

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Western Area Power Administration

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Griffith Power Plant and Transmission Line Project, Mohave County, Arizona

AGENCY: Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

SUMMARY: In accordance with Section 102(2)(c) of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, 42 U.S.C. §4332, Western Area Power Administration (Western) intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) regarding the proposal by Griffith Energy (GE), LLC, to construct an electric generating facility on private property and to interconnect this facility with Western's system in the vicinity of Kingman, Arizona. To facilitate this interconnection, Western proposes to construct three 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission lines to connect the generating facility to two existing Western transmission lines which are part of the regional grid. Two 6-mile parallel lines will connect the generating facility to the Davis-Prescott 230-kV line about 6 miles north of the proposed plant site and about 5 miles southwest of Kingman. An additional 28-mile line will connect the facility to the Mead-Liberty 345-kV transmission line about 15 miles east of Kingman. The three new lines will parallel existing lines or occupy approved corridors for most of their lengths. Because implementing this proposal would incorporate new generation into Western's system, Western has determined that an EIS is required in accordance with U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) NEPA Implementing Procedures, 10 CFR 1021, Subpart D, Appendices D5 and D6. In this notice Western announces intentions to prepare an EIS and hold a public scoping meeting for the proposed project. Western's scoping will include notifying the general public and Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies of the proposed action for identification by the public and agencies of issues and alternatives to be considered in the EIS.

DATES: The scoping meeting will be held on April 20, 1998, beginning at 7 p.m., at the County Board of Supervisors Office, 809 East Beale Street, Kingman, Arizona 86401.

Written comments on the scope of the EIS for the proposed Project should be received no later than May 21, 1998. Comments on the project will be accepted throughout the NEPA process.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: If you are interested in receiving future information or wish to submit written comments, please call or write John Holt, Environmental Manager, Western Area Power Administration, Desert Southwest Region, P.O. Box 6457, Phoenix, Arizona 85005-6457, (602) 352-2592, FAX: (602) 352-2630, E-mail: holt@wapa.gov. For general information on DOE's NEPA review procedures or status of a NEPA review, 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: GE proposes to construct the Griffith Energy Project (Project) on private land south of the City of Kingman in Mohave County, Arizona. The Project would be a "merchant plant," meaning it would not be owned by a utility or by a utility affiliate selling power to its utility, nor is it supported by a long-term power purchase agreement with a utility. The Project would instead sell power on a short and mid-term basis to customers and the on-the-spot market. Power purchases by customers would be voluntary, and all economic costs would be borne by GE.

The Project consists of a 520-megawatt natural-gas-fired, combined-cycle generating facility and on-site supporting infrastructure, including an administration building, a storage warehouse, water treatment and storage facilities, cooling towers, gas conditioning equipment, and new access roads. The generating facility and infrastructure would occupy less than 40 acres of a 160-acre site in the Mohave County I-40 Industrial Corridor south of Kingman. Additional off-site facilities would include water pipelines and buried natural gas pipelines which would bring high-pressure gas to the generating facility to fuel the gas-fired turbines from nearby natural gas transmission pipelines. The Project's water requirements would be about 2,500 to 3,000 gallons per minute during peak operating periods.

Western, with funding from GE, proposes to construct three 230-kV transmission lines to interconnect with two existing Western transmission lines. Two 6-mile parallel lines will connect the plant with the Davis-Prescott 230-kV line about 6 miles north of the proposed plant site and about 5 miles southwest of Kingman, and a 28-mile line would connect the plant with the Mead-Liberty 345-kV transmission line about 15 miles east of Kingman. These interconnections would integrate the power generated by the Project into the Western electrical grid. Western proposes to build these lines parallel to existing transmission lines or approved corridors. Since this would connect power from new generation to Western's system, DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures require Western to prepare an EIS on the potential environmental impacts of this proposal. Western, therefore, will be the lead Federal Agency, as defined at 40 CFR 1501.5.

Western will carefully examine public health and safety, environmental impacts, and engineering aspects of the proposed power project, including all related facilities, such as the power plant and electric transmission and natural gas lines.

The EIS will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Council of Environmental Quality's NEPA Implementing Regulations (40 CFR 1500-1508) and DOE's NEPA Implementing Procedures (10 CFR 1021). Western will invite local and State agencies with jurisdiction over the Project to be cooperating agencies on the EIS. Full public participation and disclosure are planned for the entire EIS process. It is anticipated that the EIS process will take 8 months and will include a public information and scoping meeting; consultation and involvement with appropriate Federal, State, local, and tribal government agencies; public review and hearings on the published draft EIS; a published final EIS; a review period; and publication of a record of decision (ROD). A public information and scoping meeting will be held on April 20, 1998. Publication of the ROD is anticipated in the fall of 1998.

Dated:

Michael S. Hacskaylo
Acting Administrator