

capacity resources needed to meet the growth in demand increases 2,000 MWs by the year 2002, and 3,200 MWs by the year 2004. The addition of the combustion turbines is needed by TVA to meet the peaking capacity requirements from both a reliability and cost standpoint.

Since 1995, additional power needs have been met or will be met through the following steps: (1) Continuing to modernize existing TVA hydroelectric plants (both conventional and pumped storage) and, thus, adding approximately 388 MWs of peaking capacity through 2002; (2) completion in 2001 of the Red Hills Power Project, a 440 MW lignite coal-fired plant supplying baseload power commercially (TVA Record of Decision, 63 FR 44944); (3) the installation and operation in 2000 of 680 MWs of peaking power capacity at the TVA Johnsonville and Gallatin Fossil Plants (TVA Record of Decision, 64 FR 138); (4) the installation and operation of up to 1,400 MWs of peaking power capacity at a greenfield site in Haywood County, Tennessee (TVA Record of Decision, 64 FR 92); (5) the completion of various power purchase agreements in effect over this period; (6) the implementation of demand-side customer service programs through TVA power distributors with an estimated 154 MWs of capacity added from 1995 to 2002 and an additional 264 MWs from 2000 through 2002; (7) the pursuance of distributed generation initiatives by TVA, including the operation of the 14 MW emergency diesel generators at the unfinished Bellefonte Nuclear Power Plant site; and (8) the implementation of a Green Power Program in 2000 as a market test providing several MWs of capacity. Technologies for this program include landfill gas, photovoltaics, and wind.

Because Energy Vision 2020 identified and evaluated alternative supply-side and demand-side energy resources and technologies for meeting peak and baseload capacity needs, this EIS will not reevaluate those alternatives. This EIS will focus on the site-specific impacts of constructing and operating simple-cycle combustion turbines at candidate sites.

#### Proposed Issues To Be Addressed

The EIS will describe the existing environmental and socioeconomic resources at and in the vicinity of each candidate site that would be affected by the construction and operation of the proposed power plant. TVA's evaluation of environmental impacts to these resources will include, but not necessarily be limited to, the potential impacts on air quality, water quality,

aquatic and terrestrial ecology, endangered and threatened species, wetlands, aesthetics and visual resources, noise, land use, historic and archaeological resources, and socioeconomic resources.

#### Alternatives

The results of evaluating the potential environmental impacts and other important issues identified in the scoping process together with engineering and economic considerations will be used by TVA in selecting a preferred alternative. Currently, TVA plans to evaluate in detail, the construction and operation of a simple-cycle combustion turbine peaking plant at two or more candidate sites in Mississippi by as early as May 2002, as well as the alternative of no action. All of the potential power plant sites currently under consideration are in Kemper County.

#### Scoping Process

Scoping, which is integral to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process, is a procedure that solicits public input to the EIS process to ensure that: (1) Issues are identified early and properly studied; (2) issues of little significance do not consume substantial time and effort; (3) the draft EIS is thorough and balanced; and (4) delays caused by an inadequate EIS are avoided. TVA's NEPA procedures require that the scoping process commence soon after a decision has been reached to prepare an EIS in order to provide an early and open process for determining the scope and for identifying the significant issues related to the proposed action. The scope of issues to be addressed in the draft EIS will be determined, in part, from written comments submitted by mail or e-mail, and comments presented orally or in writing at public meetings. The preliminary identification in this notice of reasonable alternatives and environmental issues is not meant to be exhaustive or final.

The scoping process will include both interagency and public scoping input. The public is invited to submit written comments or e-mail comments on the scope of this EIS no later than the date given under the **DATES** section of this notice.

TVA is conducting a public scoping meeting at the East Mississippi Community College, 1512 Kemper Street in Scooba, Mississippi on August 3, 2000. Registration is at 5:30 p.m. and the meeting begins at 6 p.m. At this meeting, TVA management and project staff will present an overview of the proposed power plant project, answer

questions, and solicit comments on the issues that the public expresses an interest in having addressed in the EIS. The meeting was publicized through notices in local newspapers, through TVA press releases, and in meetings conducted between TVA officials and local elected officials preceding the public meetings.

The agencies to be included in the interagency scoping are U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Mississippi Department of Environmental Quality, the Mississippi State Historic Preservation Officer, and other agencies as appropriate.

After consideration of the scoping comments, TVA will further develop alternatives and environmental issues to be addressed in the EIS. Following analysis of the environmental consequences of each alternative, TVA will prepare a draft EIS for public review and comment. The Environmental Protection Agency will publish a notice of availability (NOA) of the draft EIS in the **Federal Register**. In the NOA, TVA will solicit written comments on the draft EIS, as well as announce information pertaining to the schedule of public meetings to be held for the purpose of receiving comments on the draft EIS. TVA expects to release a draft EIS in December 2000 and a final EIS in April 2001.

Dated: July 25, 2000.

**Kathryn J. Jackson,**

*Executive Vice-President, River System Operations and Environment.*

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## OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

### Free Trade Area of the Americas

**AGENCY:** Office of the United States Trade Representative.

**ACTION:** Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) Joint Government-Private Sector Experts Committee on Electronic Commerce (Joint Committee) request for public comment on the identification of a private sector expert on consumer issues related to electronic commerce who may wish to participate in the work of the Joint Committee.

