

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**

[Docket No. PF04-12-000]

Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Central New Jersey Expansion Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues and Notice of Scoping Meeting

June 4, 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 Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation's (Transco) planned Central New Jersey Expansion Project located in Burlington County, New Jersey. This notice announces the opening of the scoping process the Commission will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the projects. Your input will help the Commission staff determine which issues need to be evaluated in the EA. The Commission will use the EA in its decision-making process to determine whether or not to authorize the project. Please note that the scoping period will close on August 27, 2004.

Comments may be submitted in written form or verbally. Further details on how to submit written comments are provided in the public participation section of this notice. In lieu of sending written comments, you are invited to attend the public scoping meeting that is scheduled as follows: Tuesday, June 29, 2004, 7 p.m. (e.s.t.), Ramada Inn, Bordentown, 1083 Route 206 North, Bordentown, NJ 08505, 609-298-3200. This notice is being sent to affected landowners; Federal, State, and local government representatives and agencies; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers in this proceeding. We¹ encourage government representatives to notify their constituents of these planned projects and advise them to comment on their areas of concern.

Summary of the Proposed Project

Transco proposes to construct and operate about 3.5 miles of 36-inch-diameter pipeline that would loop²

¹ "We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the Office of Energy Projects.

² A loop is a segment of pipeline that is installed adjacent to an existing pipeline and connected to

Transco's existing Trenton Woodbury Line, located in Bordentown and Mansfield Townships in Burlington County, New Jersey. The expansion would add an additional 105,000 dekatherms per day of firm transportation capacity to Transco's existing system. Transco proposes to place the Central New Jersey Expansion facilities into service by November 1, 2005, and requests a certificate approval from the Commission by February 1, 2005.

A map depicting Transco's proposed facilities and alternate routes is provided in Appendix 1.³

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

Transco has initially identified five route variations, of which have several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the planned facilities. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on our analysis:

- Two variations (Alternates A and B) may have land use conflicts with regards to commercial and/or private development;
- Two variations (Alternates B and C) may have land use conflicts with regards to transportation development; and
- Two variations (Alternates D and E) bisect Farmland Preservation Property.

The siting of the pipeline loop in proximity to residential neighborhoods and commercial businesses; and public safety have also been raised by concerned citizens.

The EA Process

The FERC will use the EA to consider the environmental impact that could result if it issues Transco a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity.

This notice formally announces our preparation of the EA and the beginning of the process referred to as "scoping." We are soliciting input from the public and interested agencies to help us focus the analysis in the EA on the potentially significant environmental issues related to the proposed action.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be included in an EA that will be prepared for the project. Our evaluation will also include possible alternatives to the proposed project or

it at both ends. The loop allows more gas to be moved through the system.

³ The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the **Federal Register**. Copies are available on the Commission's website at the "eLibrary" link or from the Commission's Public Reference Room or call (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary refer to the end of this notice. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

portions of the project, and we will make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas of concern.

The EA will be mailed to Federal, State, and local government agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; affected landowners; other interested parties; local libraries and newspapers; and the FERC's official service list for this proceeding. A 30-day comment period will be allotted for review of the EA. We will consider all comments submitted on the EA in any Commission Order that is issued for the project.

Although no formal application for authorizing these natural gas facilities has been filed, the FERC staff is initiating its NEPA review now. The purpose of the FERC's pre-filing process is to encourage the early involvement of interested stakeholders and to identify and resolve issues before an application is filed with the FERC.

We are currently involved with discussions with other jurisdictional agencies to identify their issues and concerns. These agencies include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. By this notice, we are asking these and other federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA. Agencies that would like to request cooperating status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided below.

Public Participation

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the proposals. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before August 27, 2004, and carefully follow these instructions:

- Send an original and two copies of your letter to: Magalie R. Salas, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426;
- Label one copy of the comments for the attention of Gas Branch 1, DG2E;

• Reference Docket No. PF04–12–000 on the original and both copies; Please note that the Commission encourages electronic filing of comments. See 18 CFR

385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Internet Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the "eFiling" link and the link to the User's Guide. Prepare your submission in the same manner as you would if filing on paper and save it to a file on your hard drive. Before you can file comments you will need to create an account by clicking on "Login to File" and then "New User Account." You will be asked to select the type of filing you are making. This filing is considered a "Comment on Filing."

