

additional scoping meetings other than those scheduled, as listed above.

#### Objectives

At the scoping meetings, the Commission staff will: (1) Summarize the environmental issues tentatively identified for analysis in the NEPA document; (2) solicit from the meeting participants all available information, especially quantified data, on the resources at issue, and (3) encourage statements from experts and the public on issues that should be analyzed in the NEPA document. Individuals, organizations, and agencies with environmental expertise and concerns are encouraged to attend the meetings and to assist the staff in defining and clarifying the issues to be addressed.

#### Meeting Procedures

The meetings will be recorded by a stenographer and become a part of the formal record of the Commission proceeding on the Damariscotta Mills Project. Individuals presenting statements at the meetings will be asked to identify themselves for the record.

Concerned parties are encouraged to offer us verbal guidance during public meetings. Speaking time allowed for individuals will be determined before each meeting, based on the number of persons wishing to speak and the approximate amount of time available for the session, but all speakers will be provided at least 5 minutes to present their views.

All those attending the meeting are urged to refrain from making any communications concerning the merits of the application to any member of the Commission staff outside of the established process for developing the record as stated in the record of the proceeding.

Persons choosing not to speak but wishing to express an opinion, as well as speakers unable to summarize their positions within their allotted time, may submit written statements for inclusion in the public record no later than November 1, 1996.

All filings should contain an original and 8 copies. Failure to file an original and 8 copies may result in appropriate staff not receiving the benefit of your comments in a timely manner. See 18 CFR 4.34(h). In addition, commenters may submit a copy of their comments on a 3½-inch diskette formatted for MS-DOS based computers. In light of our ability to translate MS-DOS based materials, the text need only be submitted in the format and version that it was generated (i.e., MS Word, WordPerfect 5.1/5.2, ASCII, etc.). It is not necessary to reformat word

processor generated text to ASCII. For Macintosh users, it would be helpful to save the documents in Macintosh word processor format and then write them to files on a diskette formatted for MS-DOS machines. All comments should be submitted to the Office of the Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, and should clearly show the following captions on the first page: Damariscotta Mills Hydro Project, FERC No. 11566.

Further, interested persons are reminded of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedures, requiring parties or interceders (as defined in 18 CFR 385.2010) to file documents on each person whose name is on the official service list for this proceeding. See 18 CFR 4.34(b).

The Commission staff will consider all written comments and may issue a Scoping Document II (SDII). SDII will include a revised list of issues, based on the scoping sessions.

For further information regarding the scoping process, please contact Rich Takacs, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Office of Hydropower Licensing, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC, 20426 at (202) 219-2840, or Ed Lee at (202) 219-2809.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

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#### [Docket No. CP96-720-000]

#### **Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Request for Comments on Environmental Issues**

October 1, 1996.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the abandonment and construction of the facilities proposed in the Louisiana Line Expansion Project.<sup>1</sup> This EA will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether an environmental impact statement is necessary and whether to approve the project.

#### Summary of the Proposed Project

Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America (NGPL) proposes to abandon

the 3,800 horsepower (hp) compressor unit at Station No. 139 on its Permian Basin Line in Lea County, New Mexico and relocate it to Station No. 346 on its Louisiana Line in Cameron Parish, Louisiana. The compressor unit has not been used since 1993 and is no longer needed at Station No. 139. The compressor unit would be upgraded to a 4,500 hp rating and equipped with low emissions control technology. The additional horsepower would increase the capacity of the Louisiana Line by 63 MMcf/d. NGPL No. 139. The general location of the project facilities are shown in appendix 1.<sup>2</sup>

NGPL also proposes to perform certain activities that it believes to be non-jurisdictional. These activities include the re-wheeling of three existing compressors at Station No. 346, Cameron Parish, Louisiana, to allow them to operate under the proposed operating conditions, and certain modifications to station piping at Station No. 342, Cameron Parish, Louisiana, in order to reduce pressure losses through the station when gas is being compressed for movement to the east.

#### Land Requirements for Construction

Only minor construction activities would be necessary to remove the compressor unit at Station No. 139 and install it at Station No. 346. All disturbance would occur within the existing compressor station sites. Station No. 346 is located on a 15 acre site. Approximately 2 acres of this site would be disturbed during the construction and installation of the compressor unit and associated structures. No additional roads would be required and the existing storage yards and parking facilities would be able to support contractor vehicles and storage areas as needed.

