

currently in progress. Consequently, the analysis for this alternative bounds the maximum potential impacts that could occur at the Nevada Test Site as a result of decisions made from the other DOE Environmental Impact Statements. This Environmental Impact Statement and the analyses it contains can be used to support these future programmatic decisions.

The decisions made in this Record of Decision are defined consistent with the conservative descriptions contained in the Environmental Impact Statement. In the application of these decisions it should be noted that some of the proposals will continue to evolve over time. In this regard, proposed new activities such as constructing and operating a 1000-megawatt Solar Power Production Facility at the Nevada Test Site were analyzed in the Environmental Impact Statement; however, the current proposal for a solar power production facility at the Nevada Test Site is less than this original power estimate and would initially serve only the Nevada Test Site. The true impact of this proposal with respect to ground clearing and water use impacts would likewise be less than those identified. DOE also estimated conservatively the number of science-based stockpile stewardship tests and experiments to be conducted over a ten year period at the Nevada Test Site. Actual schedules and data needs will dictate the number of stockpile stewardship experiments and tests conducted in a given year. This number could be less than that identified, and consequently the actual impacts would also be less. DOE also analyzed the potential impacts of a generic large heavy industrial facility under the Expanded Use Alternative in order to identify maximum potential impact at the site under the concept of expanded use. DOE may at some future time consider siting a defense, nondefense, or private industrial facility at Nevada Test Site. Once such a proposal becomes more defined, additional National Environmental Policy Act analysis, as appropriate, would tier from this programmatic heavy industrial facility analysis.

In accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act, its implementing procedures and regulations, and DOE's National Environmental Policy Act regulations, I have considered the information contained within the Final Environmental Impact Statement, including the classified Appendix and public comments received in response to the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statement. Being fully apprised of the environmental consequences of

the alternatives and other decision factors described above, I have decided to continue and expand the use of the Nevada Test Site and its resources as described. This will enhance the DOE's ability to meet its primary national security mission responsibility in Nevada and create an environment that fosters technological innovation in both the public and private sectors.

Issued at Washington, DC, December 9, 1996.

Hazel R. O'Leary,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-31652 Filed 12-12-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Environmental Impact Statement for the Continued Operation of the Pantex Plant and Associated Storage of Nuclear Weapon Components

**AGENCY:** Department of Energy.

**ACTION:** Notice of availability.

**SUMMARY:** The Department of Energy (DOE) announces the availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Continued Operation of the Pantex Plant and Associated Storage of Nuclear Weapon Components (DOE/EIS-0225). The Department's preferred alternative is to continue nuclear weapons operations at the Pantex Plant, located near Amarillo, Texas; to implement projects and facility upgrades consistent with conducting these operations; and to increase the interim storage level for plutonium components (pits) from 12,000 to 20,000 pits. The Final EIS also evaluates a No Action Alternative and a Relocation of Interim Pit Storage Alternative.

**ADDRESSES:** Written requests for copies of the Final EIS should be directed to: Ms. Nanette Founds, U.S. Department of Energy, Albuquerque Operations Office, P.O. Box 5400, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 87185-5400. Written requests can also be submitted via fax at (505) 845-6392, with facsimiles marked: Pantex Plant EIS. Requests for this EIS may also be submitted by calling (505) 845-4351.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** For information on this EIS, please contact: Ms. Nanette Founds at the above address or by calling (505) 845-4212. For information on DOE's NEPA process, please contact: Ms. Carol Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW,

Washington, DC, 20585, 202-586-4600 or 1-800-472-2756.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The Pantex Plant, near Amarillo, Texas, is the Nation's nuclear weapons assembly and disassembly site. Its missions also include the fabrication of high explosive components and the maintenance, modification and evaluation of existing nuclear weapons. However, its current workload is centered on the dismantlement of nuclear weapons that are retired from the military stockpile. There are currently no plans for producing new weapons. The preferred alternative identified in the Final EIS is to maintain the Pantex Plant's assigned missions as well as increase the plant's onsite interim storage level from 12,000 to 20,000 pits. The Final EIS also evaluates a No Action Alternative, which would continue current activities with no new projects or facility upgrades and continue to limit onsite interim storage to 12,000 pits; and a Relocation of Pit Storage Alternative, in which some or all of Pantex interim storage activities would be relocated to one or more of four alternate sites: the Savannah River Site near Aiken, South Carolina; the Nevada Test Site near Las Vegas, Nevada; the Hanford Site near Richland, Washington; and the Manzano Weapons Storage Area at Kirtland Air Force Base in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

This Final EIS incorporates comments received during the public comment period from April 5, 1996, through July 12, 1996 (61 FR 15232, April 5, 1996; 61 FR 18726, April 29, 1996). Copies of all comments and associated EIS documentation prepared by DOE are available for inspection at the following locations:

- U.S. Department of Energy Freedom of Information Reading Room, Room 1E-190, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585, 202-586-6020
- U.S. Department of Energy Nevada Operations Office Public Reading Room, 2753 S. Highland Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89109, 702-295-1274
- U.S. Department of Energy Technical Vocational Institute, Public Document Collection, 525 Buena Vista, SE, Albuquerque, New Mexico 87106, 505-224-3281/3292
- Los Alamos National Laboratory Community Reading Room, Museum Parke Office Complex, 1450 Central Avenue, Suite 101 Los Alamos, New Mexico 87544, 505-665-2127 or 1-800-543-2342
- U.S. Department of Energy Public Document Room, 2nd Floor, University Library, University of South Carolina, Aiken Campus, 171 University Parkway, Aiken, South Carolina 29801, 803-648-6851

