# Notices

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This section of the FEDERAL REGISTER contains documents other than rules or proposed rules that are applicable to the public. Notices of hearings and investigations, committee meetings, agency decisions and rulings, delegations of authority, filing of petitions and applications and agency statements of organization and functions are examples of documents appearing in this section.

## DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

### Food Safety and Inspection Service

**[Docket No. 96–026N]**

### National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods; Renewal

**AGENCY:** Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Notice of Reestablishment of Committee.

This notice announces the renewal of the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods. The Committee is being renewed in cooperation with the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), and was recommended by a 1985 report of the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Food Protection, Subcommittee on Microbiological Criteria, ''An Evaluation of the Role of Microbiological Criteria for Foods.''

USDA is charged with the enforcement of the Federal Meat Inspection Act (FMIA), the Poultry Products Inspection Act (PPIA), and the Egg Products Inspection Act (EPIA). Under these Acts, USDA is responsible for the wholesomeness and safety of meat, poultry, egg products and products thereof intended for human consumption. Similarly, the Secretary of HHS is charged with the enforcement of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA). Under this Act, HHS is responsible for ensuring the safety of human foods and animal feeds.

In order to continue to meet the responsibilities of the FMIA, PPIA, EPIA and the FFDCA, the National Advisory Committee on Microbiological Criteria for Foods is being renewed. The Committee will be tasked with advising and providing recommendations to the Secretaries on the development of microbiological criteria by which the safety and wholesomeness of food can be assessed, including criteria for microorganisms that indicate whether foods have been processed using good manufacturing practices.

Renewal of this Committee is necessary and in the public interest because the development of a sound public policy in this area can best be accomplished by a free and open exchange of information and ideas among Federal, State, and local agencies, the industry, the scientific community, consumer organizations, and other interested parties. The complexity of the issues to be addressed assures that more than one meeting will be required to accomplish the Committee's tasks.

Members will be appointed by the Secretary of USDA after consultation with the Secretary of HHS. Because of their interest in the matters to be addressed by this Committee, advice on membership appointments will be requested from the Department of Commerce's National Marine Fisheries Services and the Department of Defense's Veterinary Service Activity.

For additional information, please contact: Mr. Craig Fedchock, Advisory Committee Specialist, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Safety and Inspection Service, Room 311, 1255 22nd Street, NW., Washington, DC 20250–3700. Background materials are available for inspection by contacting Mr. Fedchock on (202)254–2517.

Done at Washington, DC, on: May 23, 1996.

Wardell Townsend, Jr.,

*Assistant Secretary for Administration.*

[FR Doc. 96–14013 Filed 6–4–96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–DM–P**

### Forest Service

### Appalachian Power Company Transmission Line Construction-Cloverdale, Virginia, to Oceana, West Virginia. George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the New River, and R.D. Bailey Lake Flowage Land. Virginia Counties of Botetourt, Roanoke, Craig, Montgomery, Pulaski, Bland, and Giles and the West Virginia Counties of Monroe, Summers, Mercer, and Wyoming

**AGENCY:** Forest Service, USDA.

**ACTION:** Revised Notice—Revises the publication date for the Draft Environmental Impact Statements; and identifies the dates and locations for seven public information meetings on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

**SUMMARY:** The Forest Service will prepare a draft and final environmental impact statement on a proposed action to authorize the Appalachian Power Company (name recently changed to American Electric Power) to construct a 765,000-volt transmission line across approximately twelve miles of the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, as well as portions of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the New River (at Bluestone Lake) and R.D. Bailey Lake Flowage Easement Land (at Buyandotte River).

The federal agencies identified a study area in which alternatives to the proposed action were developed. The study area includes land located in the Virginia counties of Botetourt, Roanoke, Craig, Montgomery, Pulaski, Bland and Giles and the West Virginia counties of Monroe, Summers, Mercer and Wyoming.

