

solicitation. The IOF sectors consist of the following, nine major materials and processing industries: agriculture, aluminum, chemicals, forest products, glass, metalcasting, mining, petroleum, and steel.

This solicitation seeks to implement OIT-supported or non-OIT technologies that meet the following requirements: Address the needs in IOF vision documents and technology roadmaps; have completed research and development and have progressed through a demonstration at a pilot-scale or full-scale facility, with demonstrated performance benefits in energy conservation and emissions reductions; and have potential to result in significant improvements in energy efficiency, environmental performance, and economic competitiveness across the industry. Projects of most interest will be those that show significant energy savings and large market penetration either through multiple implementations within one industrial sector or broad applicability across all IOF sectors.

DATES: A draft Program Solicitation will be available on or about December 20, 2000. Comments and/or questions concerning the draft version must be submitted to, and received by the DOE Contract Specialist no later than 30 calendar days from its actual posting on DOE/NETL's Web site. The mailing and E-mail addresses are provided below.

ADDRESSES: The draft Program Solicitation will be available on the DOE/NETL's Internet address at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business/solicit>. The final version of the solicitation along with all amendments will be posted at this same Internet address; applicants are therefore encouraged to periodically check this NETL address to ascertain the status of these documents. Applications must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions and forms contained in the final version of this Program Solicitation.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Larry D. Gillham, MS: 921-118, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, 626 Cochran Mill Road, PO Box 10940, Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0940, E-mail Address: gillham@netl.doe.gov, Telephone Number: (412) 386-5817.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The DOE anticipates award of multiple cost-sharing cooperative agreements; but the DOE reserves the right to award the agreement type and number deemed in its best interest. As required in Section 3002, Title XXX of the Energy Policy Act (EPA), offerors are advised that *mandatory* 50% cost-share will be

required for each project. Not all of the necessary funds are currently available for this solicitation; the Government's obligation under any cooperative agreement awarded is contingent upon the availability of appropriated FY2001 and FY2002 funds.

It is DOE's desire to encourage the widest participation including the involvement of small business concerns, and small disadvantaged business concerns. Proposals should be submitted by the entity that would house the technology implementation. In order to gain the necessary expertise to review proposals, non-Federal personnel may be used as evaluators or advisors in the evaluation of proposals, but will not serve as members of the technical merit review committee(s).

Issued in Pittsburgh, PA on November 30, 2000.

Dale A. Siciliano,

Deputy Director, Acquisition and Assistance Division.

[FR Doc. 00-31438 Filed 12-8-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

National Energy Technology Laboratory; Notice of Availability of a Financial Assistance Solicitation

AGENCY: National Energy Technology Laboratory, Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of availability of a financial assistance solicitation.

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given of the intent to issue Financial Assistance Solicitation No. DE-PS26-01NT41104 entitled "Power Plant Improvement Initiative." A draft program solicitation, as a precursor to potentially awarding multiple financial assistance cooperative agreements, is now being developed. Following release of the draft solicitation, expected in December 2000, a comment and response session with industry and other potential partners will be conducted prior to final issuance of the program solicitation. Final issuance of the program solicitation is slated for late-January or early-February 2001 with awards expected early in fiscal year 2002. DOE will provide \$95 million to fund the program, and proposers must match (or exceed) the government cost share for every project, bringing the total program value to at least \$190 million. DOE anticipates making multiple awards under this program solicitation.

DATES: The draft solicitation will be available on the DOE/NETL's Internet

address at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business> on or about December 6, 2000.

ADDRESSES: For the contact to submit comments, where documents can be obtained, where meetings are being held, please see the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jo Ann C. Zysk, MS 921-107, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, E-mail Address: zysk@netl.doe.gov, Telephone Number: (412) 386-6600.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Work is underway at the Department of Energy's National Energy Technology Laboratory to initiate a \$190 million dollar, fifty percent industry cost shared research, development and demonstration program aimed at improving the reliability of the nation's fleet of coal-fired power plants. In many regions of the United States, our expanding economy is being powered by out-of-date and undersized electric power facilities. The result has been an increasing frequency of power supply disruptions and sharp increases in the electric bills of many Americans. With more than half of our electric power being generated by coal in the United States and an abundant domestic supply of coal, projections are that coal generated power will be a major contributor to our economic expansion well into the next century. Electric power produced from coal is fundamental to a strong U.S. economy and to domestic energy security considering recent instabilities in natural gas prices and our current dependence on foreign oil supplies.

As the U.S. electric industry transitions to a new and competitive business structure, the demands on the existing fleet of coal-based electric generating facilities are changing. Power plants must operate in a fashion that reduces environmental impacts, achieves greater efficiency in operation, reduces carbon dioxide, nitric oxide, and sulfur emissions, remains cost competitive, and responds quickly to changing customer demand. This Power Plant Improvement Initiative will demonstrate advanced coal-based technologies applicable to existing and new power plants including plants capable of producing electricity and some combination of heat, fuels, and/or chemicals from coal-derived synthesis gas.

