

Form Number: None.

Type of Review: Regular submission.

Affected Public: State, Local, or Tribal Government; individuals or households; business or other for-profit organizations; and Federal government.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 4,111.

Estimated Time Per Response: 8 hours for a State objection or concurrence letter for a consistency certification or determination; 4 hours for a State request for review of unlisted activities; 1 hour for public notice requirements for a project; 4 hours for a request for remedial action of a supplemental review; 1 hour for coordination of a listing notice; 2 hours for a request for Secretarial mediation; and 200 hours for an appeal. These are average estimates and burden can significantly vary based on the individual situation.

Estimated Total Annual Burden Hours: 20,331.

Estimated Total Annual Cost to Public: \$8,000,000.

IV. Request for Comments

Comments are invited on: (a) whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency, including whether the information shall have practical utility; (b) the accuracy of the agency's estimate of the burden (including hours and cost) of the proposed collection of information; (c) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (d) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or other forms of information technology.

Comments submitted in response to this notice will be summarized and/or included in the request for OMB approval of this information collection; they also will become a matter of public record.

Dated: January 16, 2003.

Gwellnar Banks,

Management Analyst, Office of the Chief Information Officer.

[FR Doc. 03-1649 Filed 1-23-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 3510-08-S

DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Federal Consistency Appeal by Islander East Pipeline Company From an Objection by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

AGENCY: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), Department of Commerce (Commerce).

ACTION: Notice of appeal, request for comment, and notice of availability of appeal documents.

SUMMARY: The Islander East Pipeline Company has filed an administrative appeal with the Department of Commerce (Consistency Appeal of Islander East Pipeline Company, L.L.C.) asking that the Secretary of Commerce override the State of Connecticut's objection to Islander East's proposed natural gas pipeline. The pipeline would extend from an interconnection with an existing pipeline near North Haven, Connecticut, to a terminus on Long Island, New York, affecting the natural resources or land and water uses of Connecticut's coastal zone. This document: (a) Provides public notice of the appeal; (b) announces an opportunity for public comment on the appeal; and (c) identifies locations where documents comprising the appeal record will be available for review.

DATES: Public comments on the appeal must be received by May 8, 2003.

ADDRESSES: All e-mail comments on issues relevant to the Secretary's decision of this appeal may be submitted to IslanderEast.comments@noaa.gov. Comments may also be sent by mail to the Office of the General Counsel for Ocean Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce, 1305 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910. Materials from the appeal record will be available at the internet site www.ogc.doc.gov/czma.htm and at the Office of the General Counsel for Ocean Services. Also, public filings made by the parties to the appeal will be available for review at the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, 79 Elm Street, Hartford, CT.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Branden Blum, Senior Counselor, via e-mail at gcos.inquiries@noaa.gov, or at 301-713-2967, extension 186.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Notice of Appeal

Islander East Pipeline Company, L.L.C. (Islander East or Appellant) filed a notice of appeal with the Secretary of Commerce (Secretary) pursuant to section 307(c)(3)(A) of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), as amended, 16 U.S.C. 1451 *et seq.*, and the Department of Commerce's implementing regulations, 15 CFR part 930, subpart H, (revised, effective January 8, 2001). The appeal is taken from an objection by the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (State) to Islander East's consistency certification for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Federal Energy Regulatory Commission permits to construct and operate a natural gas pipeline. The certification is required to indicate that the project is consistent with the State's coastal management program. The project would cross portions of the Long Island Sound, affecting the natural resources or land and water uses of Connecticut's coastal zone.

The Appellant request that the Secretary override the State's consistency objections on the two substantive grounds provided in the CZMA. The first ground requires the Secretary to determine that the proposed activity is "consistent with the objectives" of the CZMA. To make this determination, the Secretary must find that: (1) The proposed activity furthers the national interest as articulated in section 302 or 303 of the CZMA, in a significant or substantial manner; (2) the national interest furthered by the proposed activity outweighs the activity's adverse coastal effects, when those effects are considered separately or cumulatively; and (3) no reasonable alternative is available that would permit the proposed activity to be conducted in a manner consistent with the enforceable policies of the State of Connecticut's coastal zone management program. 15 CFR 930.121.

The second substantive ground for overriding a State's objection considers whether the proposed activity is necessary in the interest of national security. To reach this conclusion, the Secretary must find that a national defense or other national security interest would be significantly impaired if the activity in question was not permitted to go forward as proposed. 15 CFR 930.122.

II. Public Comments

Written public comments are invited on any of the issues that the Secretary must consider in deciding this appeal. Comments must be received by May 8,

2003, and may be submitted by e-mail to IslanderEast.comments@noaa.gov. Comments may also be sent by mail to the Office of the General Counsel for Ocean Services, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Comments will be made available to the Appellant and the State; they will also be posted on a Department of Commerce website identified below.

