

New Mexico Office for Space Commercialization, 505 South Main Street, Suite 134, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88001. Telephone: (505) 525-5668; or refer to the following Internet address: <http://ast.dot.gov>

ADDRESSES: Copies of the DEIS will be available for review in the following locations: 1. Albuquerque-Bernalillo County Public Library, 50 Copper Avenue NW, Albuquerque, NM 87102; 2. El Paso Community, Northwest Center, 6701 S. Desert Blvd., El Paso, TX 79835; 3. El Paso Public Library, 501 N. Oregon St., El Paso, TX 79910; 4. Los Alamos County Library System, 1742 Central Avenue, Los Alamos, NM 87544; 5. New Mexico State University Library, Serials Department, P.O. Box 3475, Las Cruces, NM 88003-3475; 6. Sandia National Laboratories, Department 3140, Technical Library, P.O. Box 5800, Albuquerque, NM 37185; 7. Santa Fe Public Library, 145 Washington Ave, Santa Fe, NM 87501; Thomas Branigan Memorial Library, 200 E. Picacho Avenue, Las Cruces, NM 88001; 8. Truth or Consequences Public Library, 325 Library Lane, Truth or Consequences, NM 87901; 9. University of New Mexico, General Library, Albuquerque, NM 87131.

Written comments on the Southwest Regional Spaceport DEIS should be mailed to: Docket Clerk, Docket No. [28970], Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue SW., Room 915, Washington, D.C. 20591.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Federal Aviation Administration's Office of the Associate Administrator for Commercial Space Transportation (FAA/AST), in cooperation with the State of New Mexico's Office of Space Commercialization (NMOSC) and Department of Economic Development, have prepared a joint Federal/State Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed commercial Southwest Regional Spaceport in southern New Mexico. The operator of the launch site will require a license from AST in accordance with 49 U.S.C. Subtitle IX, ch. 701, Commercial Space Launch Activities, 49 U.S.C. 70101-70119 (1994), formerly, the Commercial Space Launch Act of 1984, as amended.

An EIS is necessary for FAA/AST to make a licensing determination on the proposal to operate the SRS and comply with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.*

The proposed project will require a land exchange between The Bureau of Land Management and New Mexico State Land Office. For this to occur,

BLM must amend its resource management plan (RMP) to make the Federal lands at issue available to be exchanged. BLM regulations require that the public shall be provided with opportunities to meaningfully participate in and comment on proposed amendments to RMPs. BLM's determination to amend its RMP is a major Federal action subject to compliance with NEPA.

Project Description

The New Mexico Office of Space Commercialization (NMOSC) proposes to construct and establish a commercial launch site on approximately 250,000 acres located in Sierra and Doña Ana Counties between the cities of Truth Or Consequences and Las Cruces, New Mexico, as a key element of the State's efforts to bring regional assets together as a consortium to form the Southwest Space Complex. The site was selected by NMOSC because it is superior to other candidate sites with respect to population density, land use, ownership, accessibility, orbital insertion physics, access to airspace, and lack of obvious environmental constraints.

The purpose of the Southwest Regional Spaceport project is to provide launch, recovery, and associated support facilities to the developing commercial space industry. The State anticipates that this project would enhance space-related economic development within the State of New Mexico generally and throughout the southwest region of the United States, as well as increase the ability of the U.S. launch industry to recapture a share of the international satellite launch market. The Southwest Regional Spaceport is intended to support the launch and recovery of fully reusable space vehicles.

Development of the Southwest Regional Spaceport, and other elements of the Southwest Space Complex, will occur in phases over a number of years. The proposed action encompassed by the EIS includes the construction of launch and associated support facilities and the extension of roads and utilities necessary to parallel the phased development of reusable launch technology. NMOSC anticipates a completed Southwest Regional Spaceport early in the next century.

Major components of the proposed Southwest Regional Spaceport would include a central control facility for administrative functions; an airfield capable of handling aircraft and launch vehicles that land horizontally; a maintenance and integration facility for payload-processing and space vehicles;

a launch/landing complex with three launch/landing pads; a flight operations control center; and a cryogenic fuel plant to manufacture and store liquid hydrogen and liquid oxygen.

Alternatives to the proposed action include no action and development of minimal infrastructure. With the minimal infrastructure alternative, construction of the Southwest Regional Spaceport facilities would be kept to a low level that is capable of supporting initial commercial space launch operations of RLVs.

The FAA/AST intends to consult and coordinate with Federal, state and local agencies which have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to any environmental impacts associated with the proposed project. The FAA/AST is currently making the DEIS available to Federal and State agencies and the public to allow review and to solicit comments. To ensure that the full range of issues related to this proposed action are addressed and all significant issues are identified, comments and suggestions are invited from all interested parties. A final EIS will be prepared following the forty-five day (45) comment period and conduct of public meetings.

Issued in Washington, D.C. on July 18, 1997.

Patricia Grace Smith,

Acting Associate Administrator for Commercial Space Transportation.

[FR Doc. 97-19677 Filed 7-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-P

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee Meeting

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration, DOT.

ACTION: Notice of public meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a public meeting of the FAA's Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee to discuss rotorcraft issues.

DATES: The meeting will be held on August 12, 1997, from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30. Arrange for oral presentations by August 1, 1997.