#### The EA Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action whether it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. NEPA also requires us to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. We call this "scoping". The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EA on the important

<sup>2</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the Federal Register. Copies are available from the Commission's Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, or call (202) 208-1371. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

<sup>1</sup> Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

environmental issues. By this Notice of Intent, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues it will address in the EA. All comments received are considered during the preparation of the EA. State and local government representatives are encouraged to notify their constituents of this proposed action and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

The EA will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed project under these general headings.

- Geology and soils.
- Water resources, fisheries, and wetlands.
- Vegetation and wildlife.
- Endangered and threatened species.
- Land use.
- Cultural resources.
- Air quality and noise.
- Public safety.

We will also evaluate possible alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be in the EA. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, the EA may be published and mailed to Federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, interested individuals, affected landowners, newspapers, libraries, and the Commission's official service list for this proceeding. A comment period will be allotted for review if the EA is published. We will consider all comments on the EA before we recommend that the Commission approve or not approve the project.

#### Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified one issue that we think deserves attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by NGPL. Keep in mind that this is a preliminary list:

- Noise impact on the nearest residence located 1,320 feet to the north of Station No. 346.

The list of issues may be added to, subtracted from, or changed based on your comments and our analysis.

#### Public Participation

You can make a difference by sending a letter addressing your specific comments or concerns about the project. You should focus on the potential environmental effects of the proposal, alternatives to the proposal, and

measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. Please follow the instructions below to ensure that your comments are received and properly recorded:

- Address your letter to: Lois Cashell, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426;
- Reference Docket No. CP96-720-000;
- Send a copy of your letter to: Ms. Mary Hertling, EA Project Manager, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., N.E., PR-11.1, Washington, D.C. 20426; and
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, D.C. on or before November 7, 1996.

If you wish to receive a copy of the EA, you should request one from Ms. Hertling at the above address.

#### Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an official party to the proceeding or become an "intervenor". Among other things, intervenors have the right to receive copies of case-related Commission documents and filings by other intervenors. Likewise, each intervenor must provide copies of its filings to all other parties. If you want to become an intervenor you must file a motion to intervene according to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214) (see appendix 2).

The date for filing timely motions to intervene in this proceeding has passed. Therefore, parties now seeking to file late interventions must show good cause, as required by section 385.214(b)(3), why this time limitations should be waived. Environmental issues have been viewed as good cause for late intervention. You do not need intervenor status to have your scoping comments considered.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from Ms. Mary Hertling, EA Project Manager, at (202) 208-0874.

Lois D. Cashell,  
Secretary.

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#### Western Area Power Administration

##### Notice of Availability of the Navajo Transmission Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement

**AGENCY:** Western Area Power Administration, DOE.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability and notice of public hearings.

**SUMMARY:** Western Area Power Administration's (Western) Colorado River Storage Project Customer Service Center (CRSP CSC) announces that the Navajo Transmission Project (NTP) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (draft EIS) is available for public review and comment. Western will hold public hearings to receive formal comments on the draft EIS according to the schedule below. The Din<sup>o</sup> Power Authority (DPA), an enterprise of the Navajo Nation, is proposing the construction and operation of a 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between northwestern New Mexico and southern Nevada, called the NTP. The draft EIS describes a range of alternatives considered and the potential environmental consequences and has been prepared in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*), the Council on Environmental Quality regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR Parts 1500-1508), and the DOE regulations for compliance with NEPA (10 CFR Part 1021). Western's CRSP CSC is the lead Federal agency to the NTP draft EIS.

**DATES:** Western will accept written and oral comments during the public review period. Written comments on the draft EIS should be sent to the Project Manager by December 6, 1996, of the EPA FR Notice at the following address: Mr. Tony Morton, EIS Manager, Western Area Power Administration, Colorado River Storage Project Customer Service Center, 257 East 200 South, Suite 475, P.O. Box 11606, Salt Lake City, Utah 84147-0606, telephone 801-524-5636.

Those wishing to make oral comments may do so at the scheduled public hearings. Speakers will be asked to register at the door prior to the beginning of the hearing. A court reporter will record the proceedings at each hearing. Interpreters for Navajo, Hopi or Hualapai Indians will be available at the appropriate sessions. Representatives will be responsible for recording comments and concerns of the public. Western will respond to all comments, both written and oral, in the final EIS.

The hearings will be held according to the following schedule. Western intends