

property would occur because no facilities or habitation exist within the area.

Impacts from construction activities on visual resources, employment and economic opportunities, air quality, and public health and safety would be minor and of short duration. After project construction, the reservoir would attract additional wildlife and diversify the viewing opportunities in the valley.

The location of the Project borrow site was not identified in the EA because it is not known at this time. However, impacts to vegetation, wildlife, and cultural resources would not be significant because preconstruction surveys would be conducted if an undeveloped borrow site is selected for use. If the surveys determine the presence of sensitive resources such as endangered species or historic properties, then the borrow site would either be relocated or appropriate mitigation measures would be applied to ensure any impacts are at a level below significant.

As stated in Chapter IV—Permit Requirements and Contacts of the EA, the Project is subject to certain regulatory requirements. A permit to fill in wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act would be required. The Nevada Division of Environmental Protection may require a letter of water quality certification or a rolling stock water pollution control permit. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers would require an Impoundment Permit for the emplacement of the reservoir. In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, a Class III cultural resources survey was conducted and found no significant resources. The Nevada State Historic Preservation Officer concurred in a letter dated June 17, 1996 that the Project site was not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. In accordance with the requirements of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) was consulted about this Project. The Project is consistent with the Endangered Species Act because the EA confirmed that no plant or animal species federally listed as threatened or endangered would be adversely affected by the Project.

#### Floodplain Statement of Findings

This is a Floodplain Statement of Findings prepared in accordance with 10 CFR Part 1022. A Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement was published in the Federal Register on May 17, 1996 and a floodplain and wetlands assessment was incorporated in the EA. BPA proposes to fund the

construction of an earth dam and reservoir in the Billy Shaw Slough of the Duck Valley Reservation near Owyhee, Nevada. The Proposed Action would be located in the floodplain because that area offers the topographical qualities needed to fill and maintain a permanent reservoir. The alternative to the Proposed Action, the No Action Alternative, would not satisfy BPA's need to provide off-site mitigation on the Duck Valley Reservation for the loss of salmon and steelhead. The Proposed Action conforms to applicable State or local floodplain protection standards.

Preliminary designs for the spillway and outlet works of the dam included the small dam criteria available from the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Services (NRCS). The inflow design floods were computed based upon NRCS, Idaho Department of Water Resources, and Nevada Division of Water Resources criteria for structures of this size and hazard classification. Although studies indicated that a probable maximum flood event could be stored without the use of the spillway, an emergency spillway would be included in the plan. These design considerations would minimize any potential harm to the floodplain should a significant flood event occur. Also, the downstream hazard classification for the reservoir site is considered low because no permanent or temporary human habitation or permanent property development lies in the floodplain downstream from the proposed damsite.

BPA will endeavor to allow 15 days of public review after publication of this statement of findings before implementing the Proposed Action.

#### Determination

Based on the information in the EA, as summarized here, BPA determines that the Proposed Action is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of NEPA, 42 U.S.C. 4321 *et seq.* Therefore, an EIS will not be prepared and BPA is issuing this FONSI.

Issued in Portland, Oregon, on March 3, 1997.

Alexandra B. Smith,

*Vice President, Environment, Fish, & Wildlife.*

[FR Doc. 97-6464 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6450-01-P

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP94-161-006]

#### Avoca Natural Gas Storage; Notice of Site Visit

March 10, 1997.

On March 25 and 26, 1997, the Office of Pipeline Regulation (OPR) staff will inspect on the ground, along with Avoca Natural Gas Storage (Avoca) personnel, locations related to the facilities proposed by Avoca in New York for the Avoca Gas Storage Project Supplement.

All interested parties may attend. Those planning to attend the March 25 and 26, 1997, site inspection must provide their own transportation.

For further information, call Paul McKee, Office of External Affairs, at (202) 208-1088.

Lois D. Cashell,

*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-6439 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. CP97-275-000]

#### Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

March 10, 1997.

