

protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party must file a motion to intervene. Copies of this filing are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection.

Lois D. Cashell,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-4118 Filed 2-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

[Docket No. CP95-194-001 and Docket No. CP96-027-000]

Northern Border Pipeline Company and Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America; Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Northern Border Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings

February 16, 1996.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the construction and operation of the facilities proposed in the Northern Border Project.¹ These facilities total 500.7 miles of pipeline, 304,750 horsepower of compression, meter stations, and other appurtenant facilities. This EIS will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether to approve the project.

We are asking a number of Federal agencies to indicate whether they wish to cooperate with us in the preparation of the EIS. These agencies are listed in appendix 1 and may choose to participate once they have evaluated each proposal relative to their agencies' responsibilities.²

Summary of the Proposed Project

Northern Border Pipeline Company (Northern Border) wants to expand the capacity of its existing facilities in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa, and extend its system into Illinois, to transport up to an additional 1,226.3 million cubic feet per day (MMcf/d) of natural gas to two interstate pipeline companies and five

¹ Northern Border Pipeline Company's and Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America's applications were filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

² The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the Federal Register. Copies are available from the Commission's Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch, 888 First Street, NE, Room 2A, Washington, DC 20426 or call (202) 208-1371. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

local distribution companies. Northern Border requests Commission authorization, in Docket No. CP95-194-001, to construct and operate the following facilities needed to transport those volumes:

- 181.5 miles of 42- and 36-inch-diameter pipeline loop and appurtenant facilities in three segments in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa;³
- 243.1 miles of new 36- and 30-inch-diameter pipeline extension and appurtenant facilities in Iowa and Illinois;
- eight new compressor stations with a total of 213,000 horsepower (hp) of compression in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota, and Iowa;
- modifications at four existing compressor stations with a total of 80,000 hp of additional compression, and modifications at three existing compressor stations with no additional horsepower in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Minnesota; and
- nine new meter stations, modifications at one existing meter station, five new pig launcher/receivers, and two new side valves in Iowa and Illinois.

Northern Border also proposes to acquire land as sites for four future compressor stations in Iowa and Illinois. Northern Border has also indicated that new communication towers may be required for remote operation of some facilities, but has not identified potential sites for these towers.

Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America (Natural) wants to expand the capacity of its existing facilities in Iowa and Illinois to transport up to an additional 345 MMcf/d of natural gas to one interstate pipeline company and four local distribution companies. Natural requests Commission authorization, in Docket No. CP96-027-000, to construct and operate the following facilities needed to transport those volumes:

- 76.1 miles of 36-inch-diameter loop in two segments in Iowa and Illinois; and
- modifications at two existing compressor stations with a total of 11,750 hp of additional compression in Iowa and Illinois.

The general locations of the project facilities are shown in appendix 2. If you are interested in obtaining detailed maps of a specific portion of the project contact Laura Turner at the address below. A detailed listing of the facilities is in appendix 3.

³ A loop is a segment of pipeline that is usually installed adjacent to an existing pipeline and connected to it at both ends. The loop allows more gas to be moved through the pipeline system.

Land Requirements for Construction Pipelines

The proposed loops would be built adjacent to Northern Border's and Natural's existing pipelines, using as much of the existing rights-of-way as possible. Approximately 77 percent of Natural's proposed loops would be installed in a previously used pipeline trench within Natural's existing right-of-way.⁴ Northern Border's proposed pipeline extension in Iowa and Illinois would be built on entirely new pipeline right-of-way, with approximately 25 percent of its route adjacent to or within other existing rights-of-way.

Northern Border and Natural would use rights-of-way ranging in width from 75 to 100 feet for standard pipeline construction. Additional temporary work space would generally be used where the pipelines would cross roads, railroads, streams, and rivers. An estimated 6,080 acres would be disturbed during pipeline construction. After construction, the disturbed area would be restored, and a permanent right-of-way (0 to 50 feet wide) in addition to existing rights-of-way would be maintained. Existing land uses on the remainder of the disturbed area, as well as most land uses on the permanent rights-of-way, such as agriculture and open areas, would be allowed to continue following construction.

Aboveground Facilities

Construction of new compressor stations would require up to approximately 20 acres each beyond the pipeline right-of-way. Modifications to existing compressor stations would require from 0 to 10 acres each within existing station boundaries.

Construction of new meter stations and launcher/receivers and the modification of an existing meter station would require from 1 to 3 acres each. Construction of new side valves would require up to 0.3 acre each within the pipeline right-of-way.

