

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 8th day of September 1997.

For the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

John W.N. Hickey,

Chief, Low-Level Waste and Decommissioning Projects Branch, Division of Waste Management, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.

[FR Doc. 97-24557 Filed 9-15-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7590-01-P

PACIFIC NORTHWEST ELECTRIC POWER AND CONSERVATION PLANNING COUNCIL

Northwest Conservation and Electronic Power Plan Draft Amendments and Addendum

AGENCY: Pacific Northwest Electric Power and Conservation Planning Council (Northwest Power Planning Council, Council).

ACTION: Notice of availability of the Addendum to the Draft Fourth Northwest Conservation and Electric Power Plan.

SUMMARY: Pursuant to the Pacific Northwest Electric Power Planning and Conservation Act of 1980 (16 U.S.C. 839, *et seq.*) (Act), in April 1983 the Council adopted a regional electric power plan, the Northwest Conservation and Electric Power Plan (plan). The plan was completely amended in 1986. Although the Act requires the Council to review the plan at least every five years, the Council has revised certain parts of the plan more often, to respond to ongoing changes in the regional energy picture and to incorporate the most recent technology and analysis. For example, the Council updated certain technical data in a 1989 Supplement to the 1986 Power Plan. In April 1991, the Council adopted another complete amendment of the plan. In March 1996, the Council released for public comment the Draft Fourth Power Plan.

In the face of nationwide initiatives for restructuring the electrical industry, the governors of Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington convened a Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System in late 1995. The Council recognized that many of the issues to be considered in its plan would also be taken up by the Comprehensive Review and therefore decided to wait until the review had issued its final report before completing the plan amendment process.

The Addendum to the Draft Fourth Northwest Power Plan has two principal

objectives. First, it reviews important developments since the release of the draft power plan. These developments include what has happened with respect to: Generation and conservation resources; gas and electricity markets; electricity loads; institutions; and policies. The more important developments include the creation of new institutions in response to the increasingly competitive utility industry and the continued evolution of policies at the state and federal levels designed to facilitate competitive electricity markets.

The second purpose of the Addendum is to examine the relationships between the analysis contained in the draft power plan and the recommendations from the Comprehensive Review. In several instances, the Addendum suggests approaches that would help move the Northwest from the usually general nature of the Comprehensive Review's recommendations to the specifics that will have to be addressed by legislatures, and state and local regulators.

During the next several months, hearings in each of the four Northwest states will be scheduled, as required by the Act. The public is invited to comment on both the Draft Fourth Northwest Power Plan and the Addendum. Note that the text of the Draft Fourth Power Plan remains unchanged. It is the Addendum that contains revisions that reflect the recommendations of the Comprehensive Review.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The electricity industry nationwide is undergoing a radical restructuring. To ensure that the four Northwest states have a voice in how this restructuring affects the region, in late 1995 the governors of these states convened a "Comprehensive Review of the Northwest Energy System." The steering committee of the review presided over 30 day-long meetings and almost 400 people were involved in more than 100 meetings of various work groups. The steering committee took public comment at 10 hearings on its draft report and presented its final recommendations to the four governors in December 1996.

To accommodate this regional review, the Council's draft plan took a different approach from that of earlier plans. The 1991 Power Plan, for example, had as its theme: "A Time for Action." In contrast, this draft plan focuses on "Northwest Power In Transition: Issues and Opportunities." The 1996 draft set out few policy determinations or recommended actions. Instead, it was

designated to serve as a reference for the regional review. The goal of the draft plan reflected that of the governors in convening the regional review: To develop, through a public process, recommendations for changes in the institutional structure of the region's electric utility industry.

This draft plan and Addendum meet the requirements of the Northwest Power Act, which specifies what components the plan is to contain. The Act requires the plan to include a number of elements, including, but not limited to: An energy conservation program; a recommendation for research and development; a methodology for determining quantifiable environmental costs and benefits; a 20-year demand forecast; a forecast of power resources that the Bonneville Power Administration will need to meet its obligations; an analysis of reserve and reserve reliability requirements; and a surcharge methodology. The plan also includes the Council's Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program, developed pursuant to other procedural requirements under the Act.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION: Please contact the Council's Central Office if you would like a copy of the Draft Fourth Northwest Power Plan, Document Number 96-5, and/or the Addendum, Document Number 97-7. The Council's address is 851 SW. 6th Avenue, Suite 1100, Portland, Oregon 97204. The Council's telephone numbers are: (503) 222-5161 and (toll free) (800) 222-3355. The Council's FAX number is (503) 795-3370. Copies of each document can also be obtained from the Council's internet site: www.nwppc.org.

When submitting comments, please note prominently that you are commenting on Council Document Number 96-5 for the Draft Fourth Northwest Power Plan or Council Document Number 97-7 for the Addendum. Comments may be submitted by mail, by facsimile transmission (FAX), or by electronic mail at: comments@nwppc.org. The Council will accept written comments through close of business on Friday, October 31, 1997. The Council may hold consultations after that date, as necessary.

Stephen L. Crow,

Executive Director.

[FR Doc. 97-23943 Filed 9-15-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-15-M