

36. American Electric Power Service Corporation Central and South West Services, Inc.

[Docket No. ER00-989-000]

Take notice that on January 3, 2000, American Electric Power Service Corporation (AEP) and Central and South West Services, Inc. (CSW) tendered for filing an amendment to the Open Access Transmission Tariff filed in this docket on April 30, 1998. The amendment would offer a new service-Network Contract Demand service in the East Zone.

AEP and CSW request that the amendment become effective upon the consummation of their proposed merger.

Copies of the filing have been served upon all parties to Docket Nos. EC98-40-000, ER98-2786-000 and ER98-2770-000, all of AEP's and CSW's transmission customers and the public service commissions of each of the eleven states in which AEP and CSW transact business.

Comment date: January 21, 2000, in accordance with Standard Paragraph E at the end of this notice.

Standard Paragraphs

E. Any person desiring to be heard or to protest such filing should file a motion to intervene