

Scoping Meetings

Commission staff will hold two scoping meetings in the vicinity of the project at the times and places noted below. The daytime meeting will focus on resource agency, Indian tribes, and non-governmental organization concerns, while the evening meeting is primarily for receiving input from the public. We invite all interested individuals, organizations, and agencies to attend one or both of the meetings, and to assist staff in identifying particular study needs, as well as the scope of environmental issues to be addressed in the environmental document. The times and locations of these meetings are as follows:

Evening Scoping Meeting

Date: Wednesday, January 24, 2018.
Time: 6:00 p.m. (EST).

Location: Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, 100 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.

Phone: (802) 223-5252.

Daytime Scoping Meeting

Date: Thursday, January 25, 2018.
Time: 9:00 a.m. (EST).

Location: Capitol Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, 100 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.

Phone: (802) 223-5252.

Scoping Document 1 (SD1), which outlines the subject areas to be addressed in the environmental document, was mailed to the individuals and entities on the Commission's mailing list. Copies of SD1 will be available at the scoping meetings, or may be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.gov>, using the eLibrary link. Follow the directions for accessing information in paragraph n. Based on all oral and written comments, a Scoping Document 2 (SD2) may be issued. SD2 may include a revised process plan and schedule, as well as a list of issues, identified through the scoping process.

Environmental Site Review

The potential applicant and Commission staff will conduct an Environmental Site Review (site visit) of the project on Wednesday, January 24, 2018, starting at 1:00 p.m. and ending at or about 3:00 p.m. All participants should meet at the base of Wrightsville Dam near the intersection of Mill Road and Corry Road in Montpelier, Vermont 05602. Participants are responsible for their own transportation. Persons with questions about the site visit should contact Dan Weston (802-223-5245; dan.weston@wec.coop) or Mark Wamser (603-428-4960; mwamser@gomezandsullivan.com).

Meeting Objectives

At the scoping meetings, staff will: (1) Initiate scoping of the issues; (2) review and discuss existing conditions and resource management objectives; (3) review and discuss existing information and identify preliminary information and study needs; (4) review and discuss the process plan and schedule for pre-filing activity that incorporates the time frames provided for in Part 5 of the Commission's regulations and, to the extent possible, maximizes coordination of federal, state, and tribal permitting and certification processes; and (5) discuss the appropriateness of any federal or state agency or Indian tribe acting as a cooperating agency for development of an environmental document.

Meeting participants should come prepared to discuss their issues and/or concerns. Please review the PAD in preparation for the scoping meetings. Directions on how to obtain a copy of the PAD and SD1 are included in item n. of this document.

Meeting Procedures

The meetings will be recorded by a stenographer and will be placed in the public records of the project.

Dated: December 29, 2017.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,

Deputy Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018-00127 Filed 1-5-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP18-12-000]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America LLC Proposed Herscher Northwest Storage Field Abandonment Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

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 Herscher Northwest Storage Field Abandonment Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America LLC (Natural) in Kankakee County, Illinois. The Commission will use this EA in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

This notice announces the opening of the scoping process the Commission will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the project. You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impacts. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please send your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before February 1, 2018.

If you sent comments on this project to the Commission before the opening of this docket on October 31, 2017, you will need to file those comments in Docket No. CP18-12-000 to ensure they are considered as part of this proceeding.

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for this project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this proposed project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

Natural Gas Pipeline Company of America LLC provided landowners with a fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" 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 also available for viewing on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov).

Public Participation

For your convenience, there are three methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

(1) You can file your comments electronically using the *eComment* feature on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to *Documents and Filings*. This is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;

(2) You can file your comments electronically by using the *eFiling* feature on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to *Documents and Filings*. With eFiling,

you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on “eRegister.” If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select “Comment on a Filing” as the filing type; or

(3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address. Be sure to reference the project docket number (C18–12–000) with your submission: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426.

Summary of the Proposed Project

Natural proposes to abandon the Herscher Northwest Storage Field with its certificated maximum inventory of 18.5 billion cubic feet (Bcf) located in Kankakee County, Illinois. Natural concludes that in light of the marginal well performance over the years, geologic uncertainty, and new Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration Regulations, it is no longer practicable to operate the storage field.

Natural proposes to abandon:

- In place 19 injection/withdrawal wells by permanently plugging and capping;
- In place 16.15 miles of 4- to 16-inch-diameter associated pipeline laterals in the storage field by grouting and capping;
- in place 13 non-jurisdictional observation wells by plugging;
- in place one non-jurisdictional salt water disposal well by plugging;
- in place approximately 15.3 Bcf of non-recoverable cushion gas;
- by removal the 330-horsepower Compressor Station 202 including its building, compressor unit, concrete piers and concrete foundation; and
- by removal all storage field auxiliary surface facilities including, but not limited to, aboveground well head piping, slug catchers, the water gathering system and methanol distribution systems, corrosion monitors, rectifiers and ground beds.

Natural requests certification by May, 2018, and expects to perform its abandonment activities over a four-year period (2018–2021).

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.¹

¹ The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the **Federal Register**. Copies of appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at www.ferc.gov using the link called “eLibrary” 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 last page of this notice.

Land Requirements for Construction

Natural would limit its construction activities to 54 acres of its existing rights-of-way and would restore all workspace to pre-abandonment conditions. Approximately 14 acres would be retained as permanent easements to permit Natural to maintain the abandoned facilities.

