[FR Doc. 99-6774 Filed 3-18-99; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Notice Inviting Financial Assistance Applications**

**AGENCY:** U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Federal Energy Technology Center (FETC).

**ACTION:** Notice inviting financial assistance applications.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy announces that it intends to conduct a competitive Program Solicitation and award financial assistance (cooperative agreements) for the program entitled "Emission Control Technologies for Fine Particulate Matter, Ozone, and Related Environmental Issues." Through this solicitation, FETC seeks to support applications in the following areas of interest: (1) Cost Effective and Efficient Control of Nitrogen Oxide Emissions from Coal-Fired Electric Utility Boilers, and (2) Cost Effective and Efficient Control of Fine Particulate Emissions from Coal-Fired Electric Utility Boilers. Applications will be subjected to a review by a DOE technical panel, and awards will be made to a limited number of applicants based on a scientific and engineering evaluation of the responses received to determine the relative merit of the approach taken in response to this offering by the DOE, and funding availability.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Thomas J. Gruber, U.S. Department of Energy, Federal Energy Technology Center, Acquisition and Assistance Division, P.O. Box 10940, MS 921-143, Pittsburgh PA 15236-0940, Telephone: (412) 892-5897, FAX: (412) 892-6216, E-mail: gruber@fetc.doe.gov. The solicitation (available in both WordPerfect 6.1 and Portable Document Format (PDF)) will be released on DOE's FETC World Wide Web Server Internet System (<http://www.fetc.doe.gov/business/solicit>) on or about March 15, 1999.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

*Title of Solicitation:* "Emission Control Technology for Fine Particulate Matter, Ozone, and Related Environmental Issues."

*Objectives:* Through Program Solicitation No. DE-PS26-99FT40288, the Department of Energy seeks applications for innovative technical approaches to ensure the continued use of domestic fossil fuels (i.e. coal) as an environmentally sound component of the U.S. overall energy mix well into the next century. This solicitation is specifically aimed at the development and testing of emission control technologies, processes, and concepts that have a high probability of commercial success and that can cost-effectively and efficiently reduce the level of NO<sub>x</sub> and fine particulate matter. This solicitation is limited to those technologies, processes, and concepts that are applicable to utility boilers that combust U.S. coals as the primary fuel and that are retrofittable to existing coal-based power systems.

*Eligibility:* Eligibility for participation in this Program Solicitation is considered to be full and open. All interested parties may apply. The solicitation will contain a complete description of the technical evaluation factors and relative importance of each factor.

*Areas of Interest:* The Department is interested in obtaining applications in the following areas of interest: (1) Cost Effective and Efficient Control of Nitrogen Oxide Emissions from Coal Fired Electric Utility Boilers. Within this area of interest are two technical topics: (a) Advanced Technologies and Systems, and (b) Field Testing and Optimization; and (2) Cost Effective and Efficient Control of Fine Particulate Emissions from Coal Fired Electric Utility Boilers. Within this second area of interest are two technical topics: (a) Primary PM Emissions Control, and (b) Acid Aerosols/Condensable Emissions Control.

*Awards:* DOE anticipates issuing financial assistance (cooperative agreements) for each project selected. DOE reserves the right to support or not support, with or without discussions, any or all applications received in whole or in part, and to determine how many awards may be made through the solicitation subject to funds available. Approximately \$12 million of DOE funding is planned for this solicitation. The estimated funding by the DOE is planned to be \$1 million to \$2 million per award. Cost sharing by the applicant is required, and details of the cost sharing requirement are contained in the solicitation.

*Solicitation Release Date:* The Program Solicitation is expected to be ready for release on or about March 15, 1999. Applications must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the