

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Federal Energy Regulatory Commission****Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Notice of Scoping Meetings and Soliciting Scoping Comments**

October 23, 2003.

Take notice that the following hydroelectric applications have been filed with Commission and are available for public inspection:

- a. *Type of Application*: New Major License.
- b. *Project No.*: 1971–079.
- c. *Date Filed*: July 21, 2003.
- d. *Applicant*: Idaho Power Company.
- e. *Name of Project*: Hells Canyon Hydropower Project.
- f. *Location*: On the Snake River in Washington and Adams Counties, Idaho; and Wallowa and Baker Counties, Oregon. About 5,270 acres of Federal lands administered by the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management (Payette and Wallowa-Whitman National Forests and Hells Canyon National Recreational Area) are included within the project boundary.
- g. *Filed Pursuant to*: Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. 791(a)–825(r).
- h. *Applicant Contact*: Mr. Robert W. Stahman, Vice President, Secretary, and General Counsel, Idaho Power Company, P.O. Box 70, Boise, Idaho 83707.
- i. *FERC Contact*: Alan Mitchnick, (202) 502–6074; [alan.mitchnick@ferc.gov](mailto:alan.mitchnick@ferc.gov).
- j. *Deadline for filing scoping comments*: December 22, 2003.

All documents (original and eight copies) should be filed with: Magalie R. Salas, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426.

The Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure require all interveners filing documents with the Commission to serve a copy of that document on each person on the official service list for the project. Further, if an intervener files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on that resource agency.

Scoping comments may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) under the "e-Filing" link.

k. This application is not ready for environmental analysis at this time.

l. The existing Hells Canyon Project consists of three developments: Brownlee Development consists of a 395-foot-high earth and rockfill dam, a 14,621-acre impoundment, and a powerhouse with five generating units producing 585.4 megawatts (MW); Oxbow Development consists of a 209-foot-high earth and rockfill dam, a 1,150-acre impoundment, and a powerhouse with four generating units producing 460 MW; and Hells Canyon Development consists of a 320-foot-high concrete gravity dam, a 2,412-acre impoundment, and a powerhouse with three generating units producing 391.5 MW. Idaho Power also operates four fish hatcheries and four adult fish traps. Idaho Power proposes to exclude 3,800 acres of Federal lands surrounding the project reservoirs and 11 of 12 existing transmission lines from the project.

m. A copy of the application is available for review at the Commission in the Public Reference Room or may be viewed on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll-free at 1–866–208–3676, or for TTY, (202) 502–8659. A copy is also available for inspection and reproduction at the address in item h above.

You may also register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp> to be notified via email of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

n. *Scoping Process*: The Commission intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on the project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The EIS will consider both site-specific and cumulative environmental impacts and reasonable alternatives to the proposed action.

**Scoping Meetings**

FERC staff will conduct one agency scoping meeting and three public meetings. The agency scoping meeting will focus on resource agency and non-governmental organization (NGO) concerns, while the public scoping meetings are primarily for public input. All interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to attend one or all of the meetings, and to assist the staff in identifying the scope of the environmental issues that

should be analyzed in the EIS. The times and locations of these meetings are as follows:

**Agency Scoping Meeting**

*When*: Tuesday, November 18, 2003, starting at 9:30 a.m.

*Where*: Boise Centre on the Grove, 850 Front Street, Boise, Idaho.

**Public Scoping Meetings***Idaho Meetings*

*When*: Tuesday, November 18, 2003, from 7 p.m. until about 9 p.m.

*Where*: Boise Centre on the Grove, 850 Front Street, Boise, Idaho.

*When*: Thursday, November 20, 2003, from 7 p.m. until about 9 p.m.

*Where*: Washington County Senior Center, 115 E. Main Street, Weiser, Idaho.

*Oregon Meeting*

*When*: Wednesday, November 19, 2003, from 7 p.m. until about 9 p.m.

*Where*: Lions Club Community Hall, Halfway, Oregon.

Copies of the Scoping Document (SD1) outlining the subject areas to be addressed in the EIS were distributed to the parties on the Commission's mailing list. Copies of the SD1 will be available at the scoping meeting or may be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "eLibrary" link (see item m above).

**Objectives**

At the scoping meetings, the staff will: (1) Summarize the environmental issues tentatively identified for analysis in the EIS; (2) solicit from the meeting participants all available information, especially quantifiable data, on the resources at issue; (3) encourage statements from experts and the public on issues that should be analyzed in the EIS, including viewpoints in opposition to, or in support of, the staff's preliminary views; (4) determine the resource issues to be addressed in the EIS; and (5) identify those issues that require a detailed analysis, as well as those issues that do not require a detailed analysis.

**Procedures**

The meetings are recorded by a stenographer and become part of the formal record of the Commission proceeding on the project.

Individuals, organizations, and agencies with environmental expertise and concerns are encouraged to attend the meeting and to assist the staff in