The EA Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requires the Commission to take into account the environmental impacts that could result from an action whenever it considers the issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity. NEPA also requires us² to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. This process is referred to as scoping. The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EA on the important environmental issues. By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues to address in the EA. We will consider all filed comments during the preparation of the EA.

In the EA 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;
- land use;
- water resources, fisheries, and wetlands;
- cultural resources;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- air quality and noise;
- endangered and threatened species;
- public safety; and
- cumulative impacts.

We will also evaluate reasonable alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

The EA will present our independent analysis of the issues. The EA will be available in the public record through eLibrary. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, we may also publish and distribute the EA to the public for an allotted comment period. We will consider all comments on the EA before making our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure we have the opportunity to consider and address your comments, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section, beginning on page 2.

² We, us, and our refer to the environmental staff of the Commission’s Office of Energy Projects.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues of this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA.³ Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice.

Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are using this notice to initiate consultation with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and to solicit their views and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project’s potential effects on historic properties.⁴ We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO as the project develops. On natural gas facility projects, the APE at a minimum encompasses all areas subject to ground disturbance (examples include construction right-of-way, contractor/pipe storage yards, compressor stations, and access roads). Our EA for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission’s regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the project. We will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that we

³ The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

⁴ The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.

send the information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed project.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies of the EA will be sent to the environmental mailing list for public review and comment. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the document instead of the CD version or would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please return the attached Information Request (appendix 2).

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an "intervenor" which is an official party to the Commission's proceeding. Intervenor 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 the proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the Document-less Intervention Guide under the e-filing link on the Commission's website. Motions to intervene are more fully described at <http://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/how-to/intervene.asp>.

Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (866) 208-FERC, or on the FERC website at 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 (*i.e.*, CP18-12-000). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or toll free at (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 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 www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp.

Finally, public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission's

calendar located at www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx along with other related information.

Dated: January 2, 2018.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018-00089 Filed 1-5-18; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

FEDERAL DEPOSIT INSURANCE CORPORATION

Proposed Statement of Policy for Participation in the Conduct of the Affairs of an Insured Depository Institution by Persons Who Have Been Convicted or Have Entered a Pretrial Diversion or Similar Program for Certain Offenses Pursuant to Section 19 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act

AGENCY: Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (FDIC).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The FDIC seeks to update its Statement of Policy (SOP), which is issued pursuant to Section 19 of the Federal Deposit Insurance Act (FDI Act) (Section 19). Section 19 prohibits, without the prior written consent of the FDIC, any person from participating in banking who has been convicted of a crime of dishonesty or breach of trust or money laundering, or who has entered a pretrial diversion or similar program in connection with the prosecution for such an offense.

Based upon its experience with the application of the SOP since 1998, the FDIC is now proposing to revise and issue an updated SOP and rescind the current SOP, and is seeking comments on the proposed revisions by issuing this **Federal Register** Notice. Notably, in addition to minor format and technical changes, as well as clarifying changes, the FDIC is proposing to expand its current *de minimis* exception to encompass insufficient funds checks of aggregate moderate value; small dollar, simple theft; and isolated, minor offenses committed by young adults. These carefully measured changes are intended to reduce regulatory burden by decreasing the number of covered offenses that will require an application, while ensuring that insured institutions are not subject to risk by convicted persons.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before March 9, 2018.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments, identified by Section 19, by any of the following methods:

- **Agency website:** <https://www.fdic.gov/regulations/laws/federal/>. Follow instructions for submitting comments on the Agency website.

- **Email:** Comments@fdic.gov. Include Section 19 on the subject line of the message.

- **Mail:** Robert E. Feldman, Executive Secretary, Attention: Comments, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, 550 17th Street NW, Washington, DC 20429.

- **Hand Delivery:** Comments may be hand delivered to the guard station at the rear of the 550 17th Street Building (located on F Street) on business days between 7:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

Public Inspection: All comments received will be posted without change to <https://www.fdic.gov/regulations/laws/federal/>, including any personal information provided. Paper copies of public comments may be ordered from the FDIC Public Information Center, 3501 North Fairfax Drive, Room E-1002, Arlington, VA 22226 by telephone at (877) 275-3342 or (703) 562-2200.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Brian Zeller, Review Examiner, (319) 395-7394 x4125, or Larisa Collado, Section Chief, (202) 898-8509, in the Division of Risk Management Supervision; or Michael P. Condon, Counsel, (202) 898-6536, or Andrea Winkler, Supervisory Counsel, (202) 898-3727 in the Legal Division.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Background

Section 19 of the FDI Act (12 U.S.C. 1829) prohibits, without the prior written consent of the FDIC, a person convicted of any criminal offense involving dishonesty or breach of trust or money laundering (covered offenses), or who has agreed to enter into a pretrial diversion or similar program in connection with a prosecution for such offense, from becoming or continuing as an institution-affiliated party (IAP), owning or controlling, directly or indirectly an insured depository institution (insured institution), or otherwise participating, directly or indirectly, in the conduct of the affairs of an insured institution. Further, the law forbids an insured institution from permitting such a person to engage in any conduct or to continue any relationship prohibited by Section 19. It also imposes a ten-year ban against the FDIC's consent for a person convicted of certain crimes enumerated in Title 18 of the United States Code, absent a motion by the FDIC and approval by the sentencing court.

The FDIC issued, after notice and comment, the current SOP for Section