

comments or concerns about the project. By becoming a commentor, your concerns will be addressed in the EA and considered by the Commission. You should focus on the potential environmental effects of the proposal, alternatives to the proposal, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. Please carefully follow these instructions to ensure that your comments are received in time and properly recorded:

- Send an original and two copies of your letter to: Kimberly D. Bose, 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 3.
- Reference Docket No. CP02–25–001.
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before May 30, 2007.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing of any comments or interventions or protests to this proceeding. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the "e-Filing" link and the link to the User's Guide. Before you can file comments you will need to create a free account which can be created on-line.

We may mail the EA for comment. If you are interested in receiving it, please return the Information Request (Appendix 3). If you do not return the Information Request, you will be taken off the mailing list.

#### Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an official party to the proceeding, or "intervenor". 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). Intervenor has the right to seek rehearing of the Commission's decision. Motions to Intervene should be electronically submitted using the Commission's eFiling system at <http://www.ferc.gov>. Persons without Internet access should send an original and 14 copies of their motion to the Secretary of the Commission at the address indicated previously. Persons filing Motions to Intervene on or before the comment deadline indicated above must send a

copy of the motion to the Applicant. All filings, including late interventions, submitted after the comment deadline must be served on the Applicant and all other intervenors identified on the Commission's service list for this proceeding. Persons on the service list with email addresses may be served electronically; others must be served a hard copy of the filing.

Affected landowners and parties with environmental concerns may be granted intervenor status upon showing good cause by stating that they have a clear and direct interest in this proceeding which would not be adequately represented by any other parties. You do not need intervenor status to have your environmental comments considered.

#### Environmental Mailing List

An effort is being made to send this notice to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed project. This includes all landowners who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within distances defined in the Commission's regulations of certain aboveground facilities. By this notice we are also asking governmental agencies, especially those in Appendix 2, to express their interest in becoming cooperating agencies for the preparation of the EA.

#### Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at 1-866-208-FERC or on the FERC Internet Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) using the eLibrary link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on "General Search" and enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field. Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission now offers a free service called eSubscription which 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. Go to <http://www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm>.

Finally, public meetings or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at <http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx> along with other related information.

**Philis J. Posey,**  
Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. E7-8540 Filed 5-3-07; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. PF07-4-000]

#### Midcontinent Express Pipeline LLC; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Midcontinent Express Pipeline Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings

April 27, 2007.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that will identify and address the environmental impacts that could result from construction and operation of the Midcontinent Express Pipeline Project (Project) proposed by Midcontinent Express Pipeline LLC (MEP). The Commission will use the EIS in its decision-making process to determine whether or not to authorize the Project. This notice explains the scoping process we<sup>1</sup> will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the Project. Your input will help us determine the issues that need to be evaluated in the EIS. Please note that the scoping period will close on May 29, 2007.

Comments on the Project and the issues that should be addressed in the EIS 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, we invite you to attend the public scoping meetings that we have scheduled as follows:

<sup>1</sup>"We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the FERC's Office of Energy Projects.

Date and time	Location
Monday, May 14, 2007; 7 p.m. (CDT) .....	Quitman Depot, Main Street and Railroad Avenue, Quitman, MS 39355.
Tuesday, May 15, 2007; 7 p.m. (CDT) .....	Pearl Community Room, 2420 Old Brandon Rd., Pearl, MS 39208.
Thursday, May 17, 2007; 7 p.m. (CDT) .....	Delhi High School Auditorium, 413 Main Street, Delhi, LA 71232.
Date and time	Location
Monday, May 21, 2007; 7 p.m. (CDT) .....	Minden Community House, 711 Gladney Street, Minden, LA 71055.
Tuesday, May 22, 2007; 7 p.m. (CDT) .....	Mt. Pleasant Civic Center, 1800 North Jefferson, Mt. Pleasant, TX 75455.
Thursday, May 24, 2007; 7 p.m. (CDT) .....	Love Civic Center, 2025 South Collegiate Drive, Paris, TX 75460.

