

briefing will be held in the Commission Meeting Room. Members of the public may view this briefing in the designated overflow room. This statement is intended to notify the public that the press briefings that follow Commission meetings may now be viewed remotely at Commission headquarters, but will not be telecast through the Capitol Connection service.

[FR Doc. 2016-22686 Filed 9-16-16; 11:15 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 14798-000]

Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency; Notice of Preliminary Permit Application Accepted for Filing and Soliciting Comments, Motions To Intervene, and Competing Applications

On August 15, 2016, Western Minnesota Municipal Power Agency filed an application for a preliminary permit, pursuant to section 4(f) of the Federal Power Act (FPA), proposing to study the feasibility of the Coon Rapids Hydroelectric Project (Coon Rapids Project or project) located on the Mississippi River at River Mile 866.2, about 11.5 miles north of downtown Minneapolis, Minnesota. The sole purpose of a preliminary permit, if issued, is to grant the permit holder priority to file a license application during the permit term. A preliminary permit does not authorize the permit holder to perform any land-disturbing activities or otherwise enter upon lands or waters owned by others without the owners' express permission.

The proposed project would consist of the following facilities: (1) An existing reservoir with a surface area of 600 square miles at normal pool elevation of 830.1 National Geodetic Vertical Datum with no storage capacity; (2) the existing 1,455-foot-long, 30.8-foot-high Coon Rapids Dam with nine intermediate piers and ten spans with crest gates; (3) an array of micro-turbines placed in front of two cast in place powerhouses; (4) a 97-foot-long, 18-foot-wide, 19-foot-high reinforced concrete powerhouse located immediately downstream of the span 9 spillway section and a 103-foot-long, 18-foot-wide, 19-foot-high reinforced concrete powerhouse located immediately downstream of the span 10 spillway section with each powerhouse divided in half resulting in four bays in which the micro-turbines would be installed; (5) two crane rails spanning the length of each powerhouse to

remove the micro-turbine units for maintenance and lower them in place for generation; (6) a tailrace made of steel draft tubes discharging directly into the Mississippi River; (7) a third powerhouse 60-foot-wide by 80-foot-long containing the controls for the dam's crest gates and necessary electrical and mechanical equipment to support the micro-turbines; (8) a 550-foot-long, 13.8 kilo-volt underground transmission line connecting to an Xcel Energy substation; and (9) appurtenant facilities. The estimated annual generation of the proposed Coon Rapids Project would be 62,790 megawatt-hours.

Applicant Contact: Raymond J. Wahle, P.E., Missouri River Energy Services, 3724 W. Avera Drive, P.O. Box 88920, Sioux Falls, SD 57109; phone: (605) 330-6963; fax: (605) 978-3960; email: rwahle@mrenergy.com.

FERC Contact: Sergiu Serban; phone: (202) 502-6211; email: sergiu.serban@ferc.gov.

Deadline for filing comments, motions to intervene, competing applications (without notices of intent), or notices of intent to file competing applications: 60 days from the issuance of this notice. Competing applications and notices of intent must meet the requirements of 18 CFR 4.36.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing. Please file comments, motions to intervene, notices of intent, and competing applications using the Commission's eFiling system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp>. Commenters can submit brief comments up to 6,000 characters, without prior registration, using the eComment system at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp>. You must include your name and contact information at the end of your comments. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov, (866) 208-3676 (toll free), or (202) 502-8659 (TTY). In lieu of electronic filing, please send a paper copy to: Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426. The first page of any filing should include docket number P-14798-000.

More information about this project, including a copy of the application, can be viewed or printed on the "eLibrary" link of Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp>. Enter the docket number (P-14798) in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support.

Dated: September 12, 2016.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2016-22603 Filed 9-19-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP16-357-000; Docket No. CP16-361-000]

Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC, Columbia Gulf Transmission, LLC; Notice of Schedule for Environmental Review of the Mountaineer XPress Project and the Gulf XPress Project

On April 29, 2016, Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC (Columbia Gas) and Columbia Gulf Transmission, LLC (Columbia Gulf) filed applications in Docket Nos. CP16-357-000 and CP16-361-000, respectively, requesting Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity pursuant to Sections 7(b) and 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act to construct, operate, and maintain certain natural gas pipeline facilities. Columbia Gas' proposed Mountaineer XPress Project in West Virginia would transport up to 2,700,000 dekatherms per day (Dth/d) of natural gas from receipt points in West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania, to markets on the Columbia Pipeline Group system. Columbia Gulf's proposed Gulf XPress Project in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Mississippi would expand the capacity of Columbia Gulf's existing system to allow for an additional 860,000 Dth/d of natural gas delivery to high-demand markets in the Gulf Coast region. Because these are interrelated projects, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) deemed it was appropriate to analyze them in a single environmental impact statement (EIS).

FERC issued respective Notices of Application for the Mountaineer XPress and Gulf XPress Projects on May 13, 2016. Among other things, those notices alerted other agencies issuing federal authorizations of the requirement to complete all necessary reviews and to reach a final decision on the request for a federal authorization within 90 days of the date of issuance of the Commission staff's final EIS for the two projects. This instant notice identifies the FERC staff's planned schedule for completion of the final EIS for the projects, which is based on an issuance of the draft EIS in November 2016.

