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Magalie R. Salas,
Secretary.

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BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Southwestern Power Administration

Robert D. Willis Power Rate

AGENCY: Southwestern Power
Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of public review and
comment.

SUMMARY: The Administrator,
Southwestern Power Administration
(Southwestern), has prepared Current
and Revised 2003 Power Repayment
Studies that show the need for an
increase in annual revenues to meet cost
recovery criteria. Such increased
revenues are required primarily due to
increased operations and maintenance
expenses at the project. The
Administrator has developed a
proposed Robert D. Willis rate schedule,
which is supported by a power
repayment study, to recover the
required revenues. Beginning October 1,
2003, the proposed rates would increase
annual revenues approximately 35.0
percent from \$353,700 to \$477,612.

DATES: The consultation and comment
period will begin on the date of
publication of this **Federal Register**
notice and will end August 25, 2003.

1. Public Information Forum—July 15,

2003, 9 a.m. central time, Tulsa, OK

2. Public Comment Forum—July 31,
2003, 9 a.m. central time, Tulsa, OK

ADDRESSES: The forums will be held in
Southwestern's offices, Room 1402,
Williams Center Tower I, One West
Third Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma 74103.
Five copies of the written comments,
together with a diskette in MS Word or
Corel Word Perfect, regarding the
proposed rate change should be
submitted to the Administrator,
Southwestern Power Administration,
U.S. Department of Energy, One West
Third Street, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74103.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Mr.
Forrest E. Reeves, Assistant
Administrator, Office of Corporate
Operations, Southwestern Power
Administration, U.S. Department of
Energy, One West Third Street, Tulsa,
Oklahoma 74103, (918) 595-6696.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The U.S.
Department of Energy was created by an
Act of the U.S. Congress, Department of

Energy Organization Act, Public Law 95-91, dated August 4, 1977, and Southwestern's power marketing activities were transferred from the Department of Interior to the Department of Energy, effective October 1, 1977. Guidelines for preparation of power repayment studies are included in DOE Order No. RA 6120.2, Power Marketing Administration Financial Reporting, Procedures for Public Participation in Power and Transmission Rate Adjustments of the Power Marketing Administrations are found at Title 10, part 903, subpart A of the Code of Federal Regulations (10 CFR 903).

Southwestern markets power from 24 multi-purpose reservoir projects, with hydroelectric power facilities constructed and operated by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. These projects are located in the states of Arkansas, Missouri, Oklahoma, and Texas. Southwestern's marketing area includes these States plus Kansas and Louisiana. The costs associated with the hydropower facilities of 22 of the 24 projects are repaid via revenues received under the Integrated System rates, as are Southwestern's transmission facilities that consist of 1,380 miles of high-voltage transmission lines, 24 substations, and 46 microwave and VHF radio sites. Costs associated with the Robert D. Willis and Sam Rayburn Dams, two projects that are isolated hydraulically, electrically, and financially from the Integrated System are repaid by separate rate schedules.

Following Department of Energy guidelines, the Administrator, Southwestern, prepared a Current Power Repayment study using the existing Robert D. Willis rate. The Study indicates that Southwestern's legal requirement to repay the investment in the power generating facility for power and energy marketed by Southwestern will be under-collected without an increase in revenues. The need for increased revenues is primarily due to increased costs for Corps of Engineers' operations and maintenance expenses. The Revised Power Repayment Study shows that an increase in annual revenue of \$123,912 (a 35.0 percent increase), beginning October 1, 2003, is needed to satisfy repayment criteria.

Opportunity is presented for Southwestern customers and other interested parties to receive copies of the Robert D. Willis Power Repayment Studies and the proposed rate schedule. If you desire a copy of the Robert D. Willis Power Repayment Data Package with the proposed Rate Schedule, submit your request to Mr. Forrest E. Reeves, Assistant Administrator, Office

of Corporate Operations, Southwestern Power Administration, One West Third Street, Tulsa, OK 74103, (918) 595-6696 or via email to gene.reeves@swpa.gov.

A Public Information Forum is scheduled to be held on July 15, 2003, to explain to customers and the public the proposed rate and supporting studies. The Forum will be conducted by a chairman who will be responsible for orderly procedure. Questions concerning the rate, studies, and information presented at the Forum will be answered, to the extent possible, at the Forum. Questions not answered at the Forum will be answered in writing, except that questions involving voluminous data contained in Southwestern's records may best be answered by consultation and review of pertinent records at Southwestern's offices.

Persons interested in attending the Public Information Forum should indicate in writing by letter or facsimile transmission (918-595-6656) by July 8, 2003, their intent to appear at such Forum. If no one so indicates their intent to attend, no such Forum will be held.

A Public Comment Forum is scheduled to be held on July 31, 2003, at which interested persons may submit written comments or make oral presentations of their views and comments related to the rate proposal. The Forum will be conducted by a chairman who will be responsible for orderly procedure. Southwestern's representatives will be present, and they and the chairman may ask questions of the speakers.

Persons interested in attending the Public Comment Forum should indicate in writing by letter or facsimile transmission (918-595-6656) by July 25, 2003, their intent to appear at such Forum. If no one so indicates their intent to attend, no such Forum will be held. Persons interested in speaking at the Forum should submit a request to the Administrator, Southwestern, in writing by July 25, 2003, their intent to appear at such Forum, so that a list of speakers can be developed. The chairman may allow others to speak if time permits.

A transcript of each Forum will be made. Copies of the transcripts may be obtained directly from the transcribing service for a fee.

Written comments on the proposed Robert D. Willis Rate are due on or before August 25, 2003. Five copies of the written comments, together with a diskette in MS Word or Corel Word Perfect, should be submitted to the Administrator, Southwestern, at the

above-mentioned address for Southwestern's offices.

Following review of the oral and written comments and the information gathered during the course of the proceedings, the Administrator will submit the amended Robert D. Willis Rate Proposal, and Power Repayment Studies in support of the proposed rate to the Secretary of Energy for confirmation and approval on an interim basis, and subsequently to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) for confirmation and approval on a final basis. The FERC will allow the public an opportunity to provide written comments on the proposed rate increase before making a final decision.

Dated: June 13, 2003.

Michael A. Deihl,
Administrator.

[FR Doc. 03-15887 Filed 6-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Western Area Power Administration

Operational Alternatives for Post-2004 Operations

AGENCY: Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: The Western Area Power Administration (Western), is a Federal power marketing administration within the Department of Energy (DOE) and markets Federal power from the Central Valley and Washoe Projects through the Sierra Nevada Region (SNR). SNR is implementing a new Marketing Plan on January 1, 2005. On December 31, 2004, three existing long-term contracts with the Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E) expire. To cost effectively implement its new Marketing Plan, SNR identified a number of alternative post-2004 operating scenarios. Western must select and implement one of these alternatives in a timely manner so that customers of SNR will avoid substantial business risk and uncertainty and not be subject to increased costs.

DATES: Written comments from entities interested in commenting must be received no later than 4 p.m., PDT, August 8, 2003. Western will accept written comments received via regular mail through the U.S. Postal Service if they are postmarked at least 3 days before August 8, 2003, and received no later than August 13, 2003. Entities are encouraged to hand deliver or use certified or electronic mail for delivery of comments. Western will not consider comments received after the prescribed