

Background

Western's firm point-to-point transmission service rate for the AC Intertie 230/345-kV transmission system was revised through Rate Order No. WAPA-76 and submitted to FERC for confirmation and approval on February 8, 1999. On June 22, 1999, in Docket No. EF99-5191-000, 87 FERC ¶ 61,346, FERC issued an order confirming, approving, and placing into effect on a final basis the firm point-to-point transmission service rate of \$12.00/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 230/345-kV transmission system. The rate was approved for 5 years from January 1, 1999, to December 31, 2003.

On August 15, 2000, the Deputy Secretary approved Rate Order WAPA-91. This extended the existing firm point-to-point transmission service rate of \$17.23/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 500-kV transmission system, and the existing nonfirm point-to-point transmission service rate of 2.00 mills/kWh for the AC Intertie 230/345/500-kV transmission system through December 31, 2003.

Discussion

During development of the firm point-to-point transmission service rate for the AC Intertie 230/345-kV transmission system (Rate Order No. WAPA-76), Western determined that it would take about 10 years for the AC Intertie 500-kV transmission system to be subscribed to a level sufficient to meet its own revenue repayment requirements. The ratesetting Power Repayment Study (PRS) established for the AC Intertie 230/345/500-kV transmission system (Rate Order No. WAPA-76) reflected the phasing-in of the AC Intertie 500-kV transmission system revenues starting in fiscal year (FY) 1999 through FY 2008. The projected firm transmission sales in the 500-kV transmission system PRS assume that in 10 years the 500-kV Project will be economically viable and capable of demonstrating repayment. The PRS was programmed for first year sales of 62.5 MW and annual increases of 100 MW through the tenth year. Based on that projection, the total sales target projected at the end of fiscal year 2003 is 562.5 MW. The 500-kV system contractual commitments are currently 664 MW. The 230/345-kV system contractual commitments are 1,059 MW. The total combined firm transmission sales beginning in FY 2004 is projected to be 1,723 MW. This ratesetting PRS methodology remains valid. Projected revenue levels from sales of firm and nonfirm point-to-point transmission service and miscellaneous items will recover project expenses and capital requirements through FY 2049 for the AC Intertie 230/345/500-kV transmission system.

Western has decided to extend the existing firm point-to-point transmission service rate of \$17.23/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 500-kV transmission system, the firm point-to-point transmission service rate of \$12.00/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 230/345-kV transmission system, and the nonfirm point-to-point transmission service rate of 2.00 mills/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 230/345/500-kV transmission system through December 31, 2006. This extension will also allow Western time to evaluate impacts of

combining revenue requirements of the Desert Southwest Region's transmission systems and to determine a methodology to put in place a multi-system transmission rate. Western proposes to extend the current rates pursuant to 10 CFR 903.23. Upon its approval, Rate Order No. WAPA-76 and Rate Order No. WAPA-91 will be extended under Rate Order No. WAPA-108. Under 10 CFR 903.23(a)(2), Western did not have a consultation and comment period.

Order

In view of the above and under the authority delegated to me by the Secretary, I hereby extend from December 31, 2003, to December 31, 2006, the existing firm point-to-point transmission service rate of \$17.23/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 500-kV transmission system, the firm point-to-point transmission service rate of \$12.00/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 230/345-kV transmission system, and the nonfirm point-to-point transmission service rate of 2.00 mills/kilowattyear for the AC Intertie 230/345/500-kV transmission system on an interim basis. The existing AC Intertie transmission system rates for transmission service shall remain in effect pending FERC confirmation and approval of their extension or substitute rates on a final basis through December 31, 2006.

Dated: October 27, 2003.

Kyle E. McSlarrow,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 03-28095 Filed 11-6-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[ER-FRL-6645-3]

Environmental Impact Statements and Regulations; Availability of EPA Comments

Availability of EPA comments prepared pursuant to the Environmental Review Process (ERP), under section 309 of the Clean Air Act and section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act as amended. Requests for copies of EPA comments can be directed to the Office of Federal Activities at (202) 564-7167. An explanation of the ratings assigned to draft environmental impact statements (EISs) was published in FR dated April 4, 2003 (68 FR 16511).

Draft EISs

ERP No. D-AFS-J65390-CO Rating EC1, Arapaho National Recreation Area Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project, Pre-Suppression Measures for Mountain Pine Beetle Infestation Reduction in Stands of Lodgepole Pine, Implementation, Arapaho National Forest, Sulphur Ranger District, Grand County, CO.

Summary: EPA expressed environmental concern due to project

impacts related to disturbances within roadless areas, contiguous terrestrial habitat and watersheds.

ERP No. D-FHW-G40177-LA Rating LO, Kansas Lane Connector Project, Construction between U.S. 80 (Desiard Street) and U.S. 165 and the Forsythe Avenue Extension, U.S. Army COE Section 10 and 404 Permits Issuance, City of Monroe, Quachita Parish, LA.

Summary: EPA has no objections to the selection of the preferred alternative.

ERP No. D-FRA-E40799-FL Rating EC1, Florida High Speed Rail from Tampa to Orlando, Transportation Improvement, NPDES Permit and US Army COE Section 404 Permit, Hillsborough, Orange, Osceola and Polk Counties, FL.

Summary: EPA has environmental concerns with the proposed project regarding noise, vibration, hazardous waste sites and potential environmental impacts to air quality, wetlands, floodplains and other aquatic resources.

ERP No. D-NOA-A91069-00 Rating EC2, Atlantic Tunas, Swordfish, and Sharks Fishery Management Plan, To Prevent Overfishing and Rebuild Overfished Species, Update Essential Fish Habitat, Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico and Caribbean Sea.

Summary: EPA expressed concern that the document had not adequately explained alternatives and impact analyses. EPA recommended that the final document summarize data and that it clearly connect to impacts analysis of the proposed action. EPA also requested information on bycatch and the effects of other fisheries on sharks.

Final EISs

ERP No. F-AFS-K26002-CA, South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) B-Line Phase III Wastewater Export Pipeline Replacement Project, Luther Pass Pump Station to U.S. Forest Service Luther Pass Overflow Campground Access Road, Special Use Permit, U.S. Army COE Section 404 and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Permits Issuance and EPA Grant, El Dorado and Alpine Counties, CA.

Summary: No formal comment letter was sent to the preparing agency.

ERP No. F-DOD-A11077-00, Ground-Based Midcourse Defense (GMD) Extended Test Range (ETR) Project, Construction and Operation, CA, AK, AS, HI and WA.

Summary: EPA expressed environmental concern regarding how soil will be sampled for perchlorate and recommended that the ROD specify a perchlorate sampling plan.

ERP No. F-FHW-J40157-MT, US 89 from Fairfield to Dupuyer Corridors Study, Reconstruction, Widening,