

northwest corner of the Reservation and transporting SNF from the existing railroad to the site by building a new rail siding and rail line to connect the proposed facility at Site A to the existing Union Pacific main line at Skunk Ridge, Utah. NRC published a notice of intent to prepare an EIS and conduct a scoping process in the **Federal Register** on May 1, 1998 (63 FR 24197). As a part of the scoping process, a public scoping meeting was conducted to obtain comments on the intended scope of the EIS on June 2, 1998, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Two additional scoping meetings were held on April 29, 1999 (64 FR 18451) in Salt Lake City and Tooele, Utah, to address the PFS proposal to construct and operate the proposed rail line and to address any environmental impacts associated with the lease agreement that might not have been discussed at the previous scoping meeting.

This DEIS has been prepared in compliance with NEPA, NRC regulations for implementing NEPA (10 CFR Part 51), guidance provided by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing the procedural provisions of NEPA (40 CFR Part 1500), STB regulations for implementing NEPA (49 CFR Part 1105), and BLM and BIA policy procedures and guidance documents.

Federal agencies' actions are considered in this DEIS. NRC's action is to grant or deny a 20-year license to PFS on the Reservation. BIA's action is to either approve or disapprove a 25-year lease between PFS and the Skull Valley Band for use of Reservation land to construct and operate the proposed facility. Both the license and the lease may be renewed. BLM's action is to either grant or deny one of two requests for rights-of-way through BLM land for transporting SNF from the existing rail line to the proposed facility site, including amending its resource management plan if necessary. STB's action is to grant or deny PFS's application for a license to construct and operate a new rail line to the proposed facility site.

This DEIS not only evaluates the proposed action (Alternative 1) described above, but also the environmental impacts of the alternative actions. Alternatives involving the Skull Valley site include an alternative site location on the Reservation (known as Site B), and an alternative transportation method (*i.e.*, heavy-haul vehicles). Consideration of an alternative site location on the Reservation and an alternative transportation method

resulted in evaluating the following alternatives:

- Alternative 2—the construction and operation of the proposed facility at Site B on the Reservation with a rail siding and a rail line similar to that described above.

- Alternative 3—construction and operation of the proposed facility at Site A, construction and operation of a new Intermodal Transfer Facility (ITF) near Timpie, Utah, and use of heavy-haul vehicles to transport SNF down Skull Valley Road.

- Alternative 4—the construction and operation of the proposed facility at Site B with the same ITF and SNF transport described in Alternative 3 above.

Additionally, the DEIS compares the construction and operation of a SNF storage facility in Wyoming in lieu of the Skull Valley site. This comparison was made to determine if an identified alternative site is obviously superior to the proposed site. Lastly, the DEIS evaluates the no-action alternative, *i.e.*, not to build the proposed facility in Skull Valley. Under the no-action alternative, the potential impacts of constructing and operating the proposed facility and associated SNF transportation facilities in Skull Valley would not occur.

This DEIS assesses the impacts of the proposed action and its alternatives for minerals, soils, water resources, air quality, ecological resources, socioeconomic and community resources, cultural resources, human health impact, noise, scenic qualities, recreation, and environmental justice. Additionally, an analysis and comparison of the costs and benefits of the proposed action has been performed.

Based on the evaluation in the DEIS, the NRC's preferred alternative is the proposed action with implementation of the mitigation measures recommended by the cooperating agencies.

A BLM decision to grant a right-of-way to PFS would be dependent upon the decisions made by the NRC and BIA. If the NRC issues a license to PFS for the proposed facility and BIA approves the lease, then BLM's preferred alternative would be to amend the Pony Express Resource Management Plan and issue a right-of-way for the Skunk Ridge rail siding and rail line. Absent such findings by the NRC and BIA, BLM would not grant either of PFS' rights-of-way requests.

Based on the information and analysis to date, the STB environmental review staff's preliminary conclusion is that the proposed project, with the implementation of the cooperating agencies recommended mitigation

measures, would not result in significant adverse impacts to the environment; therefore, its preferred alternative would be to recommend approval of the construction and operation of the proposed rail line.

BIA does not have a preferred alternative but will choose one in the Final EIS based upon its trust responsibility to the Skull Valley Band, including consideration of environmental impacts and mitigation measures identified in the DEIS and public comments on the DEIS.

This DEIS is a preliminary analysis of the environmental impacts of the PFS proposal. The cooperating Federal agencies will review the comments, conduct any necessary analyses, and make appropriate revisions in developing the Final EIS.

Participation in the public process does not entitle participants to become parties to the adjudicatory proceeding associated with the proposed NRC licensing action. Participation in the adjudicatory proceeding is governed by the procedures specified in 10 CFR 2.714 and 2.715 and in the aforementioned **Federal Register** Notice (62 FR 41099).

Dated at Rockville, Maryland, this 16th day of June 2000.

For the Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

**E. William Brach,**

*Director, Spent Fuel Project Office, Office of Nuclear Material Safety and Safeguards.*

Dated at Washington, D.C., this 15th day of June 2000.

For the Surface Transportation Board.

**Victoria J. Rutson,**

*Acting Chief, Section of Environmental Analysis.*

Dated at Salt Lake City, Utah, this 13th day of June 2000.

For the Bureau of Land Management.

**Glenn A. Carpenter,**

*Field Manager, Salt Lake Field Office.*

Dated at Fort Duchesne, Utah, this 13th day of June 2000.

For the U.S. Bureau of Indian Affairs.

