

Copies of this application will be made available, upon request, for public inspection and copying at the address provided above. In addition, the application may be reviewed or downloaded from the Fossil Energy Home Page at: <http://www.fe.doe.gov>. Upon reaching the Fossil Energy Home page, select "Regulatory" and then "Electricity" from the options menu.

Issued in Washington, DC, on August 25, 1998.

Anthony J. Como,

Manager, Electric Power Regulation, Office of Coal & Power Im/Ex, Office of Fossil Energy.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

[FE Docket No. PP-192]

Application for Presidential Permit, NRG Energy, Inc.

AGENCY: Office of Fossil Energy, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of application.

SUMMARY: NRG Energy, Inc. (NRG) has applied for a Presidential permit to construct, connect, operate and maintain an electric transmission facility across the U.S. border with Mexico. The proposed facility is a 500,000-volt (500-kV) transmission line originating at the switchyard of the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station and extending approximately 177 miles to the southwest where it will cross the U.S. border with Mexico in the vicinity of Calixico, California.

DATES: Comments, protests, or requests to intervene must be submitted on or before October 1, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Comments, protests, or requests to intervene should be addressed as follows: Office of Coal & Power Import and Export (FE-27), Office of Fossil Energy, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20585-0350.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ellen Russell (Program Office) 202-586-9624 or Michael T. Skinker (Program Attorney) 202-586-6667.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The construction, connection, operation, and maintenance of facilities at the international border of the United States for the transmission of electric energy between the United States and a foreign country is prohibited in the absence of a Presidential permit issued pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 10485, as amended by EO 12038.

On August 17, 1998, NRG, an independent power producer and

wholly-owned subsidiary of Northern States Power Company, filed an application with the Office of Fossil Energy (FE) of the Department of Energy (DOE) for a Presidential permit. NRG proposes to construct approximately 177 miles of 500-kV transmission line from the switchyard adjacent to the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station, to the U.S.-Mexico border in the vicinity of Calixico, California. South of the border, NRG will construct an additional 2.5 miles of transmission line to the Cety's Substation, located east of Mexicali, Mexico, and owned by Comision Federal de Electricidad (CFE), the national electric utility of Mexico.

The transmission line proposed by NRG will be designed to carry 1000 megawatts (MW) and is expected initially to operate at that capacity. However, under certain conditions, the capacity will be restricted to 600 MW. All but 2.5 miles of the proposed transmission line is expected to be located within an existing utility corridor designated by the Bureau of Land Management. However, the applicant will need to obtain approximately 4,300 acres of additional right-of-way from public and private landowners.

The proposed route parallels the existing Southwest Powerlink 500-kV transmission line beginning at the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station Switchyard, 30 miles west of Phoenix, Arizona. The route continues southwest, crossing the Gila Bend Mountains approximately one mile north of the Signal Mountain Wilderness Area. The route will traverse the Muggins Mountains on the northern boundary of the Muggins Mountains Wilderness Area, and 8.2 miles of the Army's Yuma Proving Grounds. The line will cross the Colorado River from Arizona into California and proceed northwest, crossing the northeast corner of the Fort Yuma-Quechan Indian Reservation before turning southwest and paralleling the BLM designated utility corridor through the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area. The route continues west between the U.S.-Mexico border and the All-American Canal. At the Hemlock Canal, the route turns south, following the Hemlock Canal alignment for 2.5 miles to the border.

The NRG application notes that there are no firm contracts in place for the sale of power to Mexico using the proposed transmission line. Prior to commencing electricity exports to Mexico using these proposed facilities, NRG, or any other electricity exporter, must obtain an electricity export authorization required by section 202(e) of the Federal Power Act. NRG expects

to submit such an application at a later date.

Since the restructuring of the electric power industry began, resulting in the introduction of different types of competitive entities into the marketplace, DOE has consistently expressed its policy that cross-border trade in electric energy should be subject to the same principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination that apply to transmission in interstate commerce. DOE has stated that policy in export authorizations granted to entities requesting authority to export over international transmission facilities. Specifically, DOE expects transmitting utilities owning border facilities constructed pursuant to Presidential permits to provide access across the border in accordance with the principles of comparable open access and non-discrimination contained in the FPA and articulated in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Order No. 888, as amended (Promoting Wholesale Competition Through Open Access Non-Discriminatory Transmission Services by Public Utilities). In furtherance of this policy, DOE intends to condition any Presidential permit issued in this proceeding on compliance with these open access principles.

Procedural Matters

Any person desiring to be heard or to protest this application should file a petition to intervene or protest at the address provided above in accordance with section 385.211 or 385.214 of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211, 385.214).

