

and Budget and the Congress, whichever date occurs last. The matching program will continue for 18 months after the effective date and may be extended for an additional 12 months thereafter, if the conditions specified in 5 U.S.C. 552a(o)(2)(D) have been met.

6. Address for Receipt of Public Comments or Inquiries.

Individuals wishing to comment on this matching program or obtain additional information about the program, including requesting a copy of the computer matching agreement between ED and VA, should contact Ms. Marya Dennis, Management and Program Analyst, U.S. Department of Education, 3111 Union Center Plaza, 830 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20202. Telephone: (202) 377-3385. If you use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD), you may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at 1-800-877-8339.

Individuals with disabilities may obtain this document in an alternative format (e.g., Braille, large print, audiotope or computer diskette) on request to the contact person listed in the preceding paragraph.

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Authority: 5 U.S.C. 552a; Pub. L. 100-503.

Dated: October 24, 2003.

Theresa S. Shaw,

Chief Operating Officer, Federal Student Aid.
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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[FE Docket Nos. PP-234 and PP-235]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and To Conduct Public Scoping Meetings and Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement; Baja California Power, Inc., and Semptra Energy Resources

AGENCY: Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) and to conduct public scoping meetings.

SUMMARY: Baja California Power, Inc. (BCP) and Semptra Energy Resources (SER) were issued Presidential permits by DOE to separately construct double-circuit 230,000-volt (230-kV) electric transmission lines across the U.S. border with Mexico. In addition, right-of-way grants were issued to each company by the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for construction of the domestic portion of both transmission lines on Federal land. The transmission lines originate at new powerplants in Mexico, pass west of Calexico, California, and terminate at San Diego Gas & Electric Company's (SDG&E's) Imperial Valley Substation near El Centro, California. Under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), DOE and its cooperating agency in that proceeding, BLM, prepared an environmental assessment (EA) and findings of no significant impact (FONSI) prior to issuance of the Presidential permits and right-of-way grants. On May 2, 2003, the United States District Court for the Southern District of California held that the EA and the FONSI did not comply with NEPA, and, on July 8, 2003, the court sent the matter back to the respective agencies for additional NEPA review.

The purpose of this notice of intent is to inform the public that DOE will now prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) addressing BCP's and SER's projects and conduct two public scoping meetings. Although the two transmission lines have been constructed and are in service, DOE will, in accordance with the court's July 2003 order, conduct this NEPA review as if the transmission lines did not exist. BLM will be a cooperating agency.

DOE and BLM invite public participation in the scoping process and solicit public comments for consideration in establishing the scope and content of the EIS. Because the projects involve action in a floodplain, the EIS will include a floodplain assessment and floodplain statement of findings in accordance with DOE

regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review (10 CFR part 1022).

DATES: DOE and BLM invite interested agencies, organizations, and members of the public to submit comments or suggestions to assist in identifying significant environmental issues and in determining the appropriate scope of the EIS. The public scoping period starts with the publication of this notice in the **Federal Register** and will continue until December 1, 2003. Written and oral comments will be given equal weight, and DOE will consider all comments received or postmarked by December 1, 2003, in defining the scope of this EIS. Comments received or postmarked after that date will be considered to the extent practicable.

Public scoping meetings will be held on November 20, 2003, in El Centro, California, from 12 p.m. until 3 p.m. and in Calexico, California, from 5 p.m. until 8 p.m.

Requests to speak at a public scoping meeting(s) should be received by Mrs. Ellen Russell at the address indicated below on or before November 13, 2003. Requests to speak may also be made at the time of registration for the scoping meeting(s). However, persons who submitted advance requests to speak will be given priority if time should be limited during the meeting.

ADDRESSES: One copy of written comments or suggestions on the scope of the EIS and requests to speak at the scoping meeting(s) should be addressed to: Mrs. Ellen Russell, Office of Fossil Energy (FE-27), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0350, Phone 202-586-9624, facsimile: 202-287-5736, or electronic mail at Ellen.Russell@hq.doe.gov.

The scoping meetings will be held at the City Hall of El Centro, located at 1275 W. Main Street, and the City of Calexico City Hall, located at 608 Heber Street.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the proposed projects or to receive a copy of the Draft EIS when it is issued, contact Mrs. Russell at the address listed in the **ADDRESSES** section of this notice or:

Lynda Kastoll, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior, 1661 South Fourth Street, El Centro, CA 92243, Phone: 760-337-4421, facsimile: 760-337-4490, or electronic mail at lkastoll@ca.blm.gov.

For general information on the DOE NEPA review process, contact: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Compliance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000