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Issued in Washington, DC, this 20th day of November, 2002.

**Stuart Sirkin,**

*Director, Corporate Policy and Research Department, Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.*

[FR Doc. 02-29959 Filed 11-25-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 7708-01-P

## OFFICE OF PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT

### Department of Agriculture; Alternative Personnel System; Demonstration Project

**AGENCY:** Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

**ACTION:** Notice of amendment of the Department of Agriculture demonstration project plan.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Agriculture, with the approval of OPM, is requesting to modify its demonstration project coverage. This action provides for changes in the final project plan published March 9, 1990, to include temporary appointments along with its current coverage of permanent and term appointments. By amending the project plan to include temporary appointments, the need to have two separate examining systems will be eliminated, thus avoiding administrative inefficiencies and ineffectiveness as well as meeting the President's Management Agenda of being more citizen-centered by reducing confusion among applicants.

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** This modification is effective upon publication of this notice.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**

*Agriculture:* Mary Ann Jenkins, Department of Agriculture, 14th and Independence Avenue, SW., Washington, DC 20250, (202-720-0515); *OPM:* Rhonda L. Taylor, Office of Personnel Management, 1900 E Street, NW., Washington, DC 20415, (202) 606-1526.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

#### Background

On March 9, 1990, the Office of Personnel Management published a

notice to demonstrate an alternative personnel management system at the Department of Agriculture. The project was originally conceived to test an alternative to the traditional recruiting and hiring system in an anticipated tight labor market. On March 8, 1996, a **Federal Register** notice was published to modify the list of experimental sites to include comparison sites. On September 18, 1996, a **Federal Register** notice was published to expand the demonstration project coverage to include term appointments. On October 21, 1998, the Department of Agriculture demonstration project was made permanent through Public Law 105-277. The proposed modification will not be a part of the permanent demonstration project authority, since it was not part of the demonstration project that Congress continued indefinitely. Rather this modification adheres to the regulations under 5 CFR part 470 and will have a time limit of 5 years.

One of the project innovations is to test a candidate assessment method which uses categorical groupings instead of numeric scores. The demonstration authority replaces the traditional system of examining applicants and ranking candidates. Instead, the candidates will be assigned to one of two groups—quality or eligible—based on job-related evaluation criteria. To be placed in the quality group, a candidate's background must show: Above average educational achievement; or, quality experience which is defined as experience clearly above and beyond the qualification standard requirements, and which is directly related to the work of the position to be filled; or, evidence of having ability to do the work of the position. Candidates who do not meet the quality group criteria but who meet basic qualification requirements will be assigned to the eligible group. Within each group, preference eligibles will be listed ahead of nonpreference eligibles. In addition, for positions other than scientific and professional at GS-9 and above, preference eligibles with a compensable service-connected disability of 10 percent or more who meet basic eligibility requirements will be listed at the top of the quality group.

Selection will be made from among candidates in the quality group. When there is an inadequate number of candidates in the quality group all qualified candidates will be listed as a single group.

Office of Personnel Management.

**Kay Coles James,**

*Director.*

### Project Plan Modification

This project plan which appeared in the **Federal Register** on March 9, 1990 (55 FR 9062) is hereby modified to include using the candidate assessment method for temporary appointments for the Agricultural Research Service and Forest Service.

[FR Doc. 02-29929 Filed 11-25-02; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6325-43-P

## POSTAL SERVICE BOARD OF GOVERNORS

### Sunshine Act Meeting

*Times and Dates:* 12:30 p.m., Monday, December 9, 2002; 8:30 a.m., Tuesday, December 10, 2002.

*Place:* Washington, DC, at U.S. Postal Service Headquarters, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW., in the Benjamin Franklin Room.

*Status:* December 9-12:30 p.m. (Closed); December 10-8:30 a.m. (Open)

*Matters to be Considered:*

*Monday, December 9-12:30 p.m. (Closed)*

1. Audit and Finance Committee Report and Review of Year-End Financial Statements.
2. Financial Performance.
3. Proposed Filing with Postal Rate Commission for Parcel Return Service.
4. Capital Investment for Ventilation and Filtration System for Mail Processing Equipment.
5. Strategic Planning.
6. Personnel Matters and Compensation Issues.

*Tuesday, December 10-8:30 a.m. (Open)*

1. Minutes of the Previous Meeting, November 4-5, 2002.
2. Remarks of the Postmaster General and CEO.
3. Fiscal Year 2002 Audited Financial Statements.
4. Postal Service Fiscal Year 2002 Annual Report.
5. Final Fiscal Year 2004 Appropriation Request.
6. Capital Investments.
  - a. Flats Recognition Improvement Program.
  - b. Flats Feeder Enhancement Program.
  - c. Rockefeller Center Station, New York, Lease Renewal.
7. Click-N-Ship.
8. Tentative Agenda for the January 6-7, 2003, meeting in Washington, DC.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:**  
William T. Johnstone, Secretary of the Board, U.S. Postal Service, 475 L'Enfant Plaza, SW., Washington, DC 20260-1000. Telephone (202) 268-4800.

**William T. Johnstone,**  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 02-30168 Filed 11-22-02; 3:43 pm]

**BILLING CODE 2210-12-M**

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[File No. 22-28638]

### Application and Opportunity for Hearing: Algoma Steel Inc.

November 20, 2002.