This notice is being sent to affected landowners; Federal, State, and local government agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers; all of which are encouraged to submit comments on the proposed Project. Details on how to submit comments are provided in the Public Participation section of this notice.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, you may be contacted by a MEP representative about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed Project facilities. The pipeline company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the Project is approved by the FERC, that approval conveys with it the right of eminent domain. Therefore, if easement negotiations fail to produce an agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings in accordance with state law.

A fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility on My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" is available for viewing on the FERC Internet Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>). This fact sheet addresses a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the FERC's proceedings.

### Summary of the Proposed Project

MEP proposes to construct, own and operate approximately 494 miles of new 30-, 36-, and 42-inch-diameter interstate natural gas transmission pipeline, a total of approximately 111,420 horsepower (hp) of compression at one booster and four new mainline compressor stations, and related appurtenant facilities located in portions of Oklahoma, northeast Texas, northern Louisiana, central Mississippi, and Alabama. The proposed pipeline route identified by MEP would extend from a receipt point with existing pipeline infrastructure near Bennington in Bryan County,

Oklahoma, to an interconnect with the existing Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company system near Butler in Choctaw County, Alabama. The general location of the proposed pipeline is shown in the figure included as Appendix 1.<sup>2</sup>

Specifically, the MEP Project facilities under FERC jurisdiction would include the following:

- Approximately 40 miles of 30-inch-diameter pipeline in Bryan County, Oklahoma, and Fannin and Lamar Counties, Texas;
- Approximately 257 miles of 42-inch-diameter pipeline in Lamar, Red River, Franklin, Titus, Morris, and Cass Counties, Texas, and Caddo, Bossier, Webster, Claiborne, Lincoln, Union, Ouachita, Morehouse, Richland, and Madison Parishes, Louisiana;
- Approximately 197 miles of 36-inch-diameter pipeline in Madison Parish, Louisiana, and Warren, Hinds, Rankin, Simpson, Smith, Jasper, Clarke, Counties, Mississippi, and Choctaw County, Alabama;
- Four new mainline and one booster, natural gas-fired compressor stations, including:
  - A new 38,555 hp compressor station at Milepost (MP) 43.9 in Lamar County, Texas;
  - A new 12,270 hp compressor station at MP 131.7 in Cass County, Texas;
  - A new 32,720 hp compressor station at MP 249.7 in Union Parish, Louisiana;
  - A new 18,405 hp compressor station at MP 346.1 in Warren County, Mississippi;
  - A new 9,470 hp booster compressor station at MP 300.6 in Madison Parish, Louisiana;

<sup>2</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the **Federal Register**. Copies of all appendices, other than Appendix 1 (maps), are available on the Commission's Web site at the "eLibrary" link or from the Commission's Public Reference Room, 888 First Street, NE., Washington, DC 20426, or call (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary refer to the Public Participation section of this notice. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail. Requests for detailed maps of the proposed facilities should be made directly to MEP.

• Meter stations at up to 13 interconnects with existing pipeline infrastructure in Bryan County, Oklahoma; Lamar and Cass Counties, Texas; Ouachita, Richland, and Madison Parishes, Louisiana; Hinds, Smith, Jasper, and Clarke Counties, Mississippi; and Choctaw County, Alabama;

- Various pig<sup>3</sup> launching and receiving facilities; and
- 29 mainline valves.

MEP indicates that the proposed Project facilities would provide long-haul takeaway capacity to facilitate the transport of natural gas from production areas in Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas to markets in the Southeast, Northeast and Midwest regions of the United States that can be accessed through interconnects with existing pipeline infrastructure. The Project would consist of two capacity zones. The initial transport capacity of Zone 1, which would include the 30- and 42-inch-diameter portions of the pipeline facilities, would be 1.4 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day (Bcf/d). However, additional supporting contracts could provide for expansion of the Zone 1 transport capacity to 1.5 Bcf/d. Zone 2, which would include the balance of the pipeline facilities, would have a transport capacity of 1.2 Bcf/d.

