

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****[FE Docket No. PP-226]****Application for Presidential Permit  
Brownsville Public Utilities Board****AGENCY:** Office of Fossil Energy, DOE.**ACTION:** Notice of application.

**SUMMARY:** Brownsville Public Utilities Board (BPUB) has applied for a Presidential permit to construct, connect, operate and maintain double-circuit electric transmission facilities across the U.S. border with Mexico.

**DATES:** Comments, protests, or requests to intervene must be submitted on or before July 31, 2000.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments, protests, or requests to intervene should be addressed as follows: Office of Coal & Power Import and Export (FE-27), Office of Fossil Energy, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20585-0350.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Ellen Russell (Program Office) 202-586-9624 or Michael T. Skinker (Program Attorney) 202-586-2793.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The construction, operation, and connection of facilities at the international border of the United States for the transmission of electric energy between the United States and a foreign country is prohibited in the absence of a Presidential permit issued pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 10485, as amended by EO 12038.

On June 23, 2000, BPUB, the municipal electric utility of the City of Brownsville, Texas, filed an application with the Office of Fossil Energy (FE) of the Department of Energy (DOE) for a Presidential permit. BPUB proposes to construct a double circuit 138,000 volt (138-kV) transmission line, on wood poles, from its existing Silas Ray Power Plant in Brownsville, Texas, and extending approximately 3,000 feet to the U.S.-Mexico border. At the border the transmission circuits would interconnect with similar facilities of the Comision Federal de Electricidad (CFE), the national electric utility of Mexico, and continue an additional 1.7 miles into Matamoros, Tamaulipas, Mexico. As an instrumentality of the State of Texas, BPUB is not subject to section 202(e) of the Federal Power Act (FPA), and therefore, not required to submit an application to DOE for authorization to export electric energy to Mexico.

BPUB is proposing to develop this project in three phases. In phase one, BPUB would energize only one of the two 138-kV circuits and operate it at 69-

kV. This would give BPUB the ability to transmit up to 100 megawatts (MW) of power to Mexico. In phase two, BPUB would energize both 138-kV circuits at 69-kV by installing a circuit breaker and related relaying equipment (by approximately the year 2002). This modification would give BPUB the ability to transmit up to 200 MW of electric power to Mexico. In phase three, BPUB would convert all 69-kV facilities at Silas Ray to 138-kV (by approximately the year 2005) by replacing power transformers, circuit breakers, switches, and related equipment within the existing switchyard. BPUB would then operate both circuits at 138-kV and be capable of transmitting up to 400 MW to Mexico.

In its application, BPUB asserts that the proposed international transmission facilities will be operated in such a way that the BPUB and CFE systems will not be operated in parallel.

Since restructuring of the electric power industry began, resulting in the introduction of different types of competitive entities into the marketplace, DOE has consistently expressed its policy that cross-border trade in electric energy should be subject to the same principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination that apply to transmission in interstate commerce. DOE has stated that policy in export authorizations granted to entities requesting authority to export over international transmission facilities. Specifically, DOE expects transmitting utilities owning border facilities to provide access across the border in accordance with the principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination contained in the FPA and articulated in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Order No. 888 (Promotion Wholesale Competition Through Open Access Non-Discriminatory Transmission Services by Public utilities; FERC Stats. & Regs. ¶ 31,036 (1996)), as amended. In furtherance of this policy, on July 27, 1999, (64 FR 40586) DOE initiated a proceeding in which it noticed its intention to condition existing and future Presidential permits, appropriate for third party transmission, on compliance with a requirement to provide non-discriminatory open access transmission service. That proceeding is not yet complete. However, in this docket DOE specifically requests comment on the appropriateness of applying the open access requirement on BPUB's proposed facilities.

**Procedural Matters**

Any person desiring to become a party to this proceeding or to be heard by filing comments or protests to this application should file a petition to intervene, comment or protest at the address provided above in accordance with §§ 385.211 or 385.214 of the FERC's Rules of Practice and Procedures (18 CFR 385.211, 385.214). Fifteen copies of each petition and protest should be filed with the DOE on or before the date listed above.

Additional copies of such petitions to intervene or protests also should be filed directly with: John S. Bruciak, Brownsville Public Utilities Board, 1425 Robin Hood Drive, P.O. Box 3270, Brownsville, TX 78520.

