

eighteen gathering systems, demonstrate that these Facilities would perform a gathering function in CNR's possession. The following statements are those of CNR.

(1) Length and Diameter of the Lines—Although it is difficult to generalize about so many lines, it is clear that the great majority of these lines are small diameter, short lines, consistent with the configuration of gathering area lines. While some lines are larger than the 2.375" to 8.625" lines which predominate, or greater than a mile in length, such lines do not exceed a size or a length appropriate for a gathering function in similar circumstances, e.g., to transport gas gathered from other lines either directly or indirectly to transmission lines.

(2) Extension Beyond a Central Point in the Field—Unlike other production areas such as those in the Southwest, the "central point in the field test" is not generally applicable to those systems, given the unique geography and development of the Appalachian gathering area. Therefore, this test provides little guidance in determining the primary function of Appalachian gathering systems such as those under consideration here.

(3) Location of Compressors and Processing Plants—There are no processing plants upstream of these Facilities, and only twelve compressors on these eighteen gathering systems. Those twelve compressors are either field boosters which are necessary to move gas over these low pressure systems, or compress the gas for entry into transmission lines.

(4) Geographic Configuration—An examination of the maps contained in Exhibits Z and Z1 of Columbia's abandonment application shows that these Facilities form a "web-type" or "backbone" configuration and are located in a production area where they function as a production area gathering network.

(5) Location of Wells—Each of these eighteen gathering systems collects gas from wells at production area receipt points located along or throughout each system.

(6) Operating Pressure of the Lines—The operating pressure of the lines is low, typically less than 100 psig, and in all cases entirely consistent with a gathering facility characterization in these low pressure production areas.

(7) Purpose, Location and Operation of the Facilities—The facilities are located in a production area, and used to provide gathering service by their present owner and operator. Even the few facilities functionalized on Columbia's books of account as

transmission either now perform a gathering function or would do so when owned and operated by CNR.

(8) The Owner's General Business Activity—CNR, the proposed owner of these Facilities, would be a gatherer, not an interstate transporter, of gas. It intends to have no jurisdictional transmission facilities. Therefore, these Facilities would be gathering facilities after the proposed transfer.

CNR states that it would operate the facilities as an independent gas gatherer to provide gas gathering and related services on an open access, nonjurisdictional, nondiscriminatory basis to all customers. CNR states that no existing shipper on any of these eighteen gathering systems would be faced with any reduction or loss of gathering service. CNR explains that it intends to provide substitute nonjurisdictional alternatives to the service provided by Columbia in connection with its transportation service under certain rate schedules in Columbia's Second Revised Volume No. 1 FERC Gas Tariff. Further, CNR would attempt to negotiate new gathering agreements with Columbia's shippers. However, if CNR is unable to reach agreement with an existing gathering shipper, CNR would offer such existing shippers a default contract under which they would continue to be able to receive gathering service for a two-year period, under rates, terms and conditions consistent with those under which Columbia currently provides these gathering services. Proposed default gathering contracts would be submitted if the parties were unable to negotiate mutually agreeable arrangements.

CNR advises that Columbia currently utilizes certain of the Facilities to deliver gas scheduled under Rate Schedules FTS, NTS,³ and SST to Mountaineer Gas Company (Mountaineer) and Columbia Gas of Kentucky, Inc. (CKY), at Town Border Stations. CNR plans to provide nonjurisdictional direct delivery service to Mountaineer and CKY, after the proposed sale. Negotiations are progressing with these two local distribution companies for the development of agreements for such service by CNR.

CNR advises that, in addition to direct delivery service at Town Border Stations, Columbia utilizes many of the Facilities to also deliver gas to certain Mainline Tap Consumers served by these local distribution companies and by Columbia Gas of Pennsylvania, Inc. These Mainline Tap Consumers are

attached directly to Columbia gathering lines and, typically, are found in areas which are remote from the nearest measured distribution system and may own land over which Columbia's gathering lines have been laid. Upon the transfer of the Facilities to CNR, deliveries to these Mainline Tap Consumers would be continued by CNR on a nonjurisdictional basis.

CNR further advises that, in the companion application filed in Docket No. CP96-386-000, Columbia proposes to abandon two Points of Delivery at exchange points on the Facilities with CNG Transmission Corporation under Columbia's Rate Schedule X-35 and X-84. However, the remaining exchange points under these rate schedules would not be affected by the proposed transfer of the Facilities to CNR and exchange services would continue to be provided under Rate Schedules X-35 and X-84.

CNR also advises that Ashland Exploration, Inc., delivers gas from its own production into Columbia's Canada (P-28) Gathering System. Some of that gas is delivered to approximately 170 customers of Ashland located on that system. CNR intends to work with Ashland to develop an appropriate replacement, if necessary, for the service currently provided by Columbia.

Any person desiring to be heard or to make any protest with reference to said petition should on or before May 20, 1996, file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Washington, D.C. 20426, a motion to intervene or a protest in accordance with the requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 384.214 or 385.211) and the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.10). All protests filed with the Commission will be considered by it in determining the appropriate action to be taken but will not serve to make the protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party to a proceeding or to participate as a party in any hearing therein must file a motion to intervene in accordance with the Commission's Rules.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

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[Docket No. CP96-97-000]

Eastern Shore Natural Gas Company; Notice of Technical Conference

May 8, 1996.