MEP proposes to place the first 40 miles of 30-inch-diameter pipeline in service by October 31, 2008, with the remainder of the pipeline constructed and operational by February 2009.

### Land Requirements for Construction

As proposed, the typical construction right-of-way for the Project pipeline would be 100 feet wide for the 30-inch-diameter portion of the pipeline and 125 feet wide for the 36-inch and 42-inch-diameter portions of the pipeline. Following construction, MEP would retain a 50-foot-wide permanent right-of-way for operation of the Project. Additionally, temporary extra

<sup>3</sup> A pig is a mechanical tool used to clean and inspect the interior of a pipeline.

workspaces beyond the typical construction right-of-way limits would also be required at certain feature crossings (e.g., roads, railroads, wetlands, or waterbodies), in areas with steep side slopes, in association with special construction techniques, or at pipe storage and contractor yards. In residential areas, wetlands, and other sensitive areas, the construction right-of-way width would be reduced as necessary to protect homeowners and environmental resources. Following construction, all temporary workspaces (including the temporary construction rights-of-way and extra workspaces) would be restored and allowed to revert to its former use.

### The EIS Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from the approval of an interstate natural gas pipeline. The FERC will use the EIS to consider the environmental impact that could result if the Project is authorized under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act.

NEPA also requires us to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals to be considered by the Commission. This process is referred to as "scoping." The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EIS on the important environmental issues. With this Notice of Intent, the Commission staff is requesting public comments on the scope of the issues to be addressed in the EIS. All comments received will be considered during preparation of the EIS.

In the EIS we will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed Project under these general headings:

- Geology and soils;
- Water resources;
- Wetlands and vegetation;
- Fish and wildlife;
- Threatened and endangered species;
- Land use, recreation, and visual resources;
- Air quality and noise;
- Cultural resources;
- Socioeconomics;
- Reliability and safety; and
- Cumulative impacts.

In the EIS, 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 affected resources.

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

The Draft EIS will be mailed to Federal, State, and local government agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; affected landowners; commentors; other interested parties; local libraries and newspapers; and the FERC's official service list for this proceeding. 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. We will consider all comments on the Final EIS before we make our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure that your comments are considered, please follow the instructions in the Public Participation section of this notice.

Although no formal application has been filed, the FERC staff has already initiated its NEPA review under the Commission's Pre-filing Process. The purpose of the 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.

With this notice, we are asking Federal, State, and local governmental agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues, especially those identified in Appendix 2, to express their interest in becoming cooperating agencies for the preparation of the EIS. These agencies may choose to participate once they have evaluated the proposal relative to their responsibilities. Agencies that would like to request cooperating status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided in Appendix 2.

### Currently Identified Environmental Issues

The EIS will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of construction and operation of the proposed Project. We have already identified several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the Project site and the facility information provided by MEP. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Potential impacts to water resources, including groundwater and perennial and intermittent waterbodies.
- Evaluation of temporary and permanent impacts on wetlands and development of appropriate mitigation.
- Potential impacts to fish and wildlife habitat, including potential impacts to federal and state-listed threatened and endangered species.

- Potential impacts to natural vegetative communities, including native prairie and forestland.
- Potential effects on prime farmland soils and soils with a high potential for compaction or erosion.
- Potential impacts to existing land uses, including agricultural and managed forested lands.
- Potential impacts to recreation and special interest areas, including Wetland Reserve Program lands and the Natchez Trace Parkway.
- Potential impacts to residential areas and planned developments.
- Potential disruption to area businesses associated with construction.
- Potential visual effects of the pipeline easement and aboveground facilities on surrounding areas.
- Potential impacts to local air and noise quality associated with construction and operation.
- Potential impacts to cultural resources and Native American lands.
- Public safety and hazards associated with the transport of natural gas.
- Alternative alignments for the pipeline route and alternative sites for the compressor stations.
- Assessment of the effect of the proposed Project when combined with other past, present, or reasonably foreseeable future actions in the Project area, including the potential cumulative effect of collocating multiple utility rights-of-way.

