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David P. Boergers,
Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 11730-000]

Black River Limited Partnership; Notice of Availability of Final Environmental Assessment

August 14, 2001.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (Commission) regulations, 18 CFR Part 380 (Order No. 486, 52 F.R. 47897), the Office of Energy Projects has reviewed the application for an original license for the existing and operating Alverno Hydroelectric Project, located on the Black River in the townships of Aloha, Benton, and Grant in Michigan (Cheboygan County) and has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the project. In the EA, the Commission's staff has concluded that approval of the proposed project, with appropriate mitigation measures, would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Copies of the EA are available for review in the Public Reference Branch, Room 2-A, of the Commission's offices at 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426. The EA may also be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "RIMS" link, select "Docket#" and follow the instructions (call 202-208-2222 for assistance).

David P. Boergers,
Secretary.

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COUNCIL ON ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Energy Task Force

AGENCY: Council on Environmental Quality.

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: On May 18, 2001, the President signed Executive Order 13212 recognizing the importance of environmentally sound production and

transmission of energy to all American people. The Order established a federal interagency task force ("Task Force"), chaired by the Chairman of the Council on Environmental Quality ("CEQ"), to work with and monitor federal agencies' efforts to expedite their review of permits or take other actions necessary to accelerate the completion of energy-related projects, while maintaining safety, public health, and environmental protections. This task force is also charged with helping agencies create mechanisms to coordinate Federal, State, tribal and local permitting in geographic areas where increased permitting activity is expected. CEQ announces the formation of this Task Force and invites comments on the proposed nature and scope of Task Force activities, specific suggestions, and examples of permitting or other decision making processes which should be improved or streamlined.

DATES: Written comments should be submitted on or before October 1, 2001.

ADDRESSES: Direct electronic written comments to Chair, Council on Environmental Quality, through the CEQ web site at www.whitehouse.gov/ceq. Written comments may also be submitted to the Chair, Council on Environmental Quality, Executive Office of the President, 17th and G Streets, NW, Washington, DC 20503. Attention: Task Force. Written comments may also be faxed to the Task Force at (202) 456-6546.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Requests for copies the "National Energy Policy Report of the National Energy Policy Development Group" may be directed to CEQ at the above address. The report is available on the White House web site (<http://www.whitehouse.gov/energy/National-Energy-Policy.pdf>) and on the Department of Energy web site (http://www.energy.gov/HQPress/releases01/maypr/energy_policy.htm). Copies of the report (ISBN 0-16-050814-2) can also be purchased from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, by calling (202) 512-1800 or mailing your request to U.S. GPO, Mail Stop SSOP, Washington, DC 20402-0001.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Abstract

A. The Task Force will work through an operational approach that addresses impediments to federal agencies' completion of decisions about energy-related projects in a way that will increase the production, transmission, and conservation of energy. The Executive Order requires federal

agencies to expedite their review of permits or take other actions as necessary to accelerate the completion of energy-related projects, while maintaining safety, public health, and environmental protections. The Executive Order creates a federal interagency task force, chaired by CEQ, to work with and monitor federal agencies in expediting their review of permits, and to help agencies create mechanisms to coordinate Federal, State, tribal and local permitting in geographic areas where increased permitting activity is expected.

B. Executive Order No. 13212, signed by the President in Washington, DC, on May 18, 2001, Actions to Expedite Energy-Related Projects, reads:

By the authority vested in me as President by the Constitution and the laws of the United States of America, and in order to take additional steps to expedite the increased supply and availability of energy to our Nation, it is hereby ordered as follows:

Section 1. Policy

The increased production and transmission of energy in a safe and environmentally sound manner is essential to the well-being of the American people. In general, it is the policy of this Administration that executive departments and agencies (agencies) shall take appropriate actions, to the extent consistent with applicable law, to expedite projects that will increase the production, transmission, or conservation of energy.

Section 2. Actions To Expedite Energy-Related Projects

For energy-related projects, agencies shall expedite their review of permits or take other actions as necessary to accelerate the completion of such projects, while maintaining safety, public health, and environmental protections. The agencies shall take such actions to the extent permitted by law and regulation, and where appropriate.

Section 3. Interagency Task Force

There is established an interagency task force (Task Force) to monitor and assist the agencies in their efforts to expedite their review of permits or similar actions, as necessary, to accelerate the completion of energy-related projects, increase energy production and conservation, and improve transmission of energy. The Task Force also shall monitor and assist agencies in setting up appropriate mechanisms to coordinate Federal, State, tribal, and local permitting in geographic areas where increased