Take notice that a technical conference will be convened in the above-docketed proceeding on

³ Only Mountaineer receives NTS service.

Wednesday, May 22, 1996, at 10:00 a.m., in a room to be designated at the offices of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC, 20426. Any party, as defined in 18 CFR 385.102(c), any person seeking intervenor status pursuant to 18 CFR 385.214, and any participant, as defined in 18 CFR 385.102(b), is invited to participate.

For additional information, please contact Carolyn Van Der Jagt, 202-208-2246, or Tom Gooding, 202-208-1123, at the Commission.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

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[Docket Nos. RP91-26-014 and RP91-162-005]

El Paso Natural Gas Company; Notice of Technical Conference

May 8, 1996.

In the Commission's order issued on April 1, 1996, in the above-captioned proceeding,¹ the Commission held that the filing raises issues for which a technical conference is to be convened.

The conference to address the issues has been scheduled for Thursday, May 30, 1996, at 10:00 a.m. in a room to be designated at the offices of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426.

All interested persons and Staff are permitted to attend.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-11978 Filed 5-13-96; 8:45 am]

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[Docket No. CP96-488-000]

El Paso Natural Gas Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

May 8, 1996.

Take notice that on May 3, 1996, El Paso Natural Gas Company (El Paso), P.O. Box 1492, El Paso, Texas, 79978, filed in Docket No. CP96-488-000 a request pursuant to Section 157.205, and 157.216(b) of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205, and 157.216) for approval to abandon certain miscellaneous tap and meter facilities and the service rendered by means thereof, under the blanket certificate issued in Docket No. CP82-435-000, pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act (NGA), all as more fully set

forth in the request which is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

El Paso states that the certificate authorizations for the construction and operation of the miscellaneous tap and meter facilities for which El Paso now seeks abandonment authorization were issued in Docket Nos. G-2363, CP69-23, CP70-78, CP74-119, and CP84-243, or installation and service was permitted under Section 2.55(c) of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure. El Paso indicates that these facilities were required to facilitate, generally, the delivery and/or measurement and sale of natural gas from its interstate transmission pipeline system to certain customers for resale.

The request for authorization further states that with respect to these miscellaneous tap and meter facilities, El Paso periodically reviews, inter alia, the operating status of such facilities located on its interstate pipeline system. El Paso indicates that such review has shown that there are twelve miscellaneous tap and meter facilities located in various counties in Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas that are eligible for abandonment for which El Paso now seeks abandonment.

El Paso asserts that it proposes to abandon such facilities and to thereafter remove and place in stock the salvable materials and scrap the nonsalvageable items, without material change in its average cost-of-service. It is further asserted that the proposed abandonments will not result in or cause any interruption, reduction, or termination of natural gas service presently rendered El Paso to any of its customers.

Any person or the Commission's Staff may, within 45 days of the issuance of the instant notice by the Commission, file pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214), a motion to intervene and pursuant to Section 157.205 of the regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.295), a protest to the request. If no protest is filed within the time allowed therefor, the proposed activities shall be deemed to be authorized effective the day after the time allowed for filing a protest. If a protest is filed and not withdrawn 30 days after the time allowed for filing a protest, the instant request shall be treated as an application for authorization pursuant to Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-11981 Filed 5-13-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. CP96-486-000]

El Paso Natural Gas Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

May 8, 1996.

Take notice that on May 3, 1996, El Paso Natural Gas Company (El Paso), Post Office Box 1492, El Paso, Texas 79978, filed a request with the Commission in Docket No. CP96-486-000, pursuant to Sections 157.205 and 157.212 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (NGA) for authorization to operate two existing tap and valve assemblies located in Reeves County, Texas as jurisdictional delivery points for the delivery of natural gas, authorized in blanket certificates issued in Docket Nos. CP82-435-000 and CP88-433-000, all as more fully set forth in the request on file with the Commission and open to the public inspection.

El Paso proposes to utilize two existing tap and valve assemblies which El Paso states that it installed in connection with the construction and installation of their Lockridge and Hamon-Toro Line Field Compressor Stations to facilitate the delivery of its own pipeline quality gas supply for fuel to these compressors. The compressor stations are now owned by a different entity but still require pipeline quality gas for fuel. Therefore, El Paso now seeks authorization to utilize the two existing tap and valve assemblies as jurisdictional delivery points to provide El Paso Field Service Company (Field Services) natural gas deliveries, at Field Services' request. Field Services intends to supply El Paso Gas Marketing Company (Gas Marketing) with gas for fuel at the Lockridge and Hamon-Toro Line Field Compressor Stations. In turn, Gas Marketing has requested El Paso to provide interruptible transportation to the two existing tap and valve assemblies on El Paso's mainline transmission system in Reeves County, Texas.

El Paso states that the operation of the proposed delivery points at the Lockridge and Hamon-Toro Line Field Compressor Stations is not prohibited by El Paso's existing Volume No. 1-A Tariff and that the volumes proposed to be delivered through the two existing tap and valve assemblies would be delivered pursuant to an effective transportation arrangement between El Paso and Gas Marketing. El Paso further states that it has sufficient capacity to accomplish the deliveries specified under the Transportation Service Agreement without detriment or

¹ 75 FERC ¶ 61,007 (1996).