

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Project No. 2077-000-NY/VT]

New England Power Company; Notice of Scoping Meetings Pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 for an Applicant Prepared Environmental Assessment

May 15, 1998.

Pursuant to the Energy Policy Act of 1992, and as part of the license application, the New England Power Company (NEP) intends to prepare an Applicant Prepared Environmental Assessment (APEA) to file along with the license application, with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) for the Fifteen Mile Falls (FMF) Project No. 2077. The license for the project expires on July 31, 2001.

In October 1995, NEP initiated the cooperative consultation process, and in December 1995, state and federal agencies, local interests, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), undertook a cooperative effort for the relicensing of the FMF Project. The process involved identification of environmental issues associated with the relicensing of the FMF Project, including: a public informational meeting in February 1996, a project site visit for agencies/stakeholders, and a public meeting to solicit comments on the Initial Consultation Document (ICD) in June 1996.

As a result of the cooperative consultation process, settlement negotiation meetings were conducted during the spring of 1997, resulting in a signed Settlement Agreement on August 6, 1997.

NEP obtained support from the parties involved in the cooperative process and Settlement Agreement to pursue the APEA process for the relicensing of the FMF Project. On March 9, 1998, NEP requested, and on April 22, 1998, obtained FERC's approval to enter the APEA process. As part of the APEA process, NEP has prepared a Scoping Document I (SDI), which provides information on the scoping process, APEA schedule, background information, environmental issues, and proposed project alternatives.

The purpose of this notice is to: (1) advise all parties as to the proposed scope of the environmental analysis, including cumulative effects, and to seek additional information pertinent to this analysis; and (2) advise all parties of their opportunity for comment.

Scoping Process

The purpose of the scoping process is to identify significant issues related to the proposed action and to determine what issues should be addressed in the document to be prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). The SDI will be circulated to enable appropriate federal, state, and local resource agencies, Indian tribes, NGOs, and other interested parties to participate in the scoping process. SDI provides a brief description of the proposed action, project alternatives, the geographic and temporal scope of a cumulative effects analysis, and a list of issues.

Scoping Meetings and Site Visit

NEP and FERC staff will conduct two scoping meetings and a site visit. All interested individuals, organizations, and agencies are invited to attend and assist in identifying the scope of environmental issues that should be analyzed in the APEA.

The public scoping meeting will be held on June 4, 1998, from 7:00 to 9:00 pm at the Littleton Opera House, Main Street, Littleton, NH. The agency scoping meeting will be held on June 5, 1998, from 9:30 to 12:00 am at the North Country Council Conference Room, 107 Glessner Road, Bethlehem, NH. The site visit will commence at 9:30 am on June 4, 1998. Those persons interested should meet at Moore Visitor Center, Rtes. 135/18, Littleton, NH. For more details, interested parties should contact John Ragonese, NEP, (603)-443-9229, prior to the meeting date.

Objectives

At the scoping meetings, NEP and FERC staff will: (1) summarize the environmental issues identified for analysis in the APEA; (2) solicit from the meeting participants all available information, especially quantified data, on the resources at issue, and (3) encourage statements from experts and the public on issues that should be analyzed in the APEA. Individuals, organizations, and agencies with environmental expertise and concerns are encouraged to attend the meetings and to assist in defining and clarifying the issues to be addressed.

Meeting Procedures

The meeting will be conducted according to the procedures used at Commission scoping meetings. Because this meeting will be a NEPA scoping meeting, the Commission will not conduct another scoping meeting when the application and APEA are filed with the Commission in Spring 1999.

The meetings will be recorded by a stenographer and become a part of the formal record of the Commission proceeding on the FMF Project. Individuals presenting statements at the meetings will be asked to identify themselves for the record. Speaking time allowed for individuals will be determined before each meeting, based on the number of persons wishing to speak and the approximate amount of time available for the session. Persons choosing not to speak but wishing to express an opinion, as well as speakers unable to summarize their positions within their allotted time, may submit written statements for inclusion in the public record no later than June 19, 1998.