The Applachian Power Company (APCo) proposal involves federal land under the administrative jurisdiction of the USDA Forest Service (George Washington and Jefferson National Forests), the USDI National Park Service (Appalachian National Scenic Trail) and the US Army Corps of Engineers (New River and R.D. Bailey Lake Flowage Easement Land).

The Forest Service is the lead agency and is responsible for the preparation of the environmental impact statement. The National Park Service and the US Army Corps of Engineers are cooperating agencies in accordance with 40 CFR 1501.6.

In initiating and conducting the analysis the federal agencies are responding to the requirements of their respective permitting processes and the need for the APCo to cross federal lands with the proposed transmission line.

The Forest Service additionally will assess how the proposed transmission line conforms to the direction contained in the Jefferson National Forest's Land and Resource Management Plan (LRMP). Changes in the LRMP could be required if the transmission line is authorized across the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.

The total length of the electric transmission line proposed by the APCo is approximately 115 miles.

The Notice of Intent for the proposed action was published in the Federal Register on November 21, 1991 (56 FR 58677–58679). The Notice was revised on March 13, 1992 (57 FR 8859), April 24, 1992 (57 FR 15049), June 16, 1993 (58 FR 33248–33250), June 21, 1994 (59 FR 31975–31978), June 9, 1995 (60 FR 30511–30514) and October 3, 1995 (60 FR 51770–51773).

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Frank Bergmann, Forest Service Project Coordinator, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, 5162 Valleypointe Parkway, Roanoke, Virginia, 24019/ (540) 265–6005.

**TO PROVIDE COMMENTS TO THE FEDERAL AGENCIES:** Write to the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, Attn: Transmission Line Analysis, 5162 Valleypointe Parkway, Roanoke, Virginia, 24019.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** APCo submitted an application to the Jefferson National Forest (name changed to George Washington and Jefferson National Forest in 1995) for authorization to construct a 765,000-volt electric transmission line across approximately twelve miles of the National Forest. Portions of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the New River (at Bluestone Lake), and R.D. Bailey Lake Flowage Easement Land (at Guyandotte River) would also be crossed by the proposed transmission line.

Studies conducted by APCo and submitted to the Virginia State Corporation Commission, as part of its application and approval process, indicate a need to reinforce its extra high voltage transmission system by the mid-to-late 1990s in order to maintain a reliable power supply for projected demands within its service territory in central and western Virginia and southern West Virginia.

A study to evaluate potential route locations for the proposed transmission line was prepared for APCo through a contract with Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University (VPI) and West Virginia University (WVU). The information gathered by VPI and WVU, along with other information collected during the analysis process, will be utilized in the preparation of the environmental impact statement. Information about the transmission line proposal is available from the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.

The decisions to be made following the Federal agencies' analysis are whether the Forest Service, the National Park Service, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will authorize APCO to cross the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, and the New River and R.D. Bailey Lake Flowage Easement Land, respectively, with the proposed 765,000-volt transmission line and, if so, under what conditions a crossing would be authorized.

In preparing the draft environmental impact statement, a range of routing alternatives was considered to meet the purpose and need for the proposed action. A no action alternative was also analyzed. Under the no action alternative APCO would not be authorized to cross the George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, the New River or R.D. Bailey Lake Flowage Easement Land. The alternatives developed by VPI and WVU will also be considered.

In July of 1994, the Federal agencies identified a number of alternatives to the proposed action in the Virginia counties of Botetourt, Roanoke, Craig, Montgomery, Pulaski, Bland, and Giles and the West Virginia counties of Monroe, Summers, and Mercer. These alternative corridors were modified by the Federal agencies in May 1995. A public comment period was afforded by the Federal agencies on these alternative corridor modifications between May 25 and Jun3 30, 1995.

The Federal analysis includes an analysis of the effects of the proposed transmission line along the entire proposed route as well as all alternative routes which were considered in detail.

