

or protests should be filed on or before the comment date. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party must file a motion to intervene. Copies of this filing are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection.

Lois D. Cashell,

Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP97-331-000]

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Cherokee Expansion Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

June 30, 1997.

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 construction and operation of the facilities proposed in the Cherokee Expansion 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

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation (Transco) wants to expand the capacity of its facilities in Alabama and Georgia to provide 87,070 dekatherms per day of additional firm transportation capacity to growing markets in the southeast for two existing customers, a local distribution company and a municipal gas distribution system. Transco seeks authority to:

- Construct about 11.2 miles of 48-inch-diameter pipeline loop from milepost (MP) 826.3 to MP 837.5 in Marengo County, Alabama;
- Uprate the 16-inch-diameter Georgia Extension in Walton and Gwinnett Counties, Georgia from a maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of 780 pounds per square inch

(psi) to a MAOP of 960 psi. The uprating would include:

- a. Replacement of 3.7 miles of 16-inch-diameter pipeline with 3.7 miles of 16-inch-diameter pipeline in five sections;
 - b. Expansion and/or uprating of four meter and regulator (M&R) stations;
 - c. Hydrostatic testing of 26.7 miles of 16-inch-diameter pipeline; and
 - d. Abandonment in place of about 0.1 mile of 16-inch-diameter pipeline.
- Construct a new 15,000 horsepower (hp) compressor station (Compressor Station 115), in Coweta County, Georgia;
 - Install an additional 8,000 hp of compression at Compressor Station 125 in Walton County, Georgia; and
 - Rewheel existing compressor units at Compressor Station 100 in Chilton County, Alabama and Compressor Station 120 in Henry County, Georgia and install additional gas cooling capacity at Compressor Station 110 in Randolph County, Alabama.

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.² If you are interested in obtaining detailed maps of a specific portion of the project, or procedural information, please write to the Secretary of the Commission.

Land Requirements for Construction

Construction of Transco's proposed pipeline facilities in Alabama would affect about 156.8 acres, of which 32.0 acres would be within existing, cleared right-of-way. Following construction, about 34.8 acres would be maintained as new permanent right-of-way. The remaining 122.0 acres of land would be restored and allowed to revert to its former use.

Replacement of the pipeline facilities in Georgia would affect about 38.4 acres, of which 29.0 acres would be within existing cleared right-of-way. The replacement pipeline would be installed in the same location as the existing 16-inch-diameter pipeline after it is removed and would not require any new permanent right-of-way.

Construction of Compressor Station 115 would require about 30.0 acres of which 25.5 acres would be maintained during operation of the compressor station. Construction at Compressor Station 125 would affect about 1.7 acres of which about 1.0 acre would be maintained with the existing compressor station area during operation. The installation of the

additional cooling capacity at Compressor Station 110 would require about 1.0 acre of land of which less than 0.1 acre would be affected by operation. The work that would occur at Compressor Stations 100 and 120 would take place within the existing compressor station buildings and would not require additional land.

Modification of the M&R stations would affect a total of about 0.6 acre of land during construction. However, no increases in the size of the existing fenced areas would occur.

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 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
- Public safety
- Land use
- Cultural resources
- Air quality and noise
- Hazardous waste

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

¹ Transco'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.

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 several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by Transco. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Seven perennial waterbodies would be crossed by the Alabama portion of the project.
- About 2.5 miles of wetlands in Alabama and Georgia would be disturbed.
- Construction may affect water wells, structures, and other utilities.
- About 61.2 acres of forest would be cleared.
- About 36 residences would be within 50 feet of the proposed construction work area.
- Additional compression would be constructed at Compressor Station 125 in Walton County, Georgia.

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 (including alternative locations/routes), 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:

- Send two copies of your letter to: Lois Cashell, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426;
- Reference Docket No. CP97-331-000; and
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before July 30, 1997.

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).

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

Lois D. Cashell,

Secretary.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-5853-5]

Clean Air Act Advisory Committee: Accident Prevention Subcommittee's RMP Implementation Workgroup; Series of Conference Call Meetings; July 1997–August 1998

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: Section 112(r) of the Clean Air Act (CAA) requires covered facilities to develop risk management programs to prevent accidental releases of dangerous chemicals. Facilities are to submit risk management plans (RMPs) to a central location by June 1999. The RMPs will be electronically available to State and local governments and citizens to help them understand local chemical hazards and take steps to prevent accidents.

The Accident Prevention Subcommittee of the CAA Advisory Committee was established in September 1996 to provide EPA with advice and counsel on scientific and technical aspects of CAA section 112(r). In October 1996, the Accident Prevention Subcommittee established the Electronic Submission Workgroup which submitted its final recommendations report on June 18, 1997. At its May 9th meeting, the Accident Prevention Subcommittee established a second workgroup, the RMP Implementation Workgroup, to ensure that all stakeholders have the tools they need to implement a risk management program under CAA section 112(r).

The RMP Implementation Workgroup will identify activities that must be undertaken and products that must be developed. Additionally, the Workgroup will make recommendations to EPA and the Accident Prevention Subcommittee about the best methods for carrying out these activities. The Workgroup will work with EPA to ensure that products are developed and issues are addressed within appropriate time frames.

At a minimum the Workgroup will address the following:

1. Implementation guidance
2. Audit protocol and guidance
3. General guidance for industry
4. Technical (i.e., offsite consequence analysis) guidance
5. RMP*Info, RMP*Submit
6. Training
7. General duty clause guidance
8. Model RMP guidances
9. Outreach & communications strategy
10. Guidance for LEPCs
 - A. Technical guidance
 - B. How to use RMP information
11. Risk communication guidance
12. Qualified third party review (e.g., ISO 14001)
13. Response planning (integrated contingency planning)

The Workgroup will include 30–35 members, with balanced membership from the following organizations: States, local government and LEPCs, industry, environmentalists, non-profits, EPA CEPPPO (HQ and Regions), other EPA offices, and other groups.

DATES: Pursuant to the Federal Advisory Committee Act, 5 U.S.C. App. 2, notice is hereby given that the RMP Implementation Workgroup will hold the following monthly, two-hour meetings (all Eastern time). All meetings are open to the public. The Workgroup will begin meeting on July 22, 1997 and will complete its work by December 1998.

- (1) July 22, 1997—1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- (2) August 20, 1997—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (2) September 17, 1997—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (3) October 15, 1997—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (4) November 19, 1997—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (5) December 17, 1997—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (6) January 21, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (7) February 18, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (8) March 18, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (9) April 15, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (10) May 20, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (11) June 17, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (12) July 15, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
- (13) August 19, 1998—2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.

ADDRESSES: All Workgroup meetings will be held at EPA Headquarters in Washington, DC. The July 22, 1997