**SUMMARY:** The Joint Committee on Electronic Commerce was established by the 34 countries in the Western Hemisphere participating in the Free Trade Area of the Americas. The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) seeks to identify a U.S. private sector expert on consumer issues related to electronic commerce who may be interested in

participating in the work of the Joint Committee. interested members of the public are invited to submit written notice of their interest and their qualifications.

**DATES:** Written expressions of interest in participating in the work of the Joint Committee should be submitted no later than August 11, 2000.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For procedural questions concerning public comments contact Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, Office of the United States Trade Representative, (202) 395-9557. All questions concerning the Joint Committee may be directed to Regina Vargo, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Commerce (202) 482-5324, Regina\_Vargo@ita.doc.gov.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** At the Second Summit of the Americas in April 1998, in Santiago, Chile, the 34 democratically elected Western Hemisphere leaders initiated negotiations to create the FTAA no later than the year 2005. They established nine initial negotiating groups, a consultative group, and two committees, one of which is the Joint Committee, which began its work in August 1998. The trade ministers mandated that both government and private sector experts meet as the Joint Committee to make recommendations on how to increase and broaden the benefits of electronic commerce; the Joint Committee is not a negotiating group. Inclusion of the private sector on the committee is consistent with President Clinton's principle that the private sector should take the lead in global electronic commerce.

The Joint Committee was chaired by the government of Barbados during the initial 18-month period and will be chaired by an Uruguayan private sector representative and vice chaired by a Canadian government representative through April 2001. Regina Vargo, Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Western Hemisphere, U.S. Department of Commerce, leads the joint U.S. government-private sector delegation to the Joint Committee.

**Status of Work in the Joint Committee:** At the FTAA Ministerial meeting in Toronto in November 1999, trade ministers received, and released to the public, a report prepared by the Joint Committee reflecting its discussions over the preceding 18 months on a broad range of electronic commerce issues; its recommendations on increasing and broadening the benefits of electronic commerce issues; its recommendations on increasing and

broadening the benefits of electronic commerce were drafted with the full participation of government and private sector experts from every region in the Hemisphere. FTAA trade ministers committed to share the report and its recommendations with other relevant authorities within their governments. They also requested that the Joint Committee continue its work as a non-negotiating group and produce further recommendations over the next 18-month period. The full report ("Report with Recommendations to Ministers," FTAA.ecom/01) is available in English and Spanish on the official FTAA website (<http://www.ftaa-alca.org>) and the U.S. Government Electronic Commerce website (<http://www.ecommerce.gov>).

At the Joint Committee's January meeting in Miami, the Joint Committee's private sector and government representatives identified issues to be discussed during the next phase of its work. The Joint Committee will focus on issues related to access and infrastructure, small and medium-size enterprises, authentication, and online payments, and consider developments in other areas such as intellectual property, taxation and consumer protection. The Joint Committee will make further recommendations to trade ministers for their consideration at the next FTAA Ministerial meeting in April 2001. At the next meeting, August 28-30, the Joint Committee will address issues on its workplan including authentication and payment systems. Consumer protection issues may also rise.

**Private Sector Participating:** During the first 18-month period, 13 U.S. private sector representatives, reflecting a balance of interests and electronic commerce issue expertise, participated in the work of the Joint Committee. Each representative had responded to notices in the **Federal Register** (63 FR 42090 August 6, 1998 and 64 FR 26811, May 17, 1999) or a request to official trade advisors inviting expressions of interest and qualifications to participate in the work of the Joint Committee.

When the Committee entered its second phase of work, the TPSC solicited U.S. private sector interest in participating, taking into consideration the current workplan (FR Notice February 29, 2000, Vol. 65, No. 40). However, the TPSC received no responses from individuals with expertise in consumer issues. The newly constituted U.S. private sector contingent in the Joint Committee includes 19 participants. The TPSC is now seeking to expand private sector participation on the Joint Committee to

include an expert on consumer issues related to electronic commerce.

### Public Comments

The TPSC is seeking to supplement U.S. private sector participation on the Joint Committee, to include expertise in consumer issues related to electronic commerce. In order to assist the TPSC in identifying U.S. private sector expert(s) on consumer issues related to electronic commerce, members of the public are invited to submit written notice of their interest and describe their qualifications. Qualifications of interest include: Demonstrated expertise in one or more aspects of electronic commerce and consumer protection; an ability and willingness to broadly solicit views from and disseminate information to consumer groups; and familiarity with U.S. and foreign trade and investment policies and obligations. Knowledge of the Western Hemisphere, including established contacts with foreign private sector interests in the region, would be helpful.

Those persons wishing to make written submissions should provide twenty (20) typed copies (in English) no later than noon, August 11, 2000 to Gloria Blue, Executive Secretary, Trade Policy Staff Committee, Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, Room 122, 600 17th Street, NW., Washington, DC 20508.

Written submission in connection with this request will be available for public inspection in the USTR Reading Room, Room 101, Office of the United States Trade Representative, 600 17th St., NW., Washington, DC. An appointment to review the file may be made by calling Brenda Webb, (202) 395-6186. The Reading room is open to the public from 9:30 a.m. to 12 noon, and from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m., Monday through Friday.

**David Walters,**

*Acting Chairman, Trade Policy Staff Committee.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

### Federal Highway Administration

#### Environmental Impact Statement: Dallas County, Texas

**AGENCY:** Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), DOT.

**ACTION:** Notice of intent.

**SUMMARY:** The FHWA is issuing this notice to advise the public that an environmental impact statement will be