The significant issues identified for the Federal analysis are listed below:

—The construction and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may (1) affect soil productivity by increasing soil compaction and erosion; (2) affect geologic resources (karst areas, Peters, Lewis, Potts Mountains, Arnolds Knob) and unique geologic features like caves through blasting, earthmoving or construction machinery operations; and (3) result in unstable structural conditions due to the placement of the towers.

—The construction and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may (1) degrade surface and ground water quality due to the application of herbicides; (2) degrade surface and ground water quality because of sedimentation resulting from soil disturbance and vegetation removal; (3) reduce the quantity of ground and spring water due to the disturbance of aquifers resulting from blasting, earthmoving or construction machinery operation; and (4) adversely affect the commercial use of ground and surface waters due to herbicide contamination and sedimentation.

—The construction and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may affect existing cultural resources, and historic structures and districts through the direct effects of the construction and maintenance activities and by changing the existing resource setting.

—The operation and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may adversely affect human health through (1) direct and indirect exposure to herbicides; and (2) exposure to electromagnetic fields and induced voltage.

—The construction of the 765kV transmission line may adversely affect the safety of those operating aircraft at low altitudes or from airports located near the transmission line.

—The operation of the 765kV transmission line may (1) adversely affect communications by introducing a source of interference; (2) increase noise levels for those in close proximity to the line.

—The construction, operation, and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may (1) adversely affect trails (including the Appalachian Trail) and trail facilities by facilitating vehicle access through new road construction and the upgrading of existing roads; and (2) reduce hiker safety by facilitating vehicle access to remote trail locations.

—The construction, operation, and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may affect hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, boating, and birding opportunities and experiences because (1) the setting in which these pursuits take place may be altered; and (2) the noise associated with the operation of the line may detract from the backcountry or recreation experience.

—The construction and operation of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may affect local communities by (1) reducing the value of private lands adjacent to the line; (2) decreasing tax

revenues due to the reductions in land value; and (3) influencing economic growth, industry siting, and employment.

—The construction, operation, and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may (1) conflict with management direction contained in resource management plans and designations; (2) affect the uses that presently occur on and adjacent to the proposed right-of-way; (3) affect the wild, scenic, and/or recreational qualities of the New River; (4) affect sensitive land uses like schools, churches, and community facilities; (5) affect the cultural attachment residents feel toward Peters Mountain; (6) affect the scenic and/or recreational qualities of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (Appalachian Trail); and (7) result in family displacement.

—The construction, operation, and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may adversely affect the visual attributes of the area because the line, the associated right-of-way, and access roads may (1) alter the existing landscape; and (2) conflict with the standards established for scenic designations.

—The construction, operation, and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may affect wildlife, plant and aquatic populations, habitat, and livestock because (1) habitats are created, changed, or eliminated; (2) herbicides are used and herbicides may be toxic; (3) the transmission line presents a flight hazard to birds; (4) electromagnetic fields and induced voltage may be injurious.

—The construction of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may have a disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low income populations as indicated in Executive Order 12898.

—The construction and operation of the 765kV transmission line may adversely affect astronomical observation activities at the Martin Observatory (VPI) due to the introduction of obstructions to the sky (lines and towers), the introduction of light from coronal discharge, and the disruption of sensitive electronic equipment by electromagnetic fields.

—The construction and operation of the 765kV transmission line may adversely affect seismological observation activities at the VPI seismic stations located near Forest Hill and Potts Mountain.

—The construction and maintenance of the 765kV transmission line and the associated access roads and right-of-way may affect the cultural attachment that residents have for the valley between Blacksburg and Catawba, Craig County, Giles County, Mercer County and portions of Montgomery County.

The following permits and/or licenses would be required to implement the proposed action:

—Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (Virginia State Corporation Commission)

—Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (West Virginia Public Service Commission)

—Special use Authorization (Forest Service)

—Right-of-Way Authorization (National Park Service)

—Section 10 Permit (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

—Right-of-Way Easement (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

—Consent to Easement (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers)

Other authorizations may be required from a variety of Federal and State agencies.

