

Any questions regarding the petition should be directed to B. Michelle Willis, Manager—Regulatory & Compliance, CenterPoint Energy Gas Transmission Company, P.O. Box 21734, Shreveport, Louisiana 71151 at (318) 429-3708.

There are two ways to become involved in the Commission's review of this project. First, any person wishing to obtain legal status by becoming a party to the proceedings for this project should, on or before the comment date stated below file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426, a motion to intervene in accordance with the requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214 or 385.211) and the Regulations under the NGA (18 CFR 157.10). A person obtaining party status will be placed on the service list maintained by the Secretary of the Commission and will receive copies of all documents filed by the applicant and by all other parties. A party must submit 14 copies of filings made in the proceeding with the Commission and must mail a copy to the applicant and to every other party. Only parties to the proceeding can ask for court review of Commission orders in the proceeding.

However, a person does not have to intervene in order to have comments considered. The second way to participate is by filing with the Secretary of the Commission, as soon as possible, an original and two copies of comments in support of or in opposition to this project. The Commission will consider these comments in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but the filing of a comment alone will not serve to make the filer a party to the proceeding. The Commission's rules require that persons filing comments in opposition to the project provide copies of their protests only to the party or parties directly involved in the protest.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings of comments, protests and interventions in lieu of paper using the "eFiling" link at <http://www.ferc.gov>. Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 14 copies of the protest or intervention to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426.

This filing is accessible on-line at <http://www.ferc.gov>, using the "eLibrary" link and is available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an "eSubscription" link on the Web site that enables subscribers to receive e-mail notification when a document is added to a subscribed

docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please e-mail FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, or call (866) 208-3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502-8659.

Comment Date: January 27, 2010.

Kimberly D. Bose,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2010-517 Filed 1-13-10; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 12777-001]

Maine Maritime Academy; Notice of Declaration of Intention and Petition for Relief Filing and Soliciting Comments

January 6, 2010.

Take notice that the following declaration of intention and petition for relief from the requirements of hydropower licensing has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection.

a. *Type of Filing:* Declaration of Intention and Petition for Relief.

b. *Project No.:* 12777-001.

c. *Date Filed:* October 28, 2009.

d. *Applicant:* Maine Maritime Academy.

e. *Name of Project:* Bagaduce River Tidal Energy Project.

f. *Location:* In the Bagaduce River and Estuary, in Hancock County, Maine. The project would not occupy federal lands.

g. *Filed Pursuant to:* 18 CFR Part 24, Section 24.1.

h. *Applicant Contact:* Richard S. Armstrong, Executive Director, Tidal Energy Demonstration and Evaluation Center, Capt. Quick Hall, Maine Maritime Academy, Castine, ME 04420 (207) 326-2186.

i. *FERC Contact:* Tom Dean at (202) 502-6041.

j. *Deadline for filing comments:* 30 days from the issuance date of this notice.

All documents (original and eight copies) should be filed with: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426.

The Commission's Rules of Practice require all intervenors filing documents with the Commission to serve a copy of that document on each person on the official service list for the project. Further, if an intervenor files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a

particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on that resource agency.

Comments may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) under the "eFiling" link.

k. *Description of Project:* The Maine Maritime Academy (Academy) intends to deploy and test for short periods, for study purposes, hydrokinetic devices that would be located at sites located in Bagaduce Narrows and Castine Harbor. The experimental hydrokinetic devices could include: (1) 4.9-foot-diameter, 19.7-foot-long 4 kilowatt (kW) Cross Flow Darrius style rotors; (2) 13.1-foot-diameter, 3.3-foot-high 4 kW Cross Flow Savonius type rotors; and (3) 13.1-foot-diameter, 3.3-foot-long 6 kW Axial Flow turbines with an average capacity up to 1.5 kW. The devices would be mounted to floats attached to a concrete superstructure, concrete or stone blocks, and other gravity based weighted frameworks connected to research vessels, small launches or barges. The hydrokinetic devices would convert mechanical power from the tidal currents and the rise and fall of the tides in Bagaduce Narrows and Castine Harbor into electrical power without constructing a dam, reservoir, penstock, or powerhouse.

l. *Petition for Declaration of Intention:* The Academy asks that it be allowed, without a license under Part I of the Federal Power Act, to deploy, test, and study the type of facilities listed above, and use the power from the test devices to heat water or charge 3 or 4 batteries which could sustain a charge and power a 12/24/32 volt array of instruments and lights aboard research vessels or small barges. The Academy would initially test the hydrokinetic devices for 12 to 14 hours during tidal cycles, and once the initial tests were completed, would continue to test the devices for durability for up to five weeks. The deployment would provide educational experience for students to develop skills in deploying, retrieving, maintaining, and repairing hydrokinetic devices.

m. A copy of the application is available for review at the Commission in the Public Reference Room or may be viewed on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or toll-free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY,

(202) 502-8659. A copy is also available for inspection and reproduction at the address in item h above.

You may also register online at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp> to be notified via e-mail of new filings and issuances related to this or other pending projects. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2010-525 Filed 1-13-10; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Western Area Power Administration

Construction and Operation of the Quartzsite Solar Energy Project, La Paz County, AZ (DOE/EIS-0440)

AGENCY: Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and To Conduct Scoping Meetings; Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement.