Fifteen copies of such petitions and protests should be filed with the DOE on or before the date listed above. Additional copies of such petitions to intervene or protest also should be filed directly with: Robert S. Evans, Executive Director and Manager, Environmental Services, NRG Energy, Inc., 1221 Nicollet Mall, Suite 700, Minneapolis, MN 55403-2445.

Before a Presidential permit may be issued or amended, the DOE must determine that the proposed action will not adversely impact on the reliability of the U.S. electric power supply system. In addition, DOE must consider the environmental impacts of the proposed action (i.e., granting the Presidential permit, with any conditions and limitations, or denying the permit) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). DOE also must obtain the concurrence of the Secretary of State and the Secretary of

Defense before taking final action on a Presidential permit application.

The NEPA compliance process is a cooperative, non-adversarial process involving members of the public, state governments and the Federal government. The process affords all persons interested in or potentially affected by the environmental consequences of a proposed action an opportunity to present their views, which will be considered in the preparation of the environmental documentation for the proposed action. Intervening and becoming a party to this proceeding will not create any special status for the petitioner with regard to the NEPA process. Notice of upcoming NEPA activities and information on how the public can participate in those activities will appear in the **Federal Register**. Additional announcements will appear in local newspapers and public libraries and/or reading rooms in the vicinity of the proposed transmission line.

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Issued in Washington, D. C., on August 25, 1998.

Anthony J. Como,

Manager, Electric Power Regulation, Office of Coal & Power Im/Ex, Office of Fossil Energy.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP98-731-000]

ANR Pipeline Company; Notice of Application

August 26, 1998.

Take notice that on August 18, 1998, ANR Pipeline Company (ANR), 500 Renaissance Center, Detroit, Michigan 48243, filed in Docket No. CP98-731-000 an abbreviated application pursuant to Section 7(b) of the Natural Gas Act for authorization and approval to abandon

a gas exchange service with Shell Offshore Inc. (Shell), performed under Rate Schedule X-157 which was authorized in Docket No. CP85-393-000, all as more fully set forth in the application on file with the Commission and open to public inspections.

No facilities are proposed to be abandoned as a result of the Commission's approval of this application. This exchange agreement was signed July 31, 1984, and was designated as Rate Schedule X-157. The applicant's facilities will continue to be available for service on an open-access basis pursuant to Part 284 of the Commission's regulations. By a letter dated June 1, 1998, ANR notified Shell of its desire to terminate the Agreement under Rate Schedule X-157, effective as of the date of such letter and or such later date as the Commission may deem appropriate. The abandonment is being proposed because no volumes have been exchanged for at least 10 years, the Purchase Contract was jointly canceled in 1988, and the parties have mutually agreed to terminate this exchange service. No imbalances exist.

ANR states that authorization to abandon the service performed under ANR's Rate Schedule X-157 will not impair any of the service obligations to its remaining customers.

Any person desiring to be heard or to make any protest with reference to said application should on or before September 16, 1998, file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, a motion to intervene or a protest in accordance with the requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214 or 385.211) and the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.10). All protests filed with the Commission will be considered by it in determining the appropriate action to be taken but will not serve to make the protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party to a proceeding or to participate as a party in any hearing therein must file a motion to intervene in accordance with the Commission's Rules.

Take further notice that, pursuant to the authority contained in and subject to the jurisdiction conferred upon the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission by Sections 7 and 15 of the Natural Gas Act and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a hearing will

be held without further notice before the Commission or its designee on this application if no motion to intervene is filed within the time required herein, if the Commission on its own review of the matter finds that permission and approval for the proposed abandonment are required by the public convenience and necessity. If a motion for leave to intervene is timely filed, or if the Commission on its own motion believes that a formal hearing is required, further notice of such hearing will be duly given.

Under the procedure herein provided for, unless otherwise advised, it will be unnecessary for ANR to appear or be represented at the hearing.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-23413 Filed 8-31-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. RP95-408-000 (Phase II)]

Columbia Gas Transmission Corp.; Notice of Informal Settlement Conference

August 26, 1998.

Take notice that an informal settlement conference in this proceeding will be convened on Wednesday, September 2, 1998, at 1:00 p.m. The settlement conference will be held at the offices of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, for the purpose of exploring the possible settlement of the above referenced docket.

Any party, as defined by 18 CFR 385.102(c), or any participant as defined in 18 CFR 385.102(b), is invited to attend. Persons wishing to become a party must move to intervene and receive intervenor status pursuant to the Commission's regulations (18 CFR 385.214).

For additional information, contact Thomas J. Burgess at (202) 208-2058 or David R. Cain at (202) 208-0917.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

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