All filings should contain an original and 8 copies. Failure to file an original and 8 copies may result in appropriate staff not receiving the benefit of your comments in a timely manner. All comments should be submitted to the Office of the Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, and should clearly show the following captions on the first page: Fifteen Mile Falls Project, FERC No. 2077. A copy of each filing should also be sent to John Ragonese, New England Power Company, 407 Miracle Mile, Suite 2, Lebanon, NH 02766.

Based on all written comments, a Scoping Document II (SDII) may be issued. SDII will include a revised list of issues, based on the scoping sessions.

For further information regarding the APEA scoping process, please contact William Guey-Lee, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC, 20426 at (202) 219-2794, or John Ragonese, New England Power Company, at (603) 443-9229.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 98-13482 Filed 5-20-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Docket No. CP98-531-000]

NorAm Gas Transmission Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

May 15, 1998.

Take notice that on May 11, 1998, NorAm Gas Transmission Company (NGT), 1600 Smith Street, Houston, Texas 77002, filed in Docket No. CP98-531-000 a request pursuant to Sections

157.205 and 157.211 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205, 157.211) for authorization to construct and operate certain facilities in Webster Parish, Louisiana, under NGT's blanket certificate issued in the Docket No. CP82-384-000 and CP82-384-001 pursuant to Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act, all as more fully set forth in the request that is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

NGT specifically requests authority to install a 3-inch tap, 3-inch regulatory setting, and 6-inch meter station, on NGT's Line S in Webster Parish, Louisiana, under Subpart G of Part 284 of the Commission's Regulation. NGT states that this meter station is being constructed to provide service to Arkla, a distribution division of NorAm Energy Corp. (Arkla). NGT states the estimated volumes to be delivered through these facilities are approximately 3,008,086 MMBtu annually and 14,857 MMBtu on a peak day. NGT states the cost of the facilities to be installed is \$64,198, and that \$59,375 will be reimbursed by Arkla. NGT also states that Arkla will install 550 feet of 6-inch pipe to connect this point to an addition to its Louisiana distribution system which it is acquiring from Louisiana-Nevada Gas Transit Company.

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.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 98-13496 Filed 5-20-98; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP98-533-000]

Northern Natural Gas Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

May 15, 1998.

Take notice that on May 11, 1998, Northern Natural Gas Company (Northern), 1111 South 103rd Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68124-1000, filed in Docket No. CP98-525-000 a request pursuant to Sections 157.205, 157.212 and 157.216 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205, 157.212, 157.216) for authorization to upgrade an existing delivery point located in Dodge County, Minnesota, to accommodate natural gas deliveries to U.S. Energy Services, Inc. (USEI), under Northern's blanket certificate issued in Docket No. CP82-401-000¹ pursuant to Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act, all as more fully set forth in the request that is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

Northern states that it requests authority to upgrade this delivery point to accommodate natural gas deliveries to USEI under currently effective throughput service agreements. Northern asserts that USEI has requested the upgrade of the existing delivery point to provide increased natural gas service to the Al-Corn town border station. The estimated incremental volumes proposed to be delivered to USEI at this delivery point are 400 MMBtu on a peak day and 146,000 MMBtu on an annual basis. Northern has stated that the estimated cost to upgrade the delivery point is \$24,500.

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.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP98-524-000]

Northern Natural Gas Company; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization

May 15, 1998

Take notice that on May 6, 1998, Northern Natural Gas Company, (Northern), 1111 South 103rd Street, Omaha, Nebraska 68124-1000, filed in Docket No. CP98-524-000 a request pursuant to Sections 157.205 and 157.216 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205, 157.216) for authorization to abandon and remove three town border stations (TBSs), all as more fully set forth in the request that is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

Northern proposes to abandon and remove one TBS in Saunders County, Nebraska, and two TBSs in Rice County, Minnesota. Northern constructed the subject facilities pursuant to 2.55 of the regulations and proposes to abandon them because the gas service downstream of the TBSs have been discontinued and that no other use exist for the facilities.

Northern states that the abandonment will not result in any disruption or disadvantage any of Northern's customers.

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

¹ See, 20 FERC ¶ 62,410 (1982).