

effective the day after the time allowed for filing a protest. If a protest is filed and not withdrawn within 30 days after the time allowed for filing a protest, the instant request shall be treated as an application for authorization pursuant to Section 7 of the NGA.

**Lois D. Cashell,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-13560 Filed 5-22-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

#### Notice of New Docket Prefix DR

May 19, 1997.

Notice is hereby given that a new docket prefix DR has been established for petitions requesting the Commission's approval of changes in depreciation rates made for accounting purposes.

On May 15, 1997, in *MidAmerican Energy Company*, 79 FERC ¶ 61,169 (1997) the Commission clarified that section 302(a) of the Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. 825a(a) (1994), requires that public utilities and licensees must file for Commission approval prior to changing depreciation rates for accounting purposes.

In order to properly docket and manage this type of filing and assess Commission resources applicable to this type of work, it is necessary to establish a new docket prefix for petitions seeking the Commission's approval of depreciation rate changes made for accounting purposes only. The new docket prefix will be DRFY-NNNNN, where the FY stands for the fiscal year in which the filing was made and the NNNNN is a sequential number. For example, the first depreciation rate change accounting filing petition made this fiscal year will be assigned DR97-1-000, the second will be the DR97-2-000, etc.

**Lois D. Cashell,**

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-13603 Filed 5-22-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 2000-010]

#### Power Authority of the State of New York; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and Hold Public Scoping Meetings on Project Relicensing

May 19, 1997.

Power Authority of the State of New York (NYPA) is the licensee for the St. Lawrence-FDR Power Project, which is located on the St. Lawrence River in St. Lawrence County, New York. The license for the project expires October 31, 2003.

On June 3, 1996, NYPA filed a Notice of Intent to seek a new license to continue to operate and maintain its St. Lawrence-FDR Project.

NYPA, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission), the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC), resource agencies, local governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and many interested members of the public have been conducting a Cooperative Consultation Process (CCP) to identify resource issues to be addressed during the relicensing of the project. The establishment of the CCP Team and the commencement of the Scoping Process for the relicensing were announced in a Notice of Memorandum of Understanding, Formation of Cooperative Consultation Process Team, and Initiation of Scoping Process Associated with Relicensing the St. Lawrence-FDR Power Project, issued May 2, 1996, and published in the **Federal Register** dated May 8, 1996, Volume 61, No. 90, on page 20813. Representatives of the Canadian government, the International Joint Commission, and Mohawk Nation communities have also attended some of the meetings. The Scoping Process will assist the FERC and the DEC in satisfying their requirements under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) and Section 401(a)(1) of the Clean Water Act.

#### Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement

The Commission and DEC staffs have determined that relicensing the existing project could constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment. Therefore, the staffs intend to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the relicensing of the St. Lawrence-FDR Project in accordance with NEPA.

The DEC is a cooperating agency and is responsible for the issuance of a water quality certificate under the Clean Water Act.

The EIS will consider both site specific and cumulative environmental impacts of the proposed project and reasonable alternatives, and will include an economic and engineering analysis.

A draft EIS will be issued and circulated for review by all interested stakeholders and the public. All comments filed on the draft EIS will be analyzed by the Commission staff and considered in a final EIS.

As part of the relicensing process, the CCP Team has prepared a Scoping Document I (SDI), which provides information on the scoping process, relicensing schedule, background information, environmental issues, and the proposed project and alternatives. The issues contained in SDI are based on agency and public comments at the CCP Team and other meetings.

The purpose of this notice is to: (1) Advise all interested individuals, organizations, and agencies as to the proposed scope of the environmental analysis, including cumulative effects, and to seek additional information pertinent to this analysis; and (2) advise all individuals, organizations, and agencies of their opportunity for comment.

#### Scoping Process

The staffs' scoping objectives are to:

- Identify significant environmental issues;
- Determine the depth of analysis appropriate to each issue;
- Identify the resource issues not requiring detailed analysis; and
- Identify reasonable project alternatives.

The purpose of the scoping process is to identify significant issues related to the proposed action and to determine what issues should be addressed in the EIS.

#### Scoping Meetings

The Commission and DEC staffs will conduct one afternoon scoping meeting and three evening scoping meetings. All interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to attend and assist the staff in identifying the scope of environmental issues that should be analyzed in the EIS.

To help focus discussions, SDI will be circulated to enable appropriate federal, state, and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and other interested individuals, organizations, and agencies to participate effectively in and contribute to the scoping process. SDI provides a brief description of the