III. Appeal Documents

The Secretary has required that Islander East file its initial brief and supplementary information on February 10, 2003, and that the State of Connecticut file its initial brief and supplementary material on March 24, 2003. NOAA intends to provide the public with access to all materials and related documents comprising the appeal record via the internet at www.ogc.doc.gov/czma.htm, except that certain materials or documents or portions thereof may be withheld if they contain confidential materials, critical energy infrastructure information, national security information or other types of information that would be inappropriate for public release. In addition, technical constraints may limit the internet availability of certain documents, such as oversized maps or exceedingly lengthy publications. All public materials and documents will be available during business hours at the NOAA Office of the General Counsel for Ocean Service. In addition, the State of Connecticut will make copies of public filings by the parties available for review during business hours at the office of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection.

(Federal Domestic Assistance Catalog No. 11.419 Coastal Zone Management Program Assistance)

Dated: January 21, 2003.

James R. Walpole,
General Counsel.

[FR Doc. 03-1634 Filed 1-23-03; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

[Docket No. 020814191-2191-01]

Establishment of a Joint or Cooperative Institute Within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) Joint and Cooperative Institute Program

AGENCY: Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research; National

Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; Department of Commerce.

ACTION: Notice of Request for Letters of Intent and Guidelines for Submission of Full Proposals.

SUMMARY: NOAA invites interested institutions to submit Letters of Intent (LOI) indicating interest in establishing a Joint or Cooperative Institute within the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) Joint and Cooperative Institute Program. The proposed name of the Joint Institute will be the Cooperative Institute for Climate Applications and Research. The OAR Joint and Cooperative Institute Program is listed in the CFDA under number 11.432, Office of Oceanic and Atmospheric Research (OAR) Joint and Cooperative Institutes.

The Institutes represent a close link between OAR laboratories, other branches of NOAA and the external research community. NOAA collaborates on cooperative research activities and provides financial support to enhance the public benefits to be derived from these research activities. The Institutes are established based on their geographical proximity to a NOAA facility, and/or their expertise in areas related to the mission of the NOAA/OAR research laboratories.

DATES: Letters of Intent should be submitted no later than February 24, 2003. Response letters will be issued from NOAA approximately 45 days after the date of the **Federal Register** Announcement. Institutions will be informed of the submittal date for full proposals in the response letter.

ADDRESSES: Letters of Intent and proposals should be submitted to: Dr. Ants Leetmaa; NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory; Forrestral Campus Rt. 1; P.O. Box 308; Princeton, NJ 08452-0308.

An Application Kit can be obtained from: Mr. Michael Nelson; NOAA Grants Management Division; Silver Spring Metro Center Bldg. 2, Room 9348; Silver Spring, MD 20910.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Dr. Ants Leetmaa; NOAA Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory; Forrestral Campus Rt. 1; P.O. Box 308; Princeton, NJ 08452-0308.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Program Authority

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 44720; 33 U.S.C. 883d; 15 U.S.C. 2907; 15 U.S.C. 2931.

II. Program Description

Funding: The base funding for the Institute is expected to be \$100,000 per year. However, funding is contingent upon availability of funds and is at the sole discretion of NOAA.

The funding instrument will be a Cooperative Agreement based on the envisioned substantial involvement of NOAA scientists in projects undertaken by the Institute. NOAA collaborates on cooperative research activities and provides financial support to enhance the public benefits to be derived from these research activities. NOAA envisions a sharing of expertise between GFDL and the proposed Institute in the areas of: earth system modeling, modern and paleoclimatic observations, and climate variability and change applications research. Funding for non-U.S. institutions and contractual arrangements for services and products for delivery to NOAA are not available under this announcement. The award will have an initial base term of five years. An OAR-sponsored, independent panel will conduct a review of the Institute during the fourth year of the five year term. The Panel's findings and recommendations will serve as the basis for renewal of the Institute for an additional five years.

Program Priorities: The Institute will be affiliated with the Geophysical Fluid Dynamics Laboratory (GFDL) located in Princeton, New Jersey. The Institute will align itself with the following GFDL research priorities:

a. *Earth System modeling:* Including, but not limited to, the development of dynamical models of the global climate system, and the production of forecasts of the long-term variability of the climate.

b. *Modern and paleoclimatic observations:* including but not limited to standard hydrographic observations and the construction and analysis of new proxies (e.g. geochemical and isotopic tracers in deep-sea sediments, aquifers, tree rings and ice cores) for studies of climate variability and change, including abrupt climate changes.

c. *Climate variability and change applications research:* including but not limited to the study of communication between forecasters and users of forecasts; the application of climate variability and change information to decision making in fields such as water resources, agriculture, human health, and policy making; and institutional mechanisms for responding to climate variability and change information.

The Institute is meant to be an integral component in a coordinated