Public participation will occur at several points during the federal analysis process. The first point in the analysis was the scoping process (40 CFR 1501.7). The Forest Service obtained information, comments, and assistance from Federal, State and local agencies, the proponent of the action, and other individuals or organizations who are interested in or affected by the electric transmission line proposal. This input will be utilized in the preparation of the draft environmental impact statement. The scoping process included, (1) identifying potential issues, (2) identifying issues to be analyzed in depth, (3) eliminating insignificant issues or those which have been covered by a relevant previous environmental analysis.

Public participation was solicited through contacts with known interested and/or affected groups, and individuals; news releases; direct mailings; and/or newspaper advertisements. Public meetings were also held to hear comments concerning the APCo proposal and to develop the significant issues to be considered in the analysis.

A similar process of public involvement was implemented by the federal agencies for the Preliminary Alternative Corridors announced in July of 1995.

Other public participation opportunities will be provided throughout the federal analysis process.

The draft environmental impact statement will be filed with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and available for public review by June 28, 1996. This revises the April 12, 1996 date previously announced. At that time, EPA will publish a notice of availability of the draft environmental impact statement in the Federal Register.

The federal agencies have established the following public meeting schedule to explain the analysis documented in the draft environmental impact statement and to hear comments related to the analysis. The public meetings will begin at 4:00 p.m. and end at 8:00 p.m. on the date and at the locations indicated:

July 31, 1996

McCleary Elementary School, Highway 615, New Castle, VA

August 2, 1996

Concord College, Vermillian Street, Athens, WV

August 6, 1996

Blacksburg High School, 520 Patrick Henry Drive, Blacksburg, VA

August 8, 1996

Twin Falls Resort State Park, Route 10, Mullens, WV

August 1, 1996

James Monroe High School, Weikel Road, Lindside, WV

August 5, 1996

Lord Botetourt High School, 755 Roanoke, Road (Highway 220), Daleville, VA

August 7, 1996

Giles County High School, Route 460 (Business), Pearisburg, VA.

Reviewers need to be aware of several court rulings related to public participation in the environmental impact statement review process. First, reviewers of draft environmental impact statements must structure their participation in the environmental review of the proposal so that it is meaningful and alerts an agency to the reviewer's position and contentions. *Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp.* v. *NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 (1978). Also, environmental objections that could be raised at the draft environmental impact statement stage but that are not raised until after completion of the final environmental impact statement may be waived or dismissed by the courts. *City*

*of Angoon* v. *Hodel,* 803 F.2d 1016, 1022 (9th Cir. 1986) and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc.* v. *Harris,* 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 (E.D. Wis. 1980). Because of these court rulings, it is very important that those interested in this proposed action participate by the close of the 90-day comment period so that substantive comments and objections are made available to the Forest Service at a time when it can meaningfully consider them and respond to them in the final environmental impact statement.

To assist the Forest Service in identifying and considering issues and concerns on the proposed action, comments on the draft environmental impact statement should be as specific as possible. It is also helpful if comments refer to specific pages or chapters of the draft statement. Comments may also address the adequacy of the draft environmental impact statement or the merits of the alternatives formulated and discussed in the statement. (Reviewers may wish to refer to the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act at 40 CFR 1503.3 in addressing these points.)

After the comment period ends on the draft environmental impact statement, the comments will be analyzed, considered, and responded to by the three federal agencies in preparing the final environmental impact statement. The federal agencies have decided to await the decisions of the Virginia State Corporation Commission and the West Virginia Public Service Commission on the APCo proposal before publishing the final environmental impact statement. It is not known when the two Commission's will issue their decisions. When these decisions are made the federal agencies will announce the publication date of the final environmental impact statement.

