

Therapy (BNCT), structural biology, analytical chemistry, and genome instrumentation.

Organizations with existing Centers of Excellence for Laser Applications in Medicine grants must submit with their renewal application the required Progress Report, which should include a section describing research accomplishments that have been carried over into clinical research and practice.

It is anticipated that up to \$1,500,000 are expected to be available for grant awards in FY 1998, contingent upon availability of appropriated funds. The actual magnitude of the funds available and the number of awards which can be made will however depend on the budget process. It is anticipated that up to four awards of up to \$600,000 each annually for a three year period will be made, with out-year support contingent on availability of funds, progress of the research, and programmatic needs.

Potential applicants are encouraged to submit a brief preapplication describing the proposed Center and its major activities. The intent in asking for a preapplication is to save the time and effort of applicants in preparing and submitting a formal project application that may be inappropriate for the program. The preapplication should consist of a three-to-five-page concept paper on the program contemplated for an application to the Centers of Excellence for Laser Applications in Medicine program. The concept paper should focus on the scientific objectives and significance of the proposed research, including an outline of the approaches planned, should briefly describe the organization of the proposed center and its setting, and should provide information relating to other aspects of the planned program, including collaborations with the DOE National Laboratories and other research organizations. The preapplication gives an opportunity to advise potential applicants on the suitability of their concept and research program to the mission of the Centers of Excellence program. A response to timely preapplications indicating the appropriateness of submitting a formal application will be communicated by June 20, 1997. Please note that notification of a successful preapplication is not an indication that an award will be made in response to the formal application. ER's preapplication policy for submitting preapplications can be found on ER's Grants and Contracts Web Site at: <http://www.er.doe.gov/production/grants/preapp.html>.

Applications will be subjected to formal merit review (peer review) and

will be evaluated against the following evaluation criteria listed in descending order of importance codified at 10 CFR 605.10(d):

1. Scientific and/or Technical Merit of the Project;
2. Appropriateness of the Proposed Method or Approach;
3. Competency of Applicant's personnel and Adequacy of Proposed Resources;
4. Reasonableness and Appropriateness of the Proposed Budget.

The evaluation will include program policy factors such as the relevance of the proposed research to the terms of the announcement and an agency's programmatic needs. Note, external peer reviewers are selected with regard to both their scientific expertise and the absence of conflict-of-interest issues. Non-federal reviewers will often be used, and submission of an application constitutes agreement that this is acceptable to the investigator(s) and the submitting institution.

Applicants are expected to use the following format in addition to following instructions in the Office of Energy Research Application Guide.

- ER standard face page (DOE F4650.2)
- Table of Contents
- Project abstract (no more than one page)
- Budgets for each year of the three-year project period (using DOE F 4620.1)
- Written explanation of the budget items
- Budgets and budget explanations for each collaborative subproject, if any
- Project narrative (recommended length is no more than 40 pages):
  - Goals
  - Research plan for each major component of the research program
  - Preliminary studies (if applicable)
  - Research design and methodologies
  - Plans for training
  - Plans for dissemination of new concepts and techniques
- Literature cited
- Description of existing facilities for research into laser applications in medicine (up to five pages)
- Description of hospital setting and medical school ties for the proposed Center, including support proposed to be offered to the Center's program by these units (up to five pages)
- Collaborative arrangements (if applicable)
- Biographical sketches (limited to 2 pages for each senior investigator)
- Current and pending funding for each senior investigator
- All required information for any activities involving human subjects (see ER Application Guide)

- All required information for any activities involving vertebrate animals (see ER Application Guide)

Information about development and submission of applications, eligibility, evaluations and selection processes, and other policies and procedures may be found in 10 CFR part 605 and the Office of Energy Research Application Guide for the Financial Assistance Program. Access to ER's Financial Assistance Application Guide is possible via the World Wide Web at: <http://www.er.doe.gov/production/grants/grants.html>. Printed copies of the Guide are available from the Medical Applications and Biophysical Research Division for potential applicants who are unable to access the Web version.

The Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance number for this program is 81.049, and the solicitation control number is ERFAP 10 CFR Part 605.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 24, 1997.

