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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**National Energy Technology Laboratory; Notice of Availability of a Financial Assistance Solicitation**

AGENCY: National Energy Technology Laboratory (NETL), 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-PS26-01NT40869 entitled "Methane Hydrates." This solicitation supports the Department of Energy's Strategic Plan to develop the knowledge base for assessing the vast deposits of methane hydrates and to promote the technology for their safe and effective recovery. The solicitation is being issued by the Natural Gas Hydrate Program which is part of NETL's Strategic Center for Natural Gas. This solicitation will focus on gas hydrates in the Gulf of Mexico and the North Slope of Alaska. These are the two principal regions of industry interest, primarily because they contain known occurrences of hydrates the existing infrastructure for drilling and production of conventional hydrocarbons.

DATES: The solicitation will be available on the DOE/NETL's Internet address at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business> on or about January 12, 2001. Since DOE does not intend to issue a draft solicitation on the subject solicitation, prospective applicants are invited to e-mail any comments and/or questions associated with the "need" areas identified in this announcement. Please submit all comments/questions to Dona Sheehan via the Internet at sheehan@netl.doe.gov by COB on January 5, 2001.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dona G. Sheehan, U.S. Department of Energy, National Energy Technology Laboratory, P.O. Box 10940, MS 921-107, Pittsburgh, PA 15236-0940, E-mail Address: sheehan@netl.doe.gov, Telephone Number: 421/386-5918.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The solicitation will request R&D proposals for work in the Gulf of Mexico that will result in information and technology that promotes: (1) Safe drilling and production operations for conventional hydrocarbons in hydrate-bearing areas, (2) a better understanding of seafloor stability issues related to gas hydrates, (3) improved methodologies for hydrate

resource characterization and (4) initiation of feasibility studies for producing methane from hydrates. Offerors should propose research that supports the needs of industry, as outlined in the "Gulf of Mexico Hydrates R&D Planning Workshop" report which is available on the web at www.netl.doe.gov/publications/proceedings/00/hydrates/00hydrate.html.

R&D proposals for work in the Alaskan North Slope will be requested that will result in information and technology leading to: (1) Improved imaging and characterization of the hydrate resource, (2) improved sampling and modeling techniques to develop hydrate reservoir information and (3) planning and feasibility analysis of production test well(s).

R&D proposals to evaluate the potential of utilizing synthetic hydrates to transport stranded gas to market, both in the offshore Gulf of Mexico and the onshore North Slope of Alaska, will also be requested.

DOE anticipates issuing financial assistance (Cooperative Agreement) awards. DOE reserves the right to support or not support, with or without discussions, any or all applications received in whole or in part, and to determine how many awards will be made.

Multiple awards are anticipated. Approximately \$15 million of DOE funding is planned over a 3 year period for this solicitation. National Laboratories may participate as team members; however, they may not act as the prime awardee and total funding to the Laboratory must not exceed 15% of the total project cost. If a project which includes National Laboratory participation is approved for funding, DOE intends to make an award to the applicant for its portion of the effort and to provide direct funding for the National Laboratories portion of the effort as a Field Work Proposal (FWP). DOE has determined that a minimum cost share of 20 percent of the total project cost is required for this solicitation. Details of the cost sharing requirement and the specific funding levels will be contained in the solicitation. The anticipated period of performance of the projects will range in duration from 12 months to 48 months.

Prospective applicants who would like to be notified as soon as the solicitation is available should register at <http://www.netl.doe.gov/business>. Provide your E-mail address and click on the "Oil & Gas" technology choice located under the heading "Fossil Energy." Once you subscribe, you will receive an announcement by E-mail that

the solicitation has been released to the public. Telephone requests, written requests, E-mail requests, or facsimile requests for a copy of the solicitation package will not be accepted and/or honored. Applications must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the instructions and forms contained in the solicitation. The actual solicitation document will allow for requests for explanation and/or interpretation.

Issued in Pittsburgh, PA on December 14, 2000.

Dale A. Siciliano,

Deputy Director, Acquisition and Assistance Division.

[FR Doc. 00-32858 Filed 12-22-00; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Energy Information Administration****Agency Information Collection****Activities: Submission for Emergency OMB Review; Comment Request**

AGENCY: Energy Information Administration (EIA), Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Agency information collection activities: Submission for Emergency OMB Review; comment request.

SUMMARY: The EIA has submitted the energy information collections listed at the end of this notice to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for emergency processing under section 3507(j)(1) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13) (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*) by January 3, 2001. The reason for this emergency clearance request is that Congress has funded an EIA project in Fiscal Year 2001 to institute a bi-weekly survey of companies during the heating season to monitor interruptible natural gas contracts. For this project EIA is proposing three related information collections. Information will be collected from natural gas suppliers, petroleum product suppliers, and a sample of major energy consumers in the Northeast United States to assess energy activities, especially volumes of fuel switching between natural gas and petroleum fuels. Normal clearance procedures would prevent the timely collection of information during the 2000-2001 heating season.

DATES: Comments must be filed by January 2, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to the OMB Desk Officer for DOE, Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, Office of Management and Budget, 726 Jackson Place, NW., Washington, DC.