Oak Ridge Public Reading Room, 55 Jefferson Avenue, Oak Ridge, Tennessee 37830, 615-576-0887

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room, Reference Department, Lyn Library and Learning Center, Amarillo College, 2201 South Washington, 4th Floor Amarillo, Texas 79109, 806-371-5400

Pantex EIS Public Information Center, c/o Tetra Tech, Inc., 6900 I-40 West, Suite 260, Amarillo, Texas, 806-355-9480

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room, Carson County Public Library, 401 Main Street, P.O. Box 339, Panhandle, Texas 79068, 806-537-3742

U.S. Department of Energy Public Reading Room, Washington State University, 100 Sprout Road, Richland, Washington, 99352, 509-376-8583

DOE intends to issue a Record of Decision at least 30 days after the date of the Environmental Protection Agency Notice of Availability and will publish it in the Federal Register.

Issued in Washington, DC, on December 9, 1996.

Gary T. Palmer,

*Environmental Specialist, Office of Environmental and Technical Support, Defense Programs.*

[FR Doc. 96-31653 Filed 12-12-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

## **Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Docket No. CP97-136-000]

### **Colorado Interstate Gas Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization**

December 9, 1996.

Take notice that on December 2, 1996, Colorado Interstate Gas Company (CIG), Post Office Box 1087, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80944, filed in Docket No. CP96-136-000 a request pursuant to Sections 157.205, 157.211 and 157.216 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205, 157.211 and 157.216) for authorization to abandon 2 meters, change the direction of flow of a lateral line, and to install a new meter, all in Adams County, Colorado, under CIG's blanket certificate issued in Docket No. CP83-21-000 pursuant to Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act, all as more fully set forth in the request that is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

CIG proposes to replace the existing Doherty Meter Station by abandoning 2 4-inch diameter meters and installing a new facility with a 2-inch diameter meter and to reverse the flow of the 4-inch diameter Third Street Lateral loop line. It is stated that these changes are

required because Vessels Hydrocarbons, Inc. (Vessels) is consolidating its processing activities by closing its Third Street processing Plant and constructing a new line to move gas from its Third Street plant to its Wattenberg Plant. CIG proposes to deliver up to 250 dt equivalent of natural gas per day to Vessels at the new meter. It is asserted that CIG will transport the gas for Vessels under its Rate Schedule TF-1. It is further asserted that CIG has notified producers who use the Third Street Plant for processing and has received no objections to the proposal. It is estimated that installation of the new meter will cost \$15,000, for which CIG will be reimbursed by Vessels.

Any person or the Commission's staff may, within 45 days after issuance of the instant notice by the Commission, file pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Procedural Rules (18 CFR 385.214) a motion to intervene or notice of intervention and pursuant to Section 157.205 of the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205) a protest to the request. If no protest is filed within the time allowed therefor, the proposed activity 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 within 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.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-31625 Filed 12-12-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. ER96-2964-000]

### **Enserco Energy, Inc.; Notice of Issuance of Order**

December 9, 1996.

Enserco Energy, Inc. (Enserco), an affiliate of Black Hills Power & Light Company, filed an application for authorization to sell power at market-based rates, and for certain waivers and authorizations. In particular, Enserco requested that the Commission grant blanket approval under 18 CFR Part 34 of all future issuances of securities and assumptions of liabilities by Enserco. On December 2, 1996, the Commission issued an Order Accepting For Filing Proposed Market-Based Rates (Order), in the above-docketed proceeding.

The Commission's December 2, 1996 Order granted the request for blanket approval under Part 34, subject to the conditions found in Ordering Paragraphs (C), (D), and (F):

(C) Within 30 days of the date of this order, any person desiring to be heard or to protest the Commission's blanket approval of issuances of securities or assumptions of liabilities by Enserco should file a motion to intervene or protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, 18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214.

(D) Absent a request to be heard within the period set forth in Ordering Paragraph (C) above, Enserco is hereby authorized, pursuant to Section 204 of the FPA, to issue securities and assume obligations and liabilities as guarantor, endorser, surety or otherwise in respect of any security of another person; provided that such issue or assumption is for some lawful object within the corporate purposes of Enserco, compatible with the public interest, and reasonably necessary or appropriate for such purposes.

(F) The Commission reserves the right to modify this order to require a further showing that neither public nor private interests will be adversely affected by continued Commission approval of Enserco's issuances of securities or assumptions of liabilities \* \* \*.

Notice is hereby given that the deadline for filing motions to intervene or protests, as set forth above, is January 2, 1997.

Copies of the full text of the Order are available from the Commission's Public Reference Branch, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 96-31624 Filed 12-12-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. CP97-134-000]

### **MarkWest Hydrocarbon Partners, Ltd.; Notice of Petition for Declaratory Order**

December 9, 1996.

Take notice that, on November 27, 1996, in Docket No. CP97-134-000, MarkWest Hydrocarbon Partners, Ltd. (MarkWest), 5613 DTC Parkway, Suite 400, Englewood, Colorado 80111, filed a petition with the Commission, pursuant to Rule 207 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.307), for a declaratory order disclaiming jurisdiction over the Cobb Extraction Plant in Kanawha County, West Virginia, and the Boldman Extraction Plant in Pike County, West Virginia, all as more fully set forth in