The responsible officials will consider the comments, responses, environmental consequences discussed in the final environmental impact statement, and applicable laws, regulations, and policies in making a decision regarding the proposal to cross federal lands with a 765,000-volt transmission line. The responsible officials will document their decisions and reasons for their decisions in a Record of Decision.

The responsible official for the Forest Service is William E. Damon, Jr., Forest Supervisor, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, 5162 Valleypointe Parkway, Roanoke, Virginia, 24019. The responsible official for the National Park Service is Pamela Underhill, Park Manager, Appalachian National Scenic Trail, National Park Service, Harpers Ferry Center, Harpers Ferry, West Virginia 25425. The responsible official for the US Army Corps of Engineers in West Virginia is Colonel Richard Jemiola, US Army Corps of Engineers, Huntington District, 508 8th Street, Huntington, West Virginia 25701–2070. The responsible official for the US Army Corps of Engineers in Virginia is Colonel Andrew M. Perkins, Jr., US Army Corps of Engineers, Norfolk District, 803 Front Street, Norfolk, Virginia 23510.

Dated: May 28, 1996.

William E. Damon, Jr.,

*Forest Supervisor, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests.*

[FR Doc. 96–14007 Filed 6–4–96; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 3410–11–M**

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## DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

### Bureau of the Census

### 1997 Economic Census Covering Manufacturing

**ACTION:** Proposed Agency Information Collection Activity; Comment Request.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Commerce, as part of its continuing effort to reduce paperwork and respondent burden, invites the general public and other Federal agencies to take this opportunity to comment on proposed and/or continuing information collections, as required by the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, Pub. L. 104–13 (44 U.S.C. 3506(c)(2)(A)).

**DATES:** Written comments must be submitted on or before August 5, 1996.

**ADDRESSES:** Direct all written comments to Linda Engelmeier, Acting Departmental Forms Clearance Officer, Department of Commerce, Room 5327, 14th and Constitution Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20230.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Requests for additional information or copies of the information collection instrument(s) and instructions should be directed to Michael Zampogna for Food, Textiles, Apparel, Wood and Chemical Products, Bureau of the Census, Room 2212, Building 4, Washington, DC 20233 on (301) 457-4810 and to Kenneth Hansen for Electrical, Transportation, Metals and Industrial Machinery, Bureau of the Census, Room 2207, Building 4, Washington, DC 20233 on (301) 457–4755.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

I. Abstract

The Census Bureau is the preeminent collector and provider of timely, relevant and quality data about the people and economy of the United States. Economic data are the Census Bureau's primary program commitment during nondecennial census years. The economic census, conducted under authority of Title 13 U.S.C., is the primary source of facts about the structure and functioning of the Nation's economy and features unique industry and geographic detail. Economic census statistics serve as part of the framework for the national accounts and provide essential information for government, business and the general public. The 1997 Economic Census will cover virtually every sector of the U.S. economy including more than 400,000 manufacturing establishments.

The information collected from companies in the manufacturing sector of the economic census will produce basic statistics by industry for number of establishments, payroll, employment, value of shipments, value added, capital expenditures, depreciation, materials consumed, selected purchased services, electric energy used and inventories held. Primary strategies for reducing burden in Census Bureau economic data collections are to increase electronic reporting through broader use of computerized self-administered census questionnaires, electronic data interchange, and other electronic data collection methods.

II. Method of Collection

Establishments included in this collection will be selected from a frame given by the Census Bureau's Standard Statistical Establishment List. To be eligible for selection, an establishment will be required to satisfy the following conditions: (i) It must be classified in the manufacturing sector; (ii) it must be an active operating establishment of a multi-establishment company, or it must be an operating single-establishment company with payroll; and (iii) it must be located in one of the 50 states or the District of Columbia. Most establishments will be included in the mail protion of the collection. Forms tailored for the particular kind of business will be mailed to the establishment to be filled out and returned. Establishments not meeting certain cutoffs for payroll will be included in the non-mail portion of the collection. We will use administrative data in lieu collecting data directly from these establishments.