20503. The OMB DOE Desk Officer may be telephoned at (202) 395-7318. (A copy of your comments should also be provided to EIA's Statistics and Methods Group at the address below.)

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information should be directed to Herbert Miller, Statistics and Methods Group, (EI-70), Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC. 20585-0670. Mr. Miller may be contacted by telephone at (202) 287-1711, FAX at (202) 287-1705, or e-mail at Herbert.Miller@eia.doe.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This section contains the following information about the energy information collection submitted to OMB for review: (1) The collection number and title; (2) the sponsor (*i.e.*, the Department of Energy component); (3) the current OMB docket number (if applicable); (4) the type of request (*i.e.*, new, revision, extension, or reinstatement); (5) response obligation (*i.e.*, mandatory, voluntary, or required to obtain or retain benefits); (6) a description of the need for and proposed use of the information; (7) a categorical description of the likely respondents; and (8) an estimate of the total annual reporting burden (*i.e.*, the estimated number of likely respondents times the proposed frequency of response per year times the average hours per response).

1. Forms EIA-911A-C, "Bi-Weekly Surveys to Assess Effects of Interruptions of Natural Supplies in the Northeast United States"

2. Energy Information Administration

3. OMB Number 1905-NEW

4. New (emergency clearance request)

5. Mandatory

6. Beginning with the period January 1-14, 2001 and continuing through the two-week period ending April 8, 2001, forms EIA-911A-C will collect information for use in assessing the interactions of energy markets in the Northeast United States. The survey requests will include: (1) Information from natural gas suppliers on deliveries and interruptions in service to customers; (2) information from petroleum product suppliers on sales, inventories, and customers that can switch between natural gas and petroleum; and (3) information from large energy consumers regarding energy-related matters. Data will be used to monitor energy supply and consumption activities in the Northeast U.S. Respondents will be natural gas suppliers, petroleum product suppliers, and a sample of large energy consumers (*e.g.*, electric power generators,

industrial establishments, commercial establishments, institutional facilities, and government facilities) in the Northeast United States (*i.e.*, the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania).

7. Businesses or other for-profit; Federal Government; Not-for-profit institutions; and State, Local or Tribal Governments

8. 6,650 total burden hours; EIA-911A (natural gas suppliers) will entail 560 total burden hours (40 respondents × 7 reports × 2 hours/report); EIA-911B (petroleum product suppliers) will entail 1,890 total burden hours (270 respondents × 7 reports × 1 hour/report); EIA-911C (large energy consumers) will entail 4,200 total burden hours (300 respondents × 7 reports × 2 hours/report)

Statutory Authority: Section 3507(j)(1) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13).

Issued in Washington, DC., December 20, 2000.

Jay H. Casselberry,

Agency Clearance Officer, Statistics and Methods Group, Energy Information Administration.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Energy Information Administration

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request

AGENCY: Energy Information Administration (EIA), Department of Energy (DOE).

ACTION: Agency information collection activities: Proposed collection; comment request.

SUMMARY: The EIA is soliciting comments on the proposed revision, and three-year extension of the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) expiration date of the form RW-859, "Nuclear Fuel Data Survey".

DATES: Comments must be filed on or before February 26, 2001. If you anticipate difficulty in submitting comments within that period, contact the person listed below as soon as possible.

ADDRESSES: Send comments to Jim Finucane, Office of Coal, Nuclear, Electric and Alternate Fuels, EI-52, Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585-0650, telephone: (202) 287-1966, e-mail:

jim.finucane@eia.doe.gov, and fax (202)-287-1934.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for additional information or copies of any forms and instructions should be directed to Jim Finucane at the address listed above.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

- I. Background
- II. Current Actions
- III. Request for Comments

I. Background

The Federal Energy Administration Act of 1974 (Pub. L. 93-275, 15 U.S.C. 761 *et seq.*) and the DOE Organization Act (Pub. L. 95-91, 42 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*) require the EIA to carry out a centralized, comprehensive, and unified energy information program. This program collects, evaluates, assembles, analyzes, and disseminates information on energy resource reserves, production, demand, technology, and related economic and statistical information. This information is used to assess the adequacy of energy resources to meet near and longer term domestic demands.

The EIA, as part of its effort to comply with the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35), provides the general public and other Federal agencies with opportunities to comment on collections of energy information conducted by or in conjunction with the EIA. Any comments received help the EIA to prepare data requests that maximize the utility of the information collected, and to assess the impact of collection requirements on the public. Also, the EIA will later seek approval by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) of the collections under section 3507(a) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

This data collection will provide the Office of Civilian Radioactive Waste Management of DOE with detailed information concerning the spent nuclear fuel generated by the respondents (commercial generators of spent nuclear fuel within the U.S. are respondents to this survey). The DOE will take possession of this spent fuel and needs this data to properly design the spent fuel repository (spent fuel receiving systems, spent fuel handling systems, etc.) which will be the final storage/disposal site for all of the spent fuel and high level radioactive waste materials.

II. Current Actions

The current proposed action is: A revision and three-year extension of an existing data collection, RW-859. As