The EIS Process/Environmental Issues

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. The EIS we are preparing will give the Commission the information to do that. NEPA also requires us to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. We call this "scoping". The main goal of the

⁴ The old pipeline has been removed from the trench.

scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EIS on the important environmental issues. By this Notice of Intent, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues it will address in the EIS. All comments received are considered during the preparation of the EIS. We encourage State and local government representatives to notify their constituents of this proposed action and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

The EIS will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed project. We have already identified a number of issues under each topic that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by the applicants. These issues are listed below. Keep in mind that this is a preliminary list. The list of issues may be added to, subtracted from, or changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Geology and Soils.
- Seismology and soil liquefaction.
- Prime farmland soils.
- Erosion control.
- Topsoil/subsoil mixing.
- Soil compaction.
- Drain tiles and ditches.
- Revegetation of non-agricultural areas.
 - Water Resources.
- 204 crossings of waterbodies, canals, and drainages.
- 16 crossings of waterbodies and canals 100 feet wide or greater, including: the Iowa, Cedar, Mississippi, Rock, Green, Fox, DuPage, and Des Plaines Rivers; Spring, Mud, Coal, and a tributary to Oat Creeks; and the Illinois and Michigan, and Hennepin Canals.
- Effect on groundwater and surface water supplies.
 - Biological Resources.

- Effect on wildlife and fisheries habitat.
- Effect on federally listed endangered and threatened species, including Indiana bat, bald eagle, Higgin's eye pearly mussel, eastern prairie fringed orchid, and western prairie fringed orchid.
- Effect on wetland habitat.
 - Cultural Resources.
- Effect on historic and prehistoric sites.
- Native American and tribal concerns.
 - Socioeconomics
- Effect of construction workforce on surrounding areas.
- Impact on property values.
 - Land Use.
- Effect on farming.
- Effect on residences and recreation areas.
- Effect on public lands, including areas owned or managed by the Bureau of Land Management; Luke's Wetland, the Maynes Grove Conservation Area, the Comet Trail, Blanchard Island, the Hennepin Canal Parkway State Park, and the Illinois and Michigan Canal State Park.
- Effect of above ground facilities on visual aesthetics.
 - Air Quality and Noise.
- Effect on local air quality and noise environment as a result of construction.
- Effect on local and regional air quality and local noise environment and as a result of operation of new and additional compression.
 - Reliability and Safety.
- Assessment of hazards associated with natural gas pipelines.

We will also evaluate possible alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be presented in a Draft EIS

which will be mailed to Federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, interested individuals, affected landowners, newspapers, libraries, and the Commission's official service list for these proceedings. A 45-day comment period will be allotted for review of the Draft EIS. We will consider all comments on the Draft EIS and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a Final EIS. The Final EIS will include our response to each comment received.

Public Participation and Scoping Meetings

You can make a difference by sending a letter addressing your specific comments or concerns about the project. You should focus on the potential environmental effects of the proposal, alternatives to the proposal (including alternative locations and routes), and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. Please follow the instructions below to ensure that your comments are received and properly recorded:

- Address your letter to: Lois Cashell, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426;
- Reference Docket No. CP95-194-001;
- Send a copy of your letter to: Ms. Laura Turner, EIS Project Manager, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Room 7M-02, Washington, DC 20426; and
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before April 1, 1996.

In addition to sending written comments, you may attend public scoping meetings. We will conduct public scoping meetings at three locations. Meetings will be held at the following times and locations:

Date	Time	Location
March 26, 1996	7:00 p.m.	Channahon, Illinois
March 27, 1996	7:00 p.m.	Princeton, Illinois
March 28, 1996	7:00 p.m.	Walcott, Iowa

The meeting in Channahon, Illinois will be held at the Channahon Junior High School. The meeting in Princeton, Illinois will be held at the Bureau County Metro Center. The meeting in Walcott, Iowa will be held at the American Legion.

The purpose of the scoping meetings is to obtain input from state and local

governments and from the public. Federal agencies have formal channels for input into the Federal Process (including separate meetings where appropriate) on an interagency basis. Federal agencies are expected to transmit their comments directly to the FERC and not use the scoping meetings for this purpose.

Northern Border and Natural will be invited to present a description of their proposals at the scoping meetings. Interested groups and individuals are encouraged to attend the meetings and present oral comments on the environmental issues which they believe should be addressed in the Draft EIS. The more specific your comments,

the more useful they will be. Anyone who would like to make an oral presentation at the meeting should contact the EIS Project Manager identified at the end of this notice to have his or her name placed on the list of speakers. Priority will be given to those persons representing groups. A list will be available at the public meetings to allow for non-preregistered speakers to sign up. A transcript will be made of the meetings and comments will be used to help determine the scope of the Draft EIS.