When Transco submits its application for authorization to construct and operate the Central New Jersey Expansion Project, the Commission will publish a Notice of Application in the **Federal Register** and will establish a deadline for interested persons to intervene in the proceeding. Because the Commission's pre-filing process occurs before an application to begin a proceeding is officially filed, petitions to intervene during this process are premature and will not be accepted by the Commission.

Environmental Mailing List

If you wish to remain on the environmental mailing list, please return the Mailing List Retention Form included in Appendix 2. If you do not return this form, you will be taken off our mailing list.

Availability of Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs at 1-866-208 FERC (3372) or on the FERC Internet website (<http://www.ferc.gov>). Using the "eLibrary" link, select "General Search" from the eLibrary menu, enter the selected date range and "Docket Number" (i.e., PF04–12–000), and follow the instructions. Searches may also be done using the phrase "Central New Jersey Expansion" in the "Text Search" field. For assistance with access to eLibrary, the helpline can be reached at 1-866-208-3676, TTY (202) 502-8659, or at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. The eLibrary link on the FERC Internet Web site also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rule makings.

In addition, the FERC now offers a free service called eSubscription that allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific

dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. To register for this service, go to <http://www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm>.

Finally, Transco has established an Internet Web site for its project at <http://centralnj.williams.com>. The website includes a project overview, contact information, regulatory overview, and construction procedures.

Linda Mitry,

Acting Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

Notice of Application Tendered for Filing With the Commission and Soliciting Additional Study Requests

June 3, 2004.

Take notice that the following hydroelectric application has been filed with the Commission and is available for public inspection.

a. *Type of Application*: Original major license under 5 megawatts (MW).

b. *Project No.*: P–11879–001.

c. *Date filed*: May 20, 2004.

d. *Applicant*: Symbiotics, LLC.

e. *Name of Project*: Chester Diversion Hydroelectric Project.

f. *Location*: On Henry's Fork of the Snake River, near the Town of Rexburg, in Fremont County, Idaho. The project would occupy 2-acres of U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BOR) land.

g. *Filed Pursuant to*: Federal Power Act, 16 U.S.C. 791(a)–825(r).

h. *Applicant Contact*: Mr. Brent L. Smith, Northwest Power Services, Inc., P.O. Box 535, Rigby, ID 83442, (208) 745–0834 or Dr. Vincent A. Lamarra, Ecosystems Research Institute, 975 South State Highway, Logan, UT 84321, (435) 752–2580.

i. *FERC Contact*: Emily Carter at (202) 502–6512, or Emily.Carter@ferc.gov.

j. *Cooperating agencies*: We are asking Federal, State, local, and tribal agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues, to cooperate with us in the preparation of the environmental document. Agencies who would like to request cooperating status should follow the instructions for filing comments described in item 'l.' below.

k. Pursuant to Section 4.32(b)(7) of 18 CFR of the Commission's regulations, if

any resource agency, Indian tribe, or person believes that an additional scientific study should be conducted in order to form an adequate factual basis for a complete analysis of the application on its merit, the resource agency, Indian tribe, or person must file a request for a study with the Commission not later than 60 days from the date of filing of the application, and serve a copy of the request on the applicant.

l. Deadline for filing additional study requests and requests for cooperating agency status: July 19, 2004.

All documents (original and eight copies) should be filed with: Magalie R. Salas, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426.

The Commission's Rules of Practice require all intervenors filing documents with the Commission to serve a copy of that document on each person on the official service list for the project. Further, if an intervenor files comments or documents with the Commission relating to the merits of an issue that may affect the responsibilities of a particular resource agency, they must also serve a copy of the document on that resource agency.

Additional study requests and requests for cooperating agency status may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. The Commission strongly encourages electronic filings. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) under the "e-Filing" link. m. *Status*: The application is not ready for environmental analysis at this time. n. The proposed Chester Diversion Hydroelectric Project would utilize the existing BOR Chester Dam on the Henry's Fork of the Snake River. The dam has an overall structural height of 17 feet and a total length of 457 feet, spanning the river. Operation of the project would depend on flows in the Henry's Fork and would be dependant on the irrigation season. It would be operated run-of-river and no storage would occur at the project.

The proposed project would consist of the following facilities: (1) A new three-foot-high inflatable rubber dam bolted to the crest of the existing spillway; (2) a new 50-foot-wide concrete spillway; (3) two new Kaplan-type turbine generator units with a combined generating capacity of 3.3 MW; (4) a new low-profile powerhouse; and (5) appurtenant facilities.

The applicant estimates that the average annual generation would be about 16.8 gigawatthours.