**John Rodney Clark,**

*Associate Director for Resource Management, Office of Energy Research.*

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BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

## Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP97-262-000]

### Ashland Exploration, Inc.; Notice of Application

March 24, 1997.

Take notice that on March 21, 1997, Ashland Exploration, Inc. (Ashland), 14701 Saint Mary's Lane, Houston, Texas 77079, completed the filing of an application for abandonment pursuant to Section 7(b) of the Natural Gas Act initially submitted on February 24, 1997. Ashland requests authorization to abandon, by sale, its jurisdictional facilities in the Martha Field to Meridian Exploration Corp. and Abarta Oil & Gas Company, Inc., all as more fully set forth in the application which is on file with the Commission and open to the public for inspection.

The facilities to be abandoned consist of approximately 29.6 miles of 6-inch and 8-inch diameter pipeline extending from the outlet of Ashland's gas processing plant in Lawrence County, Kentucky to the point where those facilities intersect with the facilities of Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company near Burnaugh, Kentucky, and three associated field taps.

Any persons desiring to be heard or to make any protest with reference to said application should, on or before

April 14, 1997, 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 and 18 CFR 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 the 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 the request should be granted. 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 Ashland to appear or be represented at the hearing.

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-7849 Filed 3-27-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. CP97-263-000]

### **Ashland Exploration, Inc.; Notice of Application**

March 24, 1997.

Take notice that on March 21, 1997, Ashland Exploration, Inc. (Ashland), 14701 Saint Mary's Lane, Houston, Texas 77079, completed the filing of an abbreviated application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity pursuant to section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act initially submitted on February 24, 1997. Ashland requests authorization to modify its remaining Martha Field pipeline facilities to accept the interconnection of a tap with the facilities to be constructed by Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company (Tennessee) and to install and operate compression

associated with the Tennessee tap. Ashland also requests modification of its current certificate authority to deliver gas from Kentucky to West Virginia for sale to Mountaineer Gas Company to permit it to deliver gas to any buyer, all as more fully set forth in the application which is on file with the Commission and open to the public for inspection.

The remaining Martha Field pipeline facilities consist of approximately 6.9 miles of pipeline in the State of Kentucky which terminates in the State of West Virginia, approximately 6,000 feet from Ashland's Catlettsburg, Kentucky refinery.

Any persons desiring to be heard or to make any protest with reference to said application should, on or before April 14, 1997, 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 and 18 CFR 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 the 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 the request should be granted. 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 Ashland to appear or be represented at the hearing.

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-7850 Filed 3-27-97; 8:45 am]

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[Docket Nos. CP96-213-000, -001, and -004, and CP96-559-000]

### **Columbia Gas Transmission Corp. and Texas Eastern Transmission Corp.; Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Market Expansion Project**

March 24, 1997.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) on the natural gas pipeline facilities proposed by Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (Columbia) and Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation (Texas Eastern) in the above-referenced dockets.

The EA was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. The staff concludes that approval of the proposed project, with appropriate mitigating measures, would not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

The EA assesses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the proposed natural gas transmission pipelines, compression, storage field pipeline and well head facilities, and points of delivery and measurement facilities in Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. The activities and facilities proposed by Columbia include:

- construct 50 miles of new, loop, and replacement pipeline and uprate the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of about 282 miles of pipeline;
- construct, relocate, and/or uprate about 32,209 horsepower (hp) of compression at 12 existing compressor stations, construct 20,975 total hp at two new compressor stations, and abandon about 8,280 hp of compression at five existing compressor stations;
- increase the performance capability of 13 existing storage fields, including construction of 36 new wells, construction of about 23 miles of 4- to 24-inch-diameter storage field pipeline, abandonment of about 7 miles of 2- to 10-inch-diameter storage field pipeline, and "well enhancement" work at about 277 existing storage wells; and
- upgrade or replace facilities at 12 existing meter stations and construct 2 new meter stations.

The activities and facilities proposed by Texas Eastern include:

- replace about 26 miles of idled 20- and 24-inch-diameter pipeline in three sections;
- upgrade two existing compressor stations by a total of 6,000 hp and