Take notice that on March 4, 1997, Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (Columbia Gas), 1700 MacCorkle Avenue S.E., Charleston, West Virginia 25314-1599, filed in Docket No. CP97-275-000 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 construct and operate a new point of delivery in McKean County, Pennsylvania, so that interruptible volumes can be delivered to Minard Run Oil Company (MRO). Columbia Gas makes such request under its blanket certificate issued in Docket No. CP83-76-000 pursuant to Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act, all as more fully set forth in the request on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

Specifically, Columbia Gas indicates its intent to render the interconnecting delivery facility operational by making use of an existing 4-inch tap, installing a 4-inch turbo meter setting and an 8-inch filter separator. It is averred that the delivery facility will be used to provide up to 950 Mcf of natural daily to MRO for industrial use, and up to 346,750 Mcf annually. Columbia Gas states that the interruptible transportation service will be provided to MRO pursuant to Columbia Gas'

blanket authority, issued under Part 284 of the Regulations. It is further stated that the interruptible volumes to be delivered to MRO, will be within MRO's certificated entitlements. Columbia Gas does not anticipate that the interruptible service that it will provide through the proposed delivery facility, will detrimentally impact its existing customers.

Columbia Gas estimates the new delivery facility to cost approximately \$38,398. It is indicated that MRO will reimburse Columbia Gas' total facility cost.

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 therefor, 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.

Lois D. Cashell,  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-6441 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. ER94-24-017]

**Enron Power Marketing, Inc.; Notice of Filing**

March 10, 1997.

Take notice that on January 21, 1997, Enron Power Marketing, Inc. tendered for filing a Notification of Change in Status.

Any person desiring to be heard or to protest said filing should file a motion to intervene or protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 18 CFR 385.214). All such motions or protests should be filed on or before March 20, 1997. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make 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. 97-6442 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. RP97-8-000]

**Granite State Gas Transmission, Inc.; Notice of Informal Settlement Conference**

March 10, 1997.

Take notice that an informal settlement conference will be convened in this proceeding on Thursday, March 20, 1997, at 10:00 a.m., at the offices of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C., for the purpose of exploring the possible settlement of the above-referenced docket.

Any party, as defined in 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 Donald Williams at (202) 208-0743 or Anja M. Clark at (202) 208-2034.

Lois D. Cashell,  
*Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 97-6446 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. ER97-1566-000]

**Southwestern Public Service Company; Notice of Filing**

March 10, 1997.

Take notice that on February 6, 1997, Southwestern Public Service Company (Southwestern) submitted an executed service agreement under its open access transmission tariff with e prime. The service agreement is for umbrella non-firm transmission service.

Any person desiring to be heard or to protest said filing should file a motion to intervene or protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 18 CFR 385.214). All such motions or protests should be filed on or before March 21, 1997. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make 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. 97-6444 Filed 3-13-97; 8:45 am]  
BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

[Docket No. CP94-161-006]

**Avoca Natural Gas Storage; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Avoca Gas Storage Project Supplement and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues**

March 10, 1997.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate the environmental impacts of the construction of about 87.6 miles of various diameter pipeline and related facilities proposed in the Avoca Gas Storage Project Supplement.<sup>1</sup> This EQ will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

**Summary of the Proposed Project**

Avoca Natural Gas Storage (Avoca) received a certificate authorizing the development of gas-storage caverns in an order issued on September 20, 1994. In conjunction with the construction of the storage caverns, Avoca wants to construct facilities to transport brine from the Avoca Storage Field (under development) near Avoca, New York, to two salt recovery facilities, Akzo Nobel Salt Company (Akzo) and Cargill, Inc. (Cargill), near and within Watkins Glen, New York, respectively. The brine would be created during the solution mining (or leaching) of the underground salt caverns that will be used to store natural gas. In that order, Avoca was authorized to use brine injection wells to dispose of the brine created during the cavern leaching process. However, the aquifers into which the brine injection wells were completed do not have the capability to receive the brine at the planned design rate of production. Therefore, Avoca would transport the brine via the proposed brine pipeline to the two salt recovery facilities. Specifically Avoca proposes to construct:

<sup>1</sup> Avoca Natural Gas Storage's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.