### Public Participation

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the proposed Project. By becoming a commentor, your concerns will be addressed in the EIS and considered by the Commission. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives (including alternative facility sites and pipeline routes), 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 carefully follow these instructions:

- Send an original and two copies of your letter to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426.
- Label one copy of your comments for the attention of Gas Branch 3, DG2E.
- Reference Docket No. PF07-4-000 on the original and both copies.
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before May 29, 2007.

The Commission strongly encourages electronic filing of any comments in response to this Notice of Intent. For information on electronic filing of comments, please see the instructions on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the "e-Filing" link and the link to the User's Guide, as well as information in 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii). Before you can submit comments you will need to create a free account, which can be created on-line.

The public scoping meetings (dates, times, and locations are listed above) are designed to provide another opportunity to offer comments on the proposed Project. Interested groups and individuals are encouraged to attend the meetings and to present comments on the environmental issues they believe should be addressed in the EIS. A transcript of each meeting will be generated so that your comments will be accurately recorded.

Once MEP formally files its application with the Commission, you may want to become an official party to the proceeding known as an "intervenor." Intervenors play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission's final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in a Commission proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are included in the User's Guide under the "e-filing" link on the Commission's Web site. Please note that you may not request intervenor status at this time. You must wait until a formal application is filed with the Commission.

#### Environmental Mailing List

An effort is being made to send this notice to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed Project. This includes all landowners who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for Project purposes, or who own homes within distances of certain aboveground facilities, as defined in the Commission's regulations.

If you received this notice, you are on the environmental mailing list for this Project. If you do not want to send comments at this time, but still want to remain on our mailing list, please return the Information Request (Appendix 3). If you do not return the Information Request, you will be removed from the Commission's environmental 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 Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov>. Using the "eLibrary" link, select "General Search" and enter the Project docket number excluding the last three digits (*i.e.*, PF07-4) in the "Docket Number" field. Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, or TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. 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>.

Public meetings or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at <http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx> along with other related information.

Finally, MEP has established an Internet Web site for this Project at <http://www.midcontinentexpress.com>. The Web site includes a description of the Project, a map of the proposed pipeline route, and answers to frequently asked questions. You can also request additional information or provide comments directly to MEP at 1-877-327-5515 or [pipelineinfo@midcontinentexpress.com](mailto:pipelineinfo@midcontinentexpress.com).

**Kimberly D. Bose,**

*Secretary.*

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**BILLING CODE 6717-01-P**

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

##### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP07-89-000]

##### Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline, Inc.; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed North Welda Storage Field Expansion Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

April 30, 2007.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the North Welda Storage Field Expansion Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Southern Star Central Gas Pipeline, Inc. (Southern Star) in and to an existing gas storage field in Anderson County, Kansas.<sup>1</sup> This EA will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, you may be contacted by a pipeline company representative about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities. The pipeline company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the project is approved by the Commission, that approval conveys with it the right of eminent domain. Therefore, if easement negotiations fail to produce an agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings in accordance with state law.

A fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" was attached to the project notice that Southern Star provided to landowners. This fact sheet addresses a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain and how to participate in the Commission's proceedings. It is available for viewing on the FERC Internet Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>).

#### Summary of the Proposed Project

Southern Star is proposing to: (1) Expand the existing certificated boundary and buffer zone of its existing storage field by acquiring certain property rights to approximately 1,240 acres; (2) to redefine the cap rock of the

<sup>1</sup> Southern Star's application was filed with the Commission under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act.