ADDRESSES: The meeting will be held at the Helicopter Association International, 1635 Prince Street, Alexandria, Virginia 22314-2818.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: David Higginbotham, Office of Rulemaking, Aircraft & Airport Rules Division, ARM-200, 800 Independence

Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20591, telephone (202) 267-3498.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The referenced meeting is announced pursuant to Section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463; 5 U.S.C. App. II). The agenda will include status reports on the following:

1. Rotorcraft External Load Combination Safety Requirements.
2. Normal Category Gross Weight and Passenger Issues.
3. Performance and Handling Qualities Requirements.
4. Critical Parts.

Attendance is open to the public but will be limited to the space available. The public must make arrangements by August 1, 1997, to present oral statements at the meeting. Written statements may be presented to the committee at any time by providing 16 copies to the Assistant Chair or by providing the copies to him at the meeting. In addition, sign and oral interpretation, as well as a listening device, can be made available at the meeting if requested 10 calendar days before the meeting. Arrangements may be made by contacting the person listed under the heading **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT**.

Issued in Washington, DC, on July 21, 1997.

Jean Casciano,

Acting Executive Director, Aviation Rulemaking Advisory Committee.

[FR Doc. 97-19569 Filed 7-24-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Research and Special Programs Administration (RSPA), DOT

[Docket No. PS-142; Notice 6]

Candidates for the Pipeline Risk Management Demonstration Program

AGENCY: Office of Pipeline Safety, DOT.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Research and Special Programs Administration's (RSPA) Office of Pipeline Safety (OPS) has completed screening of three candidate companies for the Pipeline Risk Management Demonstration Program. They are Northwest Pipeline Corporation, Shell Pipe Line Corporation, and Tennessee Gas Pipeline Corporation/East Tennessee Natural Gas Company. OPS believes these companies' demonstration project proposals satisfy all eligibility and screening criteria, based on a Letter of

Intent submitted by each company to OPS, a subsequent OPS screening, and examination of each company's safety and environmental compliance record. OPS is now engaging in consultations with these companies to clarify and refine demonstration project provisions. Once OPS and a company reach agreement, OPS will approve the company's proposal and the demonstration project can get underway. OPS invites public comment on any aspect of these companies' proposals.

OPS may approve up to ten demonstration projects. OPS will screen additional candidate companies after the July 25, 1997, deadline for companies to submit Letters of Intent. Summaries of their Letters of Intent will be published in subsequent **Federal Register** notices.

DATES: OPS requests that comments to this notice be submitted on or before August 25, 1997 so that OPS can give the comments full consideration before deciding whether to approve a company's proposal. However, comments on any aspect of the Demonstration Program, including the individual projects, will be accepted in the Docket throughout the 4-year demonstration period.

ADDRESSES: Send comments in duplicate to the Dockets Unit, Room 8421, Research and Special Programs Administration, U.S. Department of Transportation, 400 Seventh Street, SW, Washington, DC 20590. Identify the docket and notice number stated in the heading of this notice. All comments and docketed material will be available for inspection and copying in room 8421 between 8:30 a.m. and 5 p.m. each business day.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Eben Wyman, (202) 366-0918 regarding the subject matter of this notice. Contact the Dockets Unit, (202) 366-5046, for docket material.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Appendix A of The Requests for Applications for the Pipeline Risk Management Demonstration Program (62 FR 14719), published on March 27, 1997, describes the processes by which OPS will receive, review, approve, monitor, modify, and terminate company risk management demonstration projects. Companies considering participating in a demonstration project must submit a Letter of Intent to OPS no later than July 25, 1997. Based on Letters of Intent and additional screening considerations, OPS will choose up to ten candidate

companies whose project proposals merit further consideration. OPS will enter into consultations with candidate companies to clarify and refine demonstration project provisions. OPS may approve up to ten demonstration projects. If OPS approves a project, OPS will issue an order and begin auditing project performance.

OPS expects the projects, and the Demonstration Program itself, to evolve from lessons learned during the four-year demonstration period. OPS hopes to learn whether and in what form risk management should be incorporated into the Federal pipeline safety program on a permanent basis.

OPS is requesting public input through all stages of the demonstration projects, beginning with receipt of the Letters of Intent. Specific benefits of public involvement in the Demonstration Program for OPS, industry, State and community representatives include:

- Exchange of information about specific and relevant local factors during the decision-making process that may not be known at the Federal or State level; and
- Feedback regarding the success of the Demonstration Program in accomplishing the goals for which it was designed.

OPS requests comments on safety, environmental, socioeconomic, land use, geographic and any other issues that relate to these demonstration project proposals. OPS will consider public input, as well as input from local, State, and other federal agencies, during its consultations with candidate companies to clarify and refine demonstration project provisions. OPS will publish the final provisions for each project and allow for additional public comment before issuing an order signifying project approval. OPS will continue to seek broadbased input on individual demonstration projects throughout the 4-year demonstration period. A Risk Management Communications Plan is being developed that will describe the mechanisms OPS intends to have in place for providing demonstration project status and accepting stakeholder input. This communications plan will be published in the **Federal Register**.

OPS has screened the following three candidates, and has determined that they meet the criteria for participating with OPS in consultations about their proposals: Northwest Pipeline Corporation, Shell Pipe Line Corporation, and Tennessee Gas Pipeline Corporation/East Tennessee Natural Gas Company. Each company is working to develop an external