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EIS scoping process, you may want to become an official party to the proceeding or become an "intervenor". Among other things, intervenors have the right to receive copies of case-related Commission documents and filings by other intervenors. Likewise, each intervenor must provide copies of its filings to all other parties. If you want to become an intervenor you must file a motion to intervene according to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214) (see appendix 4).

The date for filing timely motions to intervene in this proceeding has passed. Therefore, parties now seeking to file late interventions must show good cause, as required by section 385.214(b)(3), why this time limitation should be waived. Environmental issues have been viewed as good cause for late interventions. You do not need intervenor status to have your scoping comments considered.

Environmental Mailing List

This notice is being sent to individuals, organizations, and government entities interested and/or potentially affected by the proposed project. It is also being sent to all potential right-of-way grantors to solicit focused comments regarding environmental considerations related to the proposed project.⁵ As details of the project become established, representatives of Northern Border and Natural will directly contact landowners, communities, and public agencies concerning any other matters, including acquisition of permits and rights-of-way.

If you do not want to send comments at this time but still want to keep informed and receive copies of the Draft and Final EISs, please return the

⁵ Natural has supplied a preliminary landowner list. This list is based on the ownership of the land containing the existing right-of-way. A supplemental mailing will be made, if necessary, after the route has been surveyed.

Information Request (appendix 5). If you do not return the Information Request you will be taken off the mailing list.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from Ms. Laura Turner, EIS Project Manager, at (202) 208-0916.

Lois D. Cashell,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-4043 Filed 2-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Project No. 1988]

Pacific Gas and Electric Company; Notice of Extending Time To Comment on Draft EA

February 16, 1996.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) issued a Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for relicensing the Hass-Kings Hydroelectric Project, FERC Project No. 1988, on November 30, 1995. This hydropower project is located on the North Fork of the Kings River near Fresno, California.

In response to a letter filed by the California Department of Fish and Game, and supported by other parties to the proceedings, FERC is extending the comment period on the DEA until March 1, 1996.

Anyone wishing to comment in writing on the DEA must do so no later than March 1, 1996. Comments should be addressed to: Lois D. Cashell, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426.

Reference should be clearly made to: Hass-Kings Hydroelectric Project (Project No. 1988).

For further information, please contact Frankie Green at (202) 501-7704.

Lois D. Cashell,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96-4047 Filed 2-22-96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. CP69-169-000, et al.]

Western Gas Interstate Company, et al. Natural Gas Certificate Filings

February 15, 1996.

Take notice that the following filings have been made with the Commission:

1. Western Gas Interstate Company

[Docket No. CP69-169-000]

Take notice that on February 6, 1996, Western Gas Interstate Company (Western) filed a request to discontinue

the Presidential Permit granted to Western in Docket No. CP69-169-000.¹

On March 20, 1969, the Commission authorized Western to construct and operate facilities, pursuant to Executive Order 10485, on the international boundary between Mexico and the United States in Dona Ana County, New Mexico. The authorized facilities included a 2-inch natural gas pipeline in Dona Ana County, New Mexico, commencing at a point of connection with El Paso Natural Gas Company's 4½-inch El Paso Brick Company pipeline and extending therefrom to a point on the United States-Mexico international boundary line, together with related metering facilities.

These facilities, however, were never constructed and the Presidential Permit was never activated. Accordingly, Western respectfully requests that the Commission discontinue the Presidential Permit.

Comment date: March 7, 1996, in accordance with Standard Paragraph F at the end of this notice.

2. Koch Gateway Pipeline Company

[Docket No. CP96-180-000]

Take notice that on February 8, 1996, Koch Gateway Pipeline Company (Koch) P.O. Box 1478, 600 Travis Street, Houston, Texas 77251-1478, filed in Docket No. CP96-180-000 a request pursuant to Sections 157.205 and 157.211 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205 and 157.211) for authorization to operate a delivery tap, located in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana, as a certificated delivery point, under Koch's blanket certificate issued in Docket No. CP82-430-000, pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act, all as more fully set forth in the request which is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

Koch states that it originally constructed the delivery tap pursuant to Section 311(a) of the Natural Gas Policy Act to be used for the delivery of gas to Louisiana Gas Service (LGS), a local distribution company pursuant to Subpart B of Part 284 of the Commission's Regulations. Koch states that it installed a 2-inch delivery tap and metering facilities on its Baton Rouge-New Orleans line in St. Charles Parish, Louisiana in order to facilitate timely deliveries to LGS who, in turn serves the St. Rose City Gate. Koch

¹ The Presidential Permit granted to Western by the Commission was part of a four-part order, 41 FPC 385 (1969), approving applications concerning the exportation of natural gas from the United States to Mexico. The other three applications contained in the order concern currently operating facilities and are not subject to this request.