

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Docket No. CP98-168-000]

Williams Natural Gas Company; Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Pampa Pipeline Abandonment Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

February 25, 1998.

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 of facilities, about 126.1 miles of various diameter pipeline, meter stations, and a compressor station, proposed in the Pampa Pipeline Abandonment Project.¹ This EA will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

Summary of the Proposed Project

Williams Natural Gas Company (Williams) proposes to abandon by sale to CPI Pipe and Tube, Inc. (CPI) about 126.1 miles of 12-, 16-, and 20-inch-diameter pipeline, meter stations, and appurtenant facilities on its Pampa pipeline system in Hemphill County, Texas and Ellis, Woodward, and Woods Counties, Oklahoma. CPI, in turn, proposes to reclaim for salvage about 114.3 miles of 20-inch-diameter pipeline, about 0.7 mile of 16-inch-diameter pipeline, and about 0.5 mile of 12-inch-diameter pipeline, and to abandon in place about 6.9 miles of 20-inch-diameter, about 0.2 mile of 16-inch-diameter pipeline, and about 3.5 miles of 12-inch-diameter pipeline. The meter stations along the pipeline route would be reclaimed with the pipeline.

The pipeline would be abandoned in place at road and railroad crossings, all waterbody and wetland crossings, and any other environmentally sensitive locations. In addition, Williams would abandon in place the Higgins Compressor Station in Hemphill County, Texas.

The location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.² If you are

interested in obtaining procedural information, please write to the Secretary of the Commission.

Land Requirements for Abandonment by Removal

The current permanent right-of-way width is 66 feet. No additional right-of-way would be required by CPI to remove and salvage the pipeline. Removal of the proposed facilities would require about 924 acres of land. Upon completion of the removal project the current permanent right-of-way would no longer be required and the land would be restored and allowed to revert to its former use.

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 whenever 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 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 abandonment of the proposed project under these general headings.

- geology and soils
- water resources and wetlands
- vegetation and wildlife
- endangered and threatened species
- land use
- cultural resources

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 make our recommendations to the Commission.

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified at least two issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by Williams. These issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- The project crosses potential lesser prairie-chicken habitat (Texas species of concern) along the route.

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 carefully follow these instructions to ensure that your comments are received in time and properly recorded:

- Send two copies of your letter to: David P. Boergers, Acting Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426;
- Label one copy of the comments for the attention of the Environmental Review and Compliance Branch, PR-11.1;
- Reference Docket No. CP98-168-000; and
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before March 30, 1998.

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).

¹ Williams Natural Gas Company's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

² 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.

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 § 385.214(b)(3), why this time limitation should be waived. Environmental issues have been viewed as good cause for late intervention.

You do not need intervenor status to have your environmental comments considered.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-5360 Filed 3-2-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Notice of Expanded Use of the Docket Prefix "IS" for Oil Pipeline Filings and Availability of Information

February 25, 1998.

Take notice that on March 1, 1998, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission will cease using the oil pipeline docket prefix "OT" and instead will use an "IS" docket prefix.

The Commission receives tariff filings and related materials from jurisdictional oil pipeline companies pursuant to the requirements of 18 CFR Parts 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 346, and 348. Filings previously given an "OT" docket prefix will now be assigned an "IS" prefix. The "IS" docket prefix has been used for oil pipeline filings which were likely to require formal action. Now this prefix will also be assigned to and designate the more routine, non-controversial, oil pipeline filings. Future use of the "OT" docket prefix will terminate upon institution of this policy.

The format of the "IS" docket prefix will remain unchanged. The "IS" prefix will be followed by the last two digits of the fiscal year in which the filing is received at the Commission, and a number assigned in numerical sequence beginning with "1" at the start of each fiscal year.

Also, as part of the Commission's continuing effort to provide easier access to its information, future oil pipeline filings will be available through the Commission's Records and Information Management System.

This notice is issued for the information and aid of jurisdictional companies, the public and practitioners before the Commission as an

explanation of the docketing prefix used by the Commission.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-5359 Filed 3-2-98; 8:45 am]

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-5973-1]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Submission for OMB Review; Comment Request; Revision—Application for Reference and Equivalent Method Determination

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this document announces that the following Information Collection Request (ICR) has been forwarded to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and approval: Application for Reference and Equivalent Method Determination; OMB Control Number 2080-0005, expiration date May 31, 1998. The ICR describes the nature of the information collection and its expected burden and cost; where appropriate, it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before April 2, 1998.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Contact Sandy Farmer at EPA by phone at (202) 260-2740, by email at farmer.sandy@epamail.epa.gov, or download off the Internet at <http://www.epa.gov/icr> and refer to EPA ICR No. 559.06.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title: Application for Reference and Equivalent Method Determination (OMB Control No. 2080-0005); EPA ICR No. 0559.06, expiring May 31, 1998. This is a request for a revision of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: State air monitoring agencies are required to use EPA-designated reference or equivalent methods in their air monitoring networks to determine compliance with the national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS). A manufacturer or seller of an air monitoring method (more specifically, an air monitoring sampler or analyzer that is the basis of the method) which seeks EPA designation of the method must carry out prescribed tests of the method. The test results along with other information must then

be submitted to the EPA in the form of an application for a reference or equivalent method determination in accordance with 40 CFR part 53. The EPA uses this information to determine whether the particular method should be designated as either a reference or equivalent method. After designation of a method, the applicant must also maintain records of the names and mailing addresses of all ultimate purchasers of all analyzers or samplers sold as designated methods under the method designation. Following designation of a method for PM_{2.5}, the applicant must also maintain its manufacturing facility as a ISO 9991-registered facility and annually submit a checklist signed by an ISO-certified auditor to verify adherence to specific quality assurance requirements in the manufacture of the samplers or analyzers sold as part of a designated method. Responses to the collection of information are voluntary but are required to obtain the benefit of EPA-designation of a method or product as a reference or equivalent method (40 CFR part 53). Submission of information that is claimed by the applicant to be confidential business information may be necessary to make a reference or equivalent method determination. The confidentiality of any submitted information identified as such will be protected in full accordance with 40 CFR part 53.15 and all applicable provisions of 40 CFR part 2.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The OMB control numbers for EPA's regulations are listed in 40 CFR part 9 and 48 CFR Chapter 15. The **Federal Register** Notice required under 5 CFR 1320.8(d), soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on 10/07/97 (62 FR 52333); no comments were received.

Burden Statement: The annual public reporting and record keeping burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1,129 hours per response, although individual burdens may vary substantially from that average. Burden means the total time, effort, or financial resources expended by persons to generate, maintain, retain, or disclose or provide information to or for a Federal agency. This includes the time needed to review instructions; develop, acquire, install, and utilize technology and systems for the purposes of collecting, validating, and verifying information, processing and maintaining information, and disclosing and providing information; adjust the