A free webcast of this event is available through www.ferc.gov. Anyone with Internet access who desires to view this event can do so by navigating to www.ferc.gov’s Calendar of Events and locating this event in the Calendar. The event will contain a link to its webcast via phone or contact Danelle Springer or David Reininger at (703) 993–3100.

Immediately following the conclusion of the Commission Meeting, a press briefing will be held in the Commission Meeting Room. Members of the public may view this briefing in the designated overflow room. This statement is intended to notify the public that the press briefings that follow Commission meetings may now be viewed remotely at Commission headquarters, but will not be telecast through the Capitol Connection service.


Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

The purpose of the FRRCC is to provide advice to the Administrator of EPA on provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App.2. The Charter for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Advisory Committee (FRRCC) will be renewed for an additional two-year period, as a necessary committee which is in the public interest, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App.2.

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
ACTION: Notice of Charter Renewal.

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The Charter for the Environmental Protection Agency’s Farm, Ranch, and Rural Communities Advisory Committee (FRRCC) will be renewed for an additional two-year period, as a necessary committee which is in the public interest, in accordance with the provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA), 5 U.S.C. App.2.

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
ACTION: Notice of Charter Renewal.


Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

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Immediately following the conclusion of the Commission Meeting, a press
environmental issues and policies that are of importance to agriculture and rural communities. It is determined that the FRRCC is in the public interest in connection with the performance of duties imposed on the Agency by law. Inquiries may be directed to Alicia Kaiser, U.S. EPA, (mail code 1101–A), 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue NW., Washington, DC 20460, telephone (202) 564–7273, or kaiser.alicia@epa.gov.


Lawrence Elworth,
Agricultural Counselor to the Administrator.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Agency.

AGENCY:

Environmental Protection Agency.

[FR Doc. 2012–3537 Filed 2–14–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6560–50–P

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL–9632–2]

Final Reissuance of the NPDES General Permit for Facilities Related to Oil and Gas Extraction in the Territorial Seas of Texas

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency.

ACTION: Notice of Final NPDES General Permit.

SUMMARY: The Director of the Water Quality Protection Division, EPA Region 6 today announces issuance of the final National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) general permit for the Territorial Seas of Texas (No. TXG260000) for discharges from existing and new dischargers and New Sources in the Offshore Subcategory of the Oil and Gas Extraction Point Source Category as authorized by section 402 of the Clean Water Act, 33 U.S.C. 1342 (CWA). The permit supersedes the previous general permit (TXG2600000) which expired on November 4, 2010. This permit renewal authorizes discharges from exploration, development, and production facilities located in and discharging to the territorial seas off Texas.

EPA proposed the draft permit in the Federal Register on October 24, 2011. EPA Region 6 has considered all comments received and makes one significant change to the proposed permit. A copy of the Region’s responses to comments and the final permit may be obtained from the EPA Region 6 Internet site: http://www.epa.gov/region6/water/npdes/genpermit/index.htm.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ms. Diane Smith, Region 6, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, 1445 Ross Avenue, Dallas, Texas 75202–2733. Telephone: (214) 665–2145.

DATES: This permit was issued and effective on February 8, 2012, and expires February 7, 2017. In accordance with 40 CFR part 23, this permit shall be considered issued for the purpose of judicial review on February 29, 2012. Under section 509(b) of the CWA, judicial review of this general permit can be held by filing a petition for review in the United States Court of Appeals within 120 days after the permit is considered issued for judicial review. Under section 509(b)(2) of the CWA, the requirements in this permit may not be challenged later in civil or criminal proceedings to enforce these requirements. In addition, this permit may not be challenged in other agency proceedings. Deadlines for submittal of notices of intent are provided in Part I.A.2 of the permit.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: EPA intends to use the reissued permit to regulate discharges from oil and gas extraction facilities located in the territorial seas off Texas under the CWA. To obtain discharge authorization, operators of such facilities must submit a new Notice of Intent (NOI). To determine whether your facility, company, business, organization, etc. is regulated by this action, you should carefully examine the applicability criteria in Part I, Section A.1 of the permit. If you have questions regarding the applicability of this action to a particular entity, consult the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section above.

Other Legal Requirements

Oil Spill Requirements. Section 311 of the CWA prohibits the discharge of oil and hazardous materials in harmful quantities. Discharges that are in compliance with NPDES permits under normal operational conditions are excluded from the provisions of section 311. However, the permit does not preclude the institution of legal action or relieve permittees from any responsibilities, liabilities, or penalties for other, unauthorized discharges of oil and hazardous materials which are covered by section 311 of the CWA. This general permit does not authorize discharges beyond normal exploration, development, and production of oil and gas extraction activities. For instance, an oil spill caused by explosion, like the Deepwater Horizon event that extended from April 20, 2010 to September 19, 2010, when oil flowed from a well in the outer continental shelf portion of the Gulf of Mexico, or any potential gas spill, is not authorized by this general permit.

Endangered Species Act. EPA evaluated the potential effects of issuance of this permit upon listed threatened or endangered species. Based on that evaluation, EPA has determined that authorization of the discharges is not likely to adversely affect any listed threatened or endangered species. EPA initiated section 7 consultations in accordance with the Endangered Species Act with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), and received the concurrence letter dated July 15, 2011, from FWS (Consultation No. 21410–2004–I–0051), and a letter dated January 3, 2012, from NMFS (Ref. No. I/SER/2011/00705).

National Environmental Policy Act.

EPA issued a final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which was published in the Federal Register at 69 FR 15829 on March 26, 2004, to evaluate the potential environmental consequences of this Federal general permit action, pursuant to its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). EPA responded to all issues raised on the Final EIS and issued a Record of Decision on January 11, 2005. EPA has prepared a Supplemental Information Report (SIR) dated September 2011 to the 2005 issued final EIS. The SIR is posted on the Internet at: http://www.epa.gov/region6/water/npdes/genpermit/index.htm.

Ocean Discharge Criteria Evaluation.

For discharges into waters of the territorial sea, contiguous zone, or oceans, CWA section 403 requires EPA to consider guidelines for determining potential degradation of the marine environment in issuance of NPDES permits. These Ocean Discharge Criteria (40 CFR part 125, subpart M) are intended to "prevent unreasonable degradation of the marine environment and to authorize imposition of effluent limitations, including a prohibition of discharge, if necessary, to ensure this goal” (45 FR 65942, October 3, 1980). EPA prepared a report on “Ocean Discharge Criteria Evaluation for the NPDES General Permit for the Territorial Seas of the State of Texas” dated October 25, 2002, when EPA proposed the reissuance of the general permit in 2004, and concluded that reissuance of the Oil and Gas General Permit for the Territorial Seas of Texas would not result in unreasonable degradation of the marine environment. EPA has reevaluated the ten (10) criteria in the SIR mentioned above.


This Act (MPSRA) of 1972 regulates the dumping of all...