Schedule for Environmental Review

Issuance of Notice of Availability of the final EIS—April 28, 2017
90-day Federal Authorization Decision Deadline—July 27, 2017

If a schedule change becomes necessary for the final EIS, an additional notice will be provided so that the relevant agencies are kept informed of the projects' progress.

Project Description

The Mountaineer XPress Project consists of new pipeline and compression facilities, all in the state of West Virginia. The major proposed facilities include 163.9 miles of new 36-inch-diameter pipeline in Marshall and Cabell Counties; 5.8 miles of new 24-inch-diameter pipeline in Doddridge County; 0.4 mile of replacement 30-inch-diameter pipeline on segments of Columbia Gas' SM80 and SM80 loop pipelines in Cabell County; three new compressor stations (totaling 106,300 horsepower) in Doddridge, Calhoun, and Jackson Counties; two new regulating stations in Ripley and Cabell Counties; and added compression at three existing compressor stations in Marshall, Wayne, and Kanawha Counties.

The Gulf XPress Project consists of construction and operation of seven new compressor stations, and upgrades at one existing meter station and one pending compressor station (under Docket No. CP15-539) on Columbia Gulf's existing system, spread across Kentucky (Carter, Boyd, Rowan, Garrard, and Metcalfe Counties), Tennessee (Davidson and Wayne Counties), and Mississippi (Union and Grenada Counties).

Background

On September 16, 2015, the Commission staff granted Columbia Gas' request to use the FERC's Pre-filing environmental review process and assigned the Mountaineer XPress Project temporary Docket No. PF15-31-000. On November 18, 2015, the Commission issued a *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Planned Mountaineer XPress Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Notice of*

Public Scoping Meetings. The Gulf XPress Project did not utilize the FERC's Pre-filing environmental process, and on June 2, 2016, the Commission issued a *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Gulf XPress Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting*.

The Notices of Intent were sent to our environmental mailing list that include federal, state, and local government agencies; elected officials; affected landowners; regional environmental groups and nongovernmental organizations; Native Americans and Indian tribes; local libraries and newspapers; and other interested parties. Major environmental issues raised during scoping included karst terrain; impacts on groundwater and surface waterbodies; impacts on forests; impacts on special status species; impacts on property values and the use of eminent domain; impacts on the local economy; impacts on historic properties and districts; visual impacts from compressor stations; impacts on land use; impacts on air quality and noise from construction and operation of pipeline facilities; and public health and safety.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; U.S. Environmental Protection Agency; West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection; and West Virginia Division of Natural Resources are cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EIS.

Additional Information

In order to receive notification of the issuance of the EIS and to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription (<http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp>). Additional data about the projects can be obtained electronically through the Commission's Internet Web site (www.ferc.gov). Under "Dockets & Filings," use the "eLibrary" link, select "General Search" from the menu, enter the docket numbers excluding the last three digits (*i.e.*, CP16-357 or CP16-361), and the search dates. Questions about the projects can be directed to the Commission's Office of External Affairs at (866) 208-FERC.

Dated: September 14, 2016.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2016-22604 Filed 9-19-16; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Docket No. CD16-21-000]

Mary Ann Gaston; Notice of Preliminary Determination of a Qualifying Conduit Hydropower Facility and Soliciting Comments and Motions To Intervene

On September 1, 2016, as supplemented on September 13, 2016, Mary Ann Gaston filed a notice of intent to construct a qualifying conduit hydropower facility, pursuant to section 30 of the Federal Power Act (FPA), as amended by section 4 of the Hydropower Regulatory Efficiency Act of 2013 (HREA). The proposed Gaston Hydro Facility would have an installed capacity of 4 kilowatts (kW), and would be located near the end of an existing irrigation pipeline on the applicant's land. The project would be located near the Town of Norwood in San Miguel County, Colorado.

Applicant Contact: Mary Ann Gaston, 1280 CR44ZN, Norwood, CO 81423
Phone No. (970) 327-0333.

FERC Contact: Christopher Chaney, Phone No. (202) 502-6778, email: Christopher.Chaney@ferc.gov.

Qualifying Conduit Hydropower Facility Description: The proposed project would consist of: (1) A barrel housing containing one 4-jet Turgo turbine/generating unit with an installed capacity of 4 kW; (2) 4 short, 2-inch-diameter intake manifold pipes; (3) one 8-inch-diameter tailrace pipe discharging water to an existing irrigation pond; and (4) appurtenant facilities. The proposed project would have an estimated annual generating capacity of 6,382 kilowatt-hours.

A qualifying conduit hydropower facility is one that is determined or deemed to meet all of the criteria shown in the table below.

TABLE 1—CRITERIA FOR QUALIFYING CONDUIT HYDROPOWER FACILITY

Statutory provision	Description	Satisfies (Y/N)
FPA 30(a)(3)(A), as amended by HREA ..	The conduit the facility uses is a tunnel, canal, pipeline, aqueduct, flume, ditch, or similar manmade water conveyance that is operated for the distribution of water for agricultural, municipal, or industrial consumption and not primarily for the generation of electricity.	Y