

Dated: May 27, 2003.

Judge Eric Andell,

Deputy Under Secretary for Safe and Drug-Free Schools.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Western Greenbrier Co-Production Demonstration Project, Rainelle, WV and Notice of Floodplain/Wetlands Involvement

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Floodplain/Wetlands Involvement.

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) announces its intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) NEPA regulations (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the DOE NEPA regulations (10 CFR Part 1021), to assess the potential environmental impacts of a proposed project by Western Greenbrier Co-Gen LLC (WGC) to design, construct, and operate, in Rainelle, Greenbrier County, West Virginia, a demonstration facility that would use an innovative atmospheric-pressure circulating fluidized-bed (ACFB) boiler as the source of heat for the co-production of electricity, steam and structural brick. The proposed project, selected under the Clean Coal Power Initiative competitive solicitation, would be the first demonstration in the United States of a compact inverted cyclone configuration for the boiler design. This design has a 40 percent smaller footprint than a conventional boiler system of similar capacity.

The proposed power station would produce 85 MW (megawatts) of net electrical power plus 10,000-30,000 pounds per hour of steam and hot water. Steam and hot water from the proposed facility would serve an industrial park, which the host municipality has planned for land adjoining the power plant. Fuel for the power plant would be coal wastes from waste piles within the surrounding area. When necessary to raise the BTU content of the fuel, quality coal would be blended with the waste coal. The proposed project would also be a first demonstration of the utilization of coal combustion ash and wood wastes for the manufacture of

molded building blocks, known as Woodbrik™, to supply the regional construction materials market. All ash that is not used in by-product manufacture would be returned to the coal waste source sites to be used in the mitigation of acid leachate.

The EIS will evaluate the proposed project and reasonable alternatives. Because the proposed project would affect a floodplain and may affect wetlands, the EIS will include a floodplain assessment and wetlands assessment and DOE will prepare a floodplain statement of findings in accordance with DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain/wetlands environmental review requirements (10 CFR part 1022).

The EIS will help DOE decide whether to provide 50 percent (approximately \$107.5 million) of the total estimated funding of \$215 million for the proposed project. The purpose of this Notice of Intent is to inform the public about the proposed project; announce plans for a public scoping meeting; invite public participation in the EIS process; and solicit public comments for consideration in establishing the proposed scope and content of the EIS.

DATES: To ensure that all of the issues related to this proposal are addressed, DOE invites comments on the proposed scope and content of the EIS from all interested parties. Comments must be received by July 3, 2003, to ensure consideration. Late comments will be considered to the extent practicable. In addition to receiving comments in writing and by telephone [See **ADDRESSES** below], DOE will conduct a public scoping meeting in which agencies, organizations, and the general public are invited to present oral comments or suggestions with regard to the range of actions, alternatives, and impacts to be considered in the EIS. The scoping meeting will be held at Greenbrier West High School in Charmco, West Virginia on June 19, 2003, beginning at 7 p.m. (See Public Scoping Process). Greenbrier West High School is located on U.S. Route 60 approximately 10.3 miles west of I-64 Exit 156 at Sam Black Church. The public is invited to an informal session at this location beginning at 4 p.m. to learn more about the proposed action. Displays and other forms of information about the proposed agency action and the demonstration plant will be available, and DOE personnel will be present at the informal session to discuss the proposed project and the EIS process.

ADDRESSES: Written comments on the proposed EIS scope and requests to participate in the public scoping meeting should be addressed to the NEPA Document Manager for the Western Greenbrier Co-Production Demonstration Project: Mr. Mark L. McKoy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, U.S. Department of Energy, P.O. Box 880, Morgantown, WV 26507-0880.

People who want to participate in the public scoping process also may contact Mr. Mark L. McKoy directly at telephone 304-285-4426; toll free number 1-800-432-8330 (extension 4426); fax 304-285-4403; or e-mail mmckoy@netl.doe.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: To obtain additional information about this project or to receive a copy of the draft EIS for review when it is issued, contact Mr. Mark L. McKoy at the address provided above. For general information on the DOE NEPA process, please contact: Ms. Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119, Telephone: 202-586-4600, facsimile: 202-586-7031, or leave a toll-free message at 1-800-472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Background and Need for Proposed Agency Action

Since the early 1970s, DOE and its predecessor agencies have pursued research and development programs that contain long-term, high-risk activities that support the development of innovative concepts for a wide variety of coal technologies through the proof-of-concept stage. However, the availability of a technology at the proof-of-concept stage is not sufficient to ensure its continued development and subsequent commercialization. Before any technology can be considered seriously for commercialization, it must be demonstrated. The financial risk associated with technology demonstration is, in general, too high for the private sector to assume in the absence of strong incentives. The Clean Coal Power Initiative (CCPI) was established in 2002 as a government/industry partnership to implement the President's National Energy Policy recommendation to increase investment in clean coal technology. This recommendation addresses a national challenge of ensuring the reliability of electricity supply while simultaneously protecting the environment. The goal of the CCPI program is to accelerate commercial deployment of advanced