The Securities and Exchange Commission gives notice that Algoma Steel Inc. has filed an application under Section 304(d) of the Trust Indenture Act of 1939. Algoma Steel asks the Commission to exempt from the certificate or opinion delivery requirements of Section 314(d) of the 1939 Act certain provisions of an indenture dated January 29, 2002, as supplemented by indentures dated January 29, 2002 and September 9, 2002, between Algoma Steel and Wilmington Trust Company. The indentures relate to 11% Secured Notes due 2009 and 1% Convertible Secured Notes due 2030.

Section 304(d) of the 1939 Act, in part, authorizes the Commission to exempt conditionally or unconditionally any indenture from one or more provisions of the 1939 Act. The Commission may provide an exemption under section 304(d) if it finds that the exemption is necessary or appropriate in the public interest and consistent with the protection of investors and the purposes fairly intended by the 1939 Act.

Section 314(d) requires the obligor to furnish to the indenture trustee certificates or opinions of fair value upon any release of collateral from the lien of the indenture. The application requests an exemption from section 314(d) for specified dispositions of collateral that are made in Algoma Steel's ordinary course of business. In its application, Algoma Steel alleges that:

1. The indenture permits Algoma Steel to dispose of collateral in the ordinary course of its business;
2. Algoma Steel will deliver to the trustee annual audited financial statements; and
3. Algoma Steel will deliver to the trustee a semi-annual certificate stating that all dispositions of collateral during

the relevant six-month period occurred in Algoma Steel's ordinary course of business and that all the proceeds were used as permitted by the indenture.

Any interested persons should look to the application for a more detailed statement of the asserted matters of fact and law. The application is on file in the Commission's Public Reference Section, File Number 22-28638, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549.

The Commission also gives notice that any interested persons may request in writing that a hearing be held on this matter. Interested persons must submit those requests to the Commission no later than December 19, 2002. Interested persons must include the following in their request for a hearing on this matter:

- The nature of that person's interest;
- The reasons for the request; and
- The issues of law or fact raised by the application that the interested person desires to refute or request a hearing on.

The interested person should address this request for a hearing to: Jonathan G. Katz, Secretary, U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission, 450 Fifth Street, NW., Washington, DC 20549-0609. At any time after December 19, 2002, the Commission may issue an order granting the application, unless the Commission orders a hearing.

For the Commission, by the Division of Corporation Finance, pursuant to delegated authority.

**Jill M. Peterson,**  
*Assistant Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 02-29979 Filed 11-25-02; 8:45 am]

**BILLING CODE 8010-01-P**

## SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION

[Release No. 35-27605]

### Filings Under the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935, as Amended ("Act")

November 19, 2002.

Notice is hereby given that the following filing(s) has/have been made with the Commission pursuant to provisions of the Act and rules promulgated under the Act. All interested persons are referred to the application(s) and/or declaration(s) for complete statements of the proposed transaction(s) summarized below. The application(s) and/or declaration(s) and any amendment(s) is/are available for public inspection through the Commission's Branch of Public Reference.

Interested persons wishing to comment or request a hearing on the application(s) and/or declaration(s) should submit their views in writing by December 13, 2002, to the Secretary, Securities and Exchange Commission, Washington, DC 20549-0609, and serve a copy on the relevant applicant(s) and/or declarant(s) at the address(es) specified below. Proof of service (by affidavit or, in the case of an attorney at law, by certificate) should be filed with the request. Any request for hearing should identify specifically the issues of facts or law that are disputed. A person who so requests will be notified of any hearing, if ordered, and will receive a copy of any notice or order issued in the matter. After December 13, 2002, the application(s) and/or declaration(s), as filed or as amended, may be granted and/or permitted to become effective.

#### Northeast Utilities, et al. (70-9343)

Northeast Utilities ("NU"), 174 Brush Hill Avenue, West Springfield, Massachusetts 01090-0010, a registered holding company, NU's wholly-owned nonutility subsidiary, NU Enterprises, Inc. ("NUEI"), and Northeast Utilities Service Company, both located at 107 Selden Street, Berlin, Connecticut 06037, (collectively, the "Applicants") have filed a post effective amendment to their application-declaration under section 12(b) and rules 45 and 54 under the Act.

By order dated November 12, 1998 (HCAR No. 26939) ("Prior Order"), the Commission authorized NU and NUEI to, among other things, issue guarantees or provide similar forms of credit support or enhancements (collectively, "Guarantees") to, or for the benefit of NUEI, NUEI's nonutility subsidiaries, or NU's other to-be-formed direct or indirect energy-related companies, as defined in rule 58 of the Act. The Commission, through subsequent orders in this file, authorized an increase in this Guarantee authority to \$500 million and the extension of the date through which Guarantees may be provided through December 31, 2002, under the terms and conditions of the Prior Order. Applicants request in this filing to maintain the Guarantee authority at \$500 million and to extend the date through which the Guarantees may be provided through September 30, 2003, under the terms and conditions of the Prior Order.

#### American Electric Power Company, et al. (70-10088)

American Electric Power Company Inc. ("AEP"), Central and South West Corporation ("CSW"), both registered holding companies under the Act, 1