Before a Presidential permit may be issued or amended, the DOE must determine that the proposed action will not adversely impact on the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system. In addition, DOE must consider the environmental impacts of the proposed action (*i.e.*, granting the Presidential permit, with any conditions and limitations, or denying the permit) pursuant to NEPA. DOE also must obtain the concurrence of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of Defense before taking final action on a Presidential permit application.

Copies of this application will be made available, upon request, for public inspection and copying at the address provided above. In addition, the application may be reviewed or downloaded from the Fossil Energy Home Page at: <http://www.fe.doe.gov>. Upon reaching the Fossil Energy Home page, select "Electricity" from the options menu, and then "Pending Proceedings."

Issued in Washington, DC, on June 27, 2000.

**Anthony J. Como,**

*Deputy Director, Electric Power Regulation,  
Office of Coal & Power Im/Ex Office of Fossil  
Energy.*

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**BILLING CODE 6450-01-P**

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Energy Information Administration****Agency Information Collection  
Activities: Proposed Collection;  
Comment Request**

**AGENCY:** Energy Information Administration, DOE.

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

**SUMMARY:** The Energy Information Administration (EIA) is soliciting comments on the proposed reinstatement and three-year extension of Form EIA-457A-G, "Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS)".

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before August 29, 2000. If you anticipate difficulty in submitting comments within that period, contact the person listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Michael T. Laurence, Office of Energy Markets and End-Use, Energy Consumption Division, EI-63, Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, D.C. 20585-0660. Alternatively, Michael T. Laurence may be reached by phone at 202-586-2453, by e-mail michael.laurence@eia.doe.gov, or by FAX 202-586-0018.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the form and instructions should be directed to Michael T. Laurence 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 Department of Energy Organization Act (Pub. L. 95-91, 42 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*) require the Energy Information Administration (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 Sections 3507(h)(1) and 3506(c) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

The Residential Energy Consumption Survey (RECS) is a periodic survey of U.S. households to collect energy consumption and expenditures data and track changes over time. The data are widely used throughout the government and the private sector for policy analysis and are made available to the public in a variety of publications, electronic products, and electronic data files. Results from the survey are presented in both printed form (*e.g.*, U.S. Department of Energy, Energy Information Administration, *A Look at Residential Consumption in 1997*, November 1999, DOE/EIA-0632(97)) and at EIA's web site at <http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/recs/contents.html>.

**II. Current Actions**

This is a reinstatement of OMB No. 1905-0092 that expired March 31, 2000. The reinstatement will be for a three-year period with an expiration date of January 31, 2004. No significant changes in the RECS are being implemented. Due to funding restraints, the RECS is conducted on a quadrennial schedule, a schedule established with the 1997 RECS. The use of Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI), a technology implemented with the 1997 RECS, will be continued.

The content of the survey questionnaires to be used in the 2001 RECS will be substantially the same as those used in the 1997 RECS. Minor wording changes may be made in the interest of clarity. Some questions that yielded little useful data will be deleted, while questions dealing with new energy-consuming appliances will be added.

The only notable methodological change will be the timing of the Rental Agents, Landlords, and Apartment Managers Survey (Form EIA-457C). Instead of being conducted after the household interview (Form EIA-457A), it will be conducted either prior to, or concurrently with, the interviews at the sampled households living in multi-unit buildings. The change in the time of the collection of energy-related data from the lessors of housing units included in the RECS will ease the burden on household respondents, who may not know about the energy aspects of the apartments they rent, and will also improve the quality of the household data.

**III. Request for Comments**

Prospective respondents and other interested parties should comment on the actions discussed in item II. The following guidelines are provided to assist in the preparation of comments.

*General Issues*

A. Is the proposed collection of information necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency and does the information have practical utility? Practical utility is defined as the actual usefulness of information to or for an agency, taking into account its accuracy, adequacy, reliability, timeliness, and the agency's ability to process the information it collects.

B. What enhancements can be made to the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?

**As a Potential Respondent**

A. Are the instructions and definitions clear and sufficient? If not, which instructions need clarification?

B. Can the information be submitted by the due date?

C. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 30 minutes per response for Form EIA-457A, Household Questionnaire; 20 minutes per response for Form EIA-457B, Mail version of the Household Questionnaire; 15 minutes per response for Form EIA-457C, Rental Agents, Landlords, and Apartment Managers; 30 minutes per response for Form EIA-457D, Household Bottle Gas (LPG or Propane) Usage; 30 minutes per response for Form EIA-457E, Household Electricity Usage; 30 minutes per response for Form EIA-457F, Household Natural Gas Usage; and 30 minutes per response for Form EIA-457G, Household Fuel Oil or Kerosene Usage. The estimated burden includes the total time, effort, or financial resources expended to generate, maintain, retain, disclose and provide the information. Please comment on the accuracy of the estimate.