The technologies to be developed under this program will be vital to the role that coal and other solid fuels will play on the world power production scene. Production of more electricity while creating a cleaner environment at

lower cost has the potential to raise the standard of living of not only the citizens of the United States, but of the world as a whole.

The National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), DOE's newest national lab that oversees the department's fossil fuel programs, will manage the program. NETL manages and implements a broad spectrum of energy and environmental programs. NETL employs approximately 1,100 federal personnel and support-service contractors at its sites in Pittsburgh, PA and Morgantown, WV.

Prospective applicants who would like to be notified as soon as the draft solicitation is available should register at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business>. Provide your E-mail address and click on the "Coal Liquids/Solid Fuels Feedstocks" technology choice located under the heading "Fossil Energy." Once you subscribe, you will receive an announcement by E-mail that the draft solicitation has been released to the public. Telephone requests, written requests, E-mail requests, or facsimile requests for a copy of the draft solicitation package will not be accepted and/or honored. The draft solicitation will be open for public comments on December 6. A public meeting will be held on December 15, 2000 and the draft solicitation will be closed to public comments on January 5, 2001.

The final solicitation will be made available on or about January 31, 2001. Applications must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions and forms contained in the solicitation. The final solicitation document will allow for requests for explanation and/or interpretation.

Issued in Pittsburgh, PA on November 24, 2000.

Dale A. Siciliano,

Deputy Director, Acquisition and Assistance Division.

[FR Doc. 00-31437 Filed 12-8-00; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Bonneville Power Administration

Schultz-Hanford Area Transmission Line Project

AGENCY: Bonneville Power Administration (BPA), Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Notice of intent to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS)

and notice of floodplain and wetlands involvement.

SUMMARY: This notice announces BPA's intention to prepare an EIS on the construction, operation, and maintenance of a 59-mile-long 500-kilovolt (kV) single-circuit transmission line in Kittitas, Yakima, Grant, and/or Benton Counties, State of Washington. In accordance with DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review requirements, BPA will prepare a floodplain and wetlands assessment and will perform this proposed action in a manner so as to avoid or minimize potential harm to or within the affected floodplain and wetlands. The assessment and a floodplain statement of findings will be included in the EIS being prepared for the proposed project in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

DATES: BPA has established a 30-day scoping period. Written comments are due to the address below no later than January 25, 2001. Comments may also be made at EIS scoping meetings to be held on January 9, 10, and 11, 2001.

ADDRESSES: BPA invites comments and suggestions on the proposed scope of the Draft EIS. To comment, phone toll-free 1-800-622-4519; send an e-mail to the BPA Internet address comment@bpa.gov; or mail comments to Communications, Bonneville Power Administration—KC-7, P.O. Box 12999, Portland, Oregon, 97212. To be placed on the project mail list, call 1-800-622-4520.

Three EIS scoping meetings will be held: (1) Tuesday, January 9, 2001, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Sage Brush Senior Center, 442 Desert Aire Drive, Desert Aire, Washington; (2) Wednesday, January 10, 2001, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Yakima County Courthouse, Room 420, Yakima, Washington; and (3) Thursday, January 11, 2001, 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., at the Hal Holmes Community Center, 201 North Ruby Street, Ellensburg, Washington. At the informal meetings, several members of the project team will be available to answer questions and accept oral and written comments. Scoping will help BPA ensure that a full range of issues related to this proposal is addressed in the EIS, and also will identify significant or potentially significant impacts that may result from the proposed project.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lou Driessen, Project Manager, Bonneville

Power Administration—TNP-3, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, Oregon, 97208-3621; telephone 503-230-5525; or e-mail lcdriessen@bpa.gov. You may also contact Nancy Wittpenn, Environmental Project Manager, Bonneville Power Administration—KEC-4, P.O. Box 3621, Portland, Oregon, 97208-3621; telephone 503-230-3297; fax 503-230-5699; or e-mail nawittpenn@bpa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The proposed 59-mile-long 500-kV single-circuit transmission line would be constructed from the existing Schultz Substation near Ellensburg, Washington, to the existing Hanford or Ashe Substation on the Hanford Nuclear Reservation or to a new substation west of the reservation, near Benton Rural Electric Association's Blackrock Substation. The new line is necessary to relieve constraints on several transmission paths (lines) that move electricity across Washington. The new line would also provide more operational flexibility and meet market needs by increasing transmission capacity for additional interstate transfer of electricity. BPA has identified several possible alternative routes for the new line. The new routes have the potential to cross private land, the Yakima Firing Center, the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, the Columbia River, and the Saddle Mountain Wildlife Refuge. BPA is in the process of contacting the U.S. Department of the Army, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to determine whether they would like to be cooperating agencies in the EIS process.

This action may involve floodplain and wetlands located in Kittitas, Yakima, Grant, and Benton Counties, State of Washington. When completed, the Draft EIS will be circulated for review and comment, and BPA will hold several public comment meetings for the Draft EIS. BPA will consider and respond in the Final EIS to comments received on the Draft EIS.

Maps and further information are available from BPA at the address above.

Issued in Portland, Oregon, on December 1, 2000.

Steven G. Hickok,

Acting Administrator and Chief Executive Officer.

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