**David Allison,**

*Superintendent, Uintah and Ouray Agency.*

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## PENSION BENEFIT GUARANTY CORPORATION

**Submission of Information Collection for OMB Review; Comment Request; Qualified Domestic Relations Orders Submitted to the PBGC**

**AGENCY:** Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.

**ACTION:** Notice of request for extension of OMB approval.

**SUMMARY:** The Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation (PBGC) is requesting that the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) extend approval, under the Paperwork Reduction Act, of the collection of information (OMB control number 1212-0054; expires July 31, 2000) relating to model forms contained in the PBGC booklet, *Divorce Orders & PBGC*. The booklet provides guidance on how to submit a proper qualified domestic relations order (a "QDRO") to the PBGC. This notice informs the public of the PBGC's request and solicits public comment on the collection of information.

**DATES:** Comments should be submitted by July 24, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments should be mailed to the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs of the Office of Management and Budget, Attention: Desk Officer for Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, Washington, DC 20503. Copies of the request for extension (including the collection of information) may be obtained by writing the Communications and Public Affairs Department, suite 240, 1200 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005-4026, or visiting that office between 9 a.m. and 4 p.m. on business days.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** James L. Beller, Attorney, Office of the General Counsel, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation, 1200 K Street, NW., Washington, DC 20005-4026, 202-326-4024. (For TTY and TDD, call the Federal relay service toll-free at 1-800-877-8339 and request connection to 202-326-4024.)

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** A defined benefit pension plan that does not have enough money to pay benefits may be terminated if the employer responsible for the plan faces severe financial difficulty, such as bankruptcy, and is unable to maintain the plan. In such an event, the PBGC becomes trustee of the plan and pays benefits, subject to legal limits, to plan participants and beneficiaries.

The benefits of a pension plan participant generally may not be assigned or alienated. Title I of ERISA provides an exception for domestic relations orders that relate to child support, alimony payments, or marital property rights of an alternate payee (a spouse, former spouse, child, or other dependent of a plan participant). The exception applies only if the domestic relations order meets specific legal requirements that make it a qualified domestic relations order.

When the PBGC is trustee of a plan, it reviews submitted domestic relations orders to determine whether the order is qualified before paying benefits to an alternate payee. For several years the PBGC has provided the public with model QDROs (and accompanying guidance) in the booklet, *Divorce Orders & PBGC*, that attorneys and other professionals who are preparing QDROs for plans trusted by the PBGC may submit to the PBGC after receiving court approval. The models and the guidance assist parties by making it easier to comply with ERISA's QDRO requirements in plans trusted by the PBGC.

Before providing the model forms and the QDRO booklet, the PBGC received many inquiries on the requirements for QDROs. Furthermore, many domestic relations orders, both in draft and final form, did not meet the applicable requirements. The PBGC worked with practitioners on a case-by-case basis to ensure that their orders were amended to meet applicable requirements. This process was time-consuming for practitioners and for the PBGC.

Since making the booklet and the model forms available, the PBGC has experienced a decrease in (1) the number of inquiries about QDRO requirements, (2) the number of orders that do not meet the applicable requirements, and (3) the amount of time practitioners and the PBGC need to spend to ensure that the orders meet the applicable requirements.

The requirements for submitting a QDRO are established by statute. The model QDROs and accompanying guidance do not create any additional requirements and will result in a reduction of the statutory burden. The PBGC estimates that it will receive 300 QDROs each year from prospective alternate payees; that the average burden of preparing a QDRO with the assistance of the guidance and model QDROs in PBGC's booklet will be ¼ hour of the alternate payee's time and \$400 in professional fees if the alternate payee hires an attorney or other professional to prepare the QDRO, or 10 hours of the alternate payee's time if the alternate payee prepares the QDRO without hiring an attorney or other professional; and that the total annual burden will be 104.25 hours and \$118,800.

The PBGC is requesting a three-year extension of the paperwork approval relating to model forms contained in the PBGC booklet, *Divorce Orders & PBGC*. The collection of information has been approved through July 31, 2000, by OMB under control number 1212-0054. An agency may not conduct or sponsor,

and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number.

Issued in Washington, D.C., this 20th day of June, 2000.

**Stuart Sirkin,**

*Director, Corporate Policy and Research Department, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.*

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**BILLING CODE 7708-01-P**

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

### Agency Meetings

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to the provisions of the Government in the Sunshine Act, Pub. L. 94-409, that the Securities and Exchange Commission will hold the following meetings during the week of June 26, 2000.

An open meeting will be held on Tuesday, June 27, 2000 at 10 a.m. in Room 1C30.

Commissioner Hunt, as duty officer, determined that no earlier notice thereof was possible.

The subject matter of the open meeting scheduled for Tuesday, June 27, 2000 will be:

The Commission will consider whether to propose rule amendments to its auditor independence requirements. The proposals are intended to modernize the Commission's regulations regarding:

(1) Investments by auditors or their family members in audit clients;

(2) Employment relationships between auditors or their family members and audit clients; and

(3) The scope of services provided by audit firms to their audit clients.

In addition, the rules would require companies to disclose in their annual proxy statements certain information about non-audit services provided by their auditors during the last fiscal year.

For further information, please contact John Morrissey or W. Scott Bayless at (202) 942-4400.

A closed meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 28, 2000 at 11 a.m.

Commissioners, Counsel to the Commissioners, the Secretary to the Commission, and recording secretaries will attend the closed meeting. Certain staff members who have an interest in the matters may also be present.

The General Counsel of the Commission, or his designee, has certified that, in his opinion, one or more of the exemptions set forth in 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4), (8), (9)(A) and (10) and 17 CFR 200.402(a)(4), (8), (9)(A) and