

**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Federal Energy Regulatory  
Commission**

[Docket No. CP98-686-000]

**Williams Gas Pipeline Central, Inc.;  
Notice of Request Under Blanket  
Authorization**

July 30, 1998.

Take notice that on July 23, 1998, Williams Gas Pipelines Central, Inc., (Applicant), One Williams Center, P.O. Box 3288, Tulsa, Oklahoma, 74101-0330, filed in Docket No. CP98-686-000 a request pursuant to Sections 157.205, and 157.216 of the Commission's Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205, and 157.216) for approval to abandon by reclaim facilities installed to receive transportation gas from TEC Pipeline, L.L.C., (TEC) located in Nowata County, under Applicant's blanket certificate issued in Docket Nos. CP82-479-000, pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act (NGA), all as more fully set forth in the request which is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

Applicant asserts that the metering facilities for which it now seeks abandonment authorization are owned by TEC and that by letter dated March 19, 1998, TEC has agreed to the proposed abandonment. Applicant states that the estimated cost to abandon these facilities is \$272.

Any person or the Commission's Staff may, within 45 days of the issuance of the instant notice by the Commission, file pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214), a motion to intervene and pursuant to Section 157.205 of the regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.205), a protest to the request. If no protest is filed within the time allowed therefor, the proposed activities shall be deemed to be authorized effective the day after the time allowed for filing a protest. If a protest is filed and not withdrawn 30 days after the time allowed for filing a protest, the instant request shall be treated as an application for authorization pursuant to Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act.

**David P. Boergers,***Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 98-20853 Filed 8-4-98; 8:45 am]

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**DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY****Federal Energy Regulatory  
Commission**

[Docket No. CP98-637-000]

**Columbia Gas Transmission  
Corporation; Notice of Intent To  
Prepare an Environmental Assessment  
for the Proposed VNG Replacement  
Project and Request for Comments on  
Environmental Issues**

July 30, 1998.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation's (Columbia) proposal to construct about 6.9 miles of 20-inch-diameter pipeline to replace an equivalent length of 12-inch-diameter pipeline on its Line VM-108 in Sussex County, Virginia.<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.

Columbia states that the proposed replacement is primarily due to the age and condition of the old pipeline. Also, the proposed replacement would allow Columbia to transport the additional storage service volume to Virginia Natural Gas, Inc. in Norfolk, Virginia.

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 addressing a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain, is attached to this notice as appendix 1.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

<sup>2</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the **Federal Register**. Copies are available from the Commission's Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, or call (202) 208-1371. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

**Summary of the Proposed Project**

Columbia seeks authorization for the following:

(1) Construct approximately 6.9 miles of 20-inch-diameter pipeline to replace an equivalent length of 12-inch-diameter pipeline on Line VM-108 in Sussex County, Virginia;

(2) Increase the deliverability of its existing Gladly Storage Field by 14,100 Mcfd in Randolph and Pocohantas Counties, West Virginia by reworking two wells; and

(3) Reacquire from Transco Energy Marketing Company certain pipeline capacity on its Solo Pipeline between Emporia, Virginia and Petersburg, Virginia, and on Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Corporation's pipeline from Boswells Tavern, Virginia, to Emporia, Virginia.

The location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.

**Land Requirements for Construction**

Construction of the proposed facilities would require about 109 acres of land. Following construction, about 58 acres would be maintained as new permanent right-of-way. The remaining 51 acres of land would be restored and allowed to revert to its former use.

**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 us to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. We call this "scoping". The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EA on the important environmental issues. By this Notice of Intent, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues it will address in the EA. All comments received are considered during the preparation of the EA. State and local government representatives are encouraged to notify their constituents of this proposed action and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

The EA 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, fisheries, and wetlands.
- Vegetation and wildlife.
- Endangered and threatened species.
- Public safety.

- Land use.
- Cultural resources.
- Air quality and noise.
- Hazardous waste.

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 the various resource areas.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be in the EA. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, the EA may be published and mailed to Federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, interested individuals, affected landowners, newspapers, libraries, and the Commission's official service list for this proceeding. A comment period will be allotted for review if the EA is published. We will consider all comments on the EA before we make our recommendations to the Commission.

To ensure your comments are considered, please carefully follow the instructions in the public participation section on page 4 of this notice.

#### Currently Identified Environmental Issues

We have already identified several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by Columbia. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- The project would cross two perennial streams classified as warm water fisheries which contain wild trout.
- Four federally listed endangered or threatened species may occur in the proposed project area.
- Prehistoric and historic archeological sites and landscape with historic structures may be affected.

#### Public Participation

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific 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 (including alternative locations/routes, 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 two copies of your letter to: David P. Boergers, Acting Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., N.E., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426;

- Label one copy of the comments for the attention of the Environmental Review and Compliance Branch, PR-11.2.

- Reference Docket No. CP98-637-000; and

- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before August 31, 1998.

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 4). 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 known as an "intervenor". Intervenor play a more formal role in the process. Among other things, intervenors have the right to receive copies of case-related Commission documents and filings by other intervenors. Likewise, each intervenor must provide 14 copies of its filings to the Secretary of the Commission and must send a copy of its filings to all other parties on the Commission's service list for this proceeding. If you want 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) (see appendix 3). Only intervenors have the right to seek rehearing of the Commission's decision. You do not need intervenor status to have your environmental comments considered.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from Mr. Paul McKee of the Commission's Office of External Affairs at (202) 208-1088.

**David P. Boergers,**

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 98-20851 Filed 8-4-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-M

#### DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

#### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

#### Notice of Amendment of License

July 30, 1998.

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

a. *Type of Application:* Amendment of License.

b. *Project No:* 346-033.

c. *Date Filed:* July 20, 1998.

d. *Applicant:* Minnesota Power, Incorporated.

e. *Name of Project:* Minnesota Blanchard Project.

f. *Location:* Morrison County, Royalton, Minnesota.

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

h. *Applicant Contact:* Mr. John A. Niemela P.E., Minnesota Power, Incorporated, 30 West Superior Street, Duluth, Minnesota 55802 (218) 722-5642, extension 3329.

i. *FERC Contact:* Doan Pham, (202) 219-2851.

j. *Comment Date:* September 18, 1998.

k. *Description of the Filing:* The licensee filed an application to amend the license to remove from the project boundary, about 1, 831.59 acres of private property and 103.27 acres of fee-owned property, located along the Mississippi River, about 8.5 river miles upstream and 0.8 river mile downstream of the Blanchard Dam. The licensee indicates these properties are not necessary for project operation and maintenance, do not have any value with regard to environmental resources enhancement, and are subject to adequate local zoning and land use regulation by the local government agencies.

l. This notice also consists of the following standard paragraphs: B, C1, and D2.

B. Comments, Protests, or Motions to Intervene—Anyone may submit comments, a protest, or a motion to intervene in accordance with the requirements of Rules of Practice and Procedure, 18 CFR 385.210, .211, .214. In determining the appropriate action to take, the Commission will consider all protests or other comments filed, but only those who file a motion to intervene in accordance with the Commission's Rules may become a party to the proceeding. Any comments, protests, or motions to intervene must be received on or before the specified comment date for the particular application.

C1. Filing and Service of Responsive Documents—Any filings must bear in all capital letters the title "COMMENTS", "RECOMMENDATIONS FOR TERMS AND CONDITIONS", "PROTEST", OR "MOTION TO INTERVENE", as applicable, and the Project Number of the particular application to which the filing refers. Any of the above-named documents must be filed by providing the original and the number of copies