D. The agency estimates that the only costs to the respondents are for the time it will take them to complete the collection. Please comment if respondents will incur start-up costs for reporting, or any recurring annual costs for operation, maintenance, and purchase of services associated with the information collection.

E. What additional actions could be taken to minimize the burden of this collection of information? Such actions may involve the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

F. Does any other Federal, State, or local agency collect similar information? If so, specify the agency, the data element(s), and the methods of collection.

**As a Potential User**

- A. Is the information useful at the levels of detail indicated on the form?
- B. For what purpose(s) would the information be used? Be specific.
- C. Are there alternate sources for the information and are they useful? If so, what are their weaknesses and/or strengths?

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of the form. They also will become a matter of public record.

**Statutory Authority:** Section 3507(h)(1) and 3506(c) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (Pub. L. No. 104-13, 44 U.S.C. Chapter 35).

Issued in Washington, D.C. June 26, 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, DOE.

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

**SUMMARY:** The Energy Information Administration (EIA) is soliciting comments on the proposed three-year extension to the Form FE-781R "Annual Report of International Electrical Export/Import Data."

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before August 29, 2000. If you anticipate difficulty in submitting comments within that period, contact the person listed below as soon as possible.

**ADDRESSES:** Send comments to Steven Mintz, Office of Coal and Power Imports and Exports, FE-27, Forrestal Building, U.S. Department of Energy, Washington, DC 20585. Alternatively, Mr. Mintz may be reached by phone at 202-586-9506; by e-mail (steven.mintz@hq.doe.gov), or by FAX (202-586-6050).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the form and instructions should be directed to Steven Mintz 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 Department of Energy Organization Act (Pub. L. 95-91), 42 U.S.C. 7101 *et seq.*) require the Energy Information Administration (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 Sections 3507(h)(1) and 3506(c) of the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995.

The Office of Coal and Power Imports and Exports (Fossil Energy) will monitor the levels of electricity imports and exports and issue summary tabulations in a staff Annual Report. The Office will also provide monthly tabulations of these data for use in the Energy Information Administration's Monthly Energy Review and Annual Energy Review. This information will be kept in the public docket files and will be available for public inspection and copying.

**II. Current Actions**

A clearance package will be submitted to the Office of Management and Budget requesting approval of a three-year extension with no change of the currently-approved collection.

**III. Request for Comments**

Prospective respondents and other interested parties should comment on the actions discussed in item II. The following guidelines are provided to assist in the preparation of comments.

**General Issues**

A. Is the proposed collection of information necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency and does the information have practical utility? Practical utility is defined as the actual usefulness of information to or for an agency, taking into account its accuracy, adequacy, reliability, timeliness, and the agency's ability to process the information it collects.

B. What enhancements can be made to the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected?

**As a Potential Respondent**

A. Are the instructions and definitions clear and sufficient? If not, which instructions need clarification?

B. Can the information be submitted by the due date?

C. Public reporting burden for this collection is estimated to average 10 hours per response. The estimated burden includes the total time, effort, or financial resources expended to generate, maintain, retain, disclose and provide the information. Please comment on the accuracy of the estimate.

D. The agency estimates that the only costs to the respondents are for the time it will take them to complete the collection. Please comment if respondents will incur start-up costs for reporting, or any recurring annual costs for operation, maintenance, and purchase of services associated with the information collection.

E. What additional actions could be taken to minimize the burden of this collection of information? Such actions may involve the use of automated, electronic, mechanical, or other technological collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

F. Does any other Federal, State, or local agency collect similar information? If so, specify the agency, the data element(s), and the methods of collection.

**As a Potential User**

A. Is the information useful at the levels of detail indicated on the form?

B. For what purpose(s) would the information be used? Be specific.

C. Are there alternate sources for the information and are they useful? If so, what are their weaknesses and/or strengths?

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of the form. They also will become a matter of public record.

**Statutory Authority:** Section 3507(h)(1) and 3506(c) of the Paperwork Reduction Act