SUMMARY: The Western Area Power Administration (Western), an agency of the DOE, intends to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the proposed Quartzsite Solar Energy Project (Project) in La Paz County, near Quartzsite, Arizona. Quartzsite Solar Energy, LLC (QSE) has applied to Western to interconnect the proposed Project to Western's power transmission system. Western is issuing this notice to inform the public and interested parties about Western's intent to prepare an EIS, to conduct a public scoping process, and to invite the public to comment on the scope, proposed action, alternatives, and issues to be addressed in the EIS. Solar Reserve has applied to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Yuma Field Office for a right-of-way grant for the proposed solar power plant. Western will apply to BLM for a right-of-way grant for the proposed substation.

This EIS will address Western's Federal action of interconnecting the proposed Project to Western's transmission system and making any necessary modification to Western facilities to accommodate the interconnection. The EIS will also review the potential environmental impacts of QSE constructing, operating, and maintaining a 100-megawatt (MW) (net) solar-powered generating facility, consisting of a solar field of heliostat mirrors, power block, thermal energy storage system, substation site,

transmission line, temporary laydown areas, and other ancillary facilities.

The BLM has agreed to be a cooperating agency for the EIS.

DATES: Public scoping meetings will be held:

1. January 26, 2010, BLM, Yuma Field Office, 2555 E. Gila Ridge Road, Yuma, AZ 85365.

2. January 27, 2010, Blue Water Casino, 11300 Resort Dr., Parker, AZ 85344.

3. January 28, 2010, Quartzsite Town Hall, 465 N. Plymouth Ave., Quartzsite, AZ 85346.

The public scoping meetings will begin at 6 p.m. and will end at 8 p.m. The meetings will be informal, and attendees will be able to speak directly with Western and QSE representatives about the proposed Project. The public scoping period begins with the publication of this notice and closes on February 16, 2010. Announcements will also be made by news release to the media, individual letter mailings, and posting on the Western Web site listed below.

ADDRESSES: Western will host public scoping meetings at the time and locations indicated in the **DATES** section. Oral or written comments may be provided at the public scoping meetings, mailed or e-mailed to Ms. Mary Barger. Comments should be addressed to Ms. Mary Barger, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Document Manager, Western Area Power Administration, Desert Southwest Region, P.O. Box 6457, 615 S. 43rd Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85005 or quartzsitesolarEIS@wapa.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For information on the proposed Project and general information about interconnections with Western's transmission system, you may refer to the project Web site <http://www.wapa.gov/transmission/quartzsitesolar.htm> or contact Ms. Mary Barger, NEPA Document Manager, at the address above, by telephone (602) 605-2524, fax (602) 605-2630, or e-mail quartzsitesolarEIS@wapa.gov.

For general information on DOE's NEPA review procedures or status of a NEPA review, contact Ms. Carol M. Borgstrom, Director of NEPA Policy and Compliance, GC-54, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585, telephone (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756.

For information on BLM's participation, contact Eddie Arreola, Supervisory Project Manager, Bureau of Land Management, One North Central Avenue, Phoenix, AZ 85004, telephone

(602) 417-9505, fax (602) 417-9454, or e-mail Quartzsite_Solar@blm.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Western, an agency within DOE, markets Federal hydroelectric power to preference customers, as specified by law. These customers include municipalities, cooperatives, irrigation districts, Federal and State agencies, and Native American tribes. Western's service territory covers 15 western states, of which Arizona is included. Western owns and operates more than 17,000 miles of high-voltage transmission lines.

QSE is a Santa Monica, California-based energy company formed by U.S. Renewables Group, a private equity firm focused exclusively on renewable energy.

Project Description and Alternatives

QSE proposes to construct a 100-MW (net), solar-powered electrical generation facility in La Paz County, Arizona. The solar power facility would occupy approximately 1,450 acres of BLM administered lands within a larger BLM administered area. The proposed Project would be located approximately six miles north of Quartzsite, and adjacent to Arizona State Route 95. The proposed Project, powerline and ancillary facilities would be on BLM administered land.

The proposed Project would use concentrating solar "power tower" technology to capture the sun's heat to make steam, which would power traditional steam turbine generators. The solar power facility would contain the power block, a central receiver or tower, solar fields which consist of mirrors or heliostats to reflect the sun's energy to the central tower, a thermal energy storage system, technical and non-technical buildings, a stormwater system, water supply and treatment systems, a wastewater system, and other supporting facilities.

Other Project components would include access roads, an electrical substation, and a transmission line. The access road would originate from Highway 95 and extend approximately 0.5 miles to the perimeter of the solar power facility.

QSE has applied to Western to interconnect the proposed Project to Western's transmission system. The transmission line from the solar facility would extend approximately 0.5 miles from the solar facility boundary to a new substation to be constructed adjacent to Western's existing line. The substation would be owned, operated, and maintained by Western, and would be located adjacent to Western's existing Bouse-Kofa 161-kV line that parallels State Route 95 in the vicinity of