

respectively; and public comments in arriving at its decision. In deciding among the three alternative locations at the Paducah site for the conversion facility, DOE considered environmental factors, site preparation requirements affecting construction, availability of utilities, proximity to cylinder storage areas, and potential impacts to current or planned site operations. DOE has determined that Location A is the best alternative. DOE believes that the decision identified below best meets its programmatic goals and is consistent with all the regulatory requirements and public laws.

II. Decision

DOE has decided to implement the actions described in the preferred alternative from the FEIS at Location A. This decision includes the following actions:

- DOE will construct and operate the conversion facility at Location A within the Paducah site. Construction will commence on or before July 31, 2004, as intended by Congress in Public Law 107-206.
- All shipments to and from the conversion site, including any potential shipments of non-DUF₆ cylinders currently stored at ETTP to Paducah, will be conducted by either truck or rail, as appropriate. Cylinders will be shipped in a manner that is consistent with DOT regulations for the transportation of UF₆ cylinders.
- Current cylinder management activities (handling, inspection, monitoring, and maintenance) will continue, consistent with the Cylinder Project Management Plan for Depleted Uranium Hexafluoride, effective October 2003, which cover actions needed to meet safety and environmental requirements, until conversion could be accomplished.
- The aqueous HF produced during conversion will be sold for use, pending approval of authorized release limits as appropriate. If necessary, CaF₂ will be produced and reused, pending approval of authorized release limits, or disposed of as appropriate.
- The depleted U₃O₈ conversion product will be reused to the extent possible or packaged for disposal in emptied cylinders at an appropriate disposal facility. DOE plans to decide the specific disposal location(s) for the depleted U₃O₈ conversion product after additional appropriate NEPA review. Accordingly, DOE will continue to evaluate its disposal options and will consider any further information or comments relevant to that decision. DOE will give a minimum 45-day notice before making the specific disposal

decision and will provide any supplemental NEPA analysis for public review and comment.

III. Mitigation

On the basis of the analyses conducted for the FEIS, the DOE will adopt all practicable measures, which are described below, to avoid or minimize adverse environmental impacts that may result from constructing and operating a conversion facility at Location A. These measures are either explicitly part of the alternative or are already performed as part of routine operations.

- The conversion facility will be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with the comprehensive set of DOE requirements and applicable regulatory requirements that have been established to protect public health and the environment. These requirements encompass a wide variety of areas, including radiation protection, facility design criteria, fire protection, emergency preparedness and response, and operational safety requirements.
- Temporary impacts on air quality from fugitive dust emissions during reconstruction of cylinder yards or construction of any new facility will be controlled by the best available practices, as necessary, to comply with the established standards for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}.
- During construction, impacts to water quality and soil will be minimized through implementing storm water management, sediment and erosion controls, and good construction practices consistent with the Soil, Erosion, and Sediment Control Plan and Construction Management Plan.
- If live trees with exfoliating bark are encountered on construction areas, they will be saved if possible to avoid destroying potential habitat for the Indiana bat.

Issued in Washington, DC this 20th day of July 2004.

Paul M. Golan,

Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for Environmental Management.

[FR Doc. 04-17050 Filed 7-26-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP04-368-000]

El Paso Natural Gas Company; Notice of Request for Authorization

July 2, 2004.

Take notice that on June 25, 2004, El Paso Natural Gas Company (El Paso), P.O. Box 1087, Colorado Springs, Colorado 80904, filed in Docket No. CP04-368-000, a request pursuant to section 157.216(b) and 157.208(b) of the Commission's Regulations (18 CFR 157.214) to abandon, by removal, its 7.1 mile 10¾ inch diameter Nevada Loop Line (Line No. 2112), and replace two segments of its 16 inch diameter Nevada Loop Line (Line No. 2121), totaling 17.2 miles, located in Mohave County, Arizona, all as more fully set forth in the application on file with the Commission and open for public review.

Any questions regarding this application should be directed to Robert T. Tomlinson, Director, Regulatory Affairs, El Paso Natural Gas Company, P.O. Box 1087, Colorado Springs, Colorado, 80944, at (719) 520-3788.

This filing is available for review at the Commission or may be viewed on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call toll-free at (866) 208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. Protests, comments and interventions may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper; see, 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site under the "e-Filing" link. The Commission strongly encourages interveners to file electronically.

Any person or the Commission's staff may, within 45 days after issuance of the instant notice by the Commission, file pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Procedural Rules (18 CFR 385.214) a motion to intervene or notice of intervention and pursuant to section 157.205 of the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205) a protest to the request. If no protest is filed within the time allowed therefore, the proposed activity shall be deemed to be authorized effective the day after the time allowed for filing a protest. If a protest is filed and not withdrawn within 30 days after the time allowed for filing a protest, the instant request

shall be treated as an application for authorization pursuant to section 7 of the Natural Gas Act.

Comment Date: July 23, 2004.

Magalie R. Salas,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. E4-1654 Filed 7-26-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 1979]

Wisconsin Public Service Corporation; Notice of Authorization for Continued Project Operation

July 2, 2004.

On June 21, 2002, Wisconsin Public Service Corporation, licensee for the Alexander Project No. 1979, filed an application for a new or subsequent license pursuant to the Federal Power Act (FPA) and the Commission's regulations. Project No. 1979 is located on the Wisconsin River in Lincoln County, Wisconsin.

The license for Project No. 1979 was issued for a period ending June 30, 2004. Section 15(a)(1) of the FPA, 16 U.S.C. 808(a)(1), requires the Commission, at the expiration of a license term, to issue from year to year an annual license to the then licensee under the terms and conditions of the prior license until a new license is issued, or the project is otherwise disposed of as provided in section 15 or any other applicable section of the FPA. If the project's prior license waived the applicability of section 15 of the FPA, then, based on section 9(b) of the Administrative Procedure Act, 5 U.S.C. 558(c), and as set forth at 18 CFR 16.21(a), if the licensee of such project has filed an application for a subsequent license, the licensee may continue to operate the project in accordance with the terms and conditions of the license after the minor or minor part license expires, until the Commission acts on its application. If the licensee of such a project has not filed an application for a subsequent license, then it may be required, pursuant to 18 CFR 16.21(b), to continue project operations until the Commission issues someone else a license for the project or otherwise orders disposition of the project.

If the project is subject to section 15 of the FPA, notice is hereby given that an annual license for Project No. 1979 is issued to Wisconsin Public Service Corporation for a period effective July 1, 2004, through June 30, 2005, or until the

issuance of a new license for the project or other disposition under the FPA, whichever comes first. If issuance of a new license (or other disposition) does not take place on or before July 1, 2005, notice is hereby given that, pursuant to 18 CFR 16.18(c), an annual license under section 15(a)(1) of the FPA is renewed automatically without further order or notice by the Commission, unless the Commission orders otherwise.

If the project is not subject to section 15 of the FPA, notice is hereby given that Wisconsin Public Service Corporation is authorized to continue operation of the Alexander Project No. 1979 until such time as the Commission acts on its application for subsequent license.

Magalie R. Salas,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. E4-1657 Filed 7-26-04; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket Nos. CP04-349-000 and CP04-356-000]

Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Columbia Pavonia Storage Wells 8901 and 12446 Project and the Pavonia Storage Wells 3731 and 12447 Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

July 2, 2004.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation's (Columbia) Pavonia Storage Wells 8901 and 12446 Project and Wells 3731 and 12447 Project in Ashland County, Ohio. For the facilities in Docket No. CP04-349-000, Columbia would plug and abandon Well 8901 by replacement because corrosion threatens the integrity of the well. A new storage well would be drilled and designated as Well 12446. For the facilities in Docket No. CP04-356-000, Columbia would plug and abandon Well 3731 by replacement because the well has developed excessive water production and cannot be economically repaired. The new storage well would be designated as Well 12447. Columbia would also abandon by removal the associated interconnecting pipeline and

related facilities for the old wells and construct new interconnecting pipeline and appurtenances associated with the new wells. 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.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, you may be contacted by a pipeline company representative about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities. The company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the project is approved by the Commission, that approval conveys with it the right of eminent domain. Therefore, if easement negotiations fail to produce an agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings in accordance with state law.

A fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" was attached to the project notice Columbia provided to landowners. This fact sheet addresses a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the Commission's proceedings. It is available for viewing on the FERC Internet Web site (www.ferc.gov).

Summary of the Proposed Project

In Docket No. CP04-349-000

Columbia proposes to:

- Plug and abandon Well 8901;
- Abandon by removal all equipment on well line SL-W8901. This would include about 23 feet of 4-inch diameter pipeline, 18 feet of 3-inch-diameter pipeline, 90 feet of 6-inch-diameter pipeline, a 35-barrel steel holding tank, a 16-inch vertical drip, a 4-inch tie-in valve setting, and the existing 4-inch tie-in valve setting for Line SL-W9623;
- Drill new storage Well 12446;
- Construct 75 feet of 6-inch-diameter well line designated as SL-W12446 and 90 feet of 4-inch-diameter well line designated as SL-W9623; and
- Construct a 6-inch orifice meter run, a 6-inch tie-in valve setting, and a 4-inch tie-in valve setting.

In Docket No. CP04-356-000

Columbia proposes to:

- Plug and abandon Well 3731;
- Abandon by removal all equipment on well line SL-W3731. This would include about 20 feet of 3-inch-diameter pipeline, 20 feet of 4-inch-diameter pipeline, and a drip;
- Drill new storage Well 12447;
- Construct 165 feet of 4-inch-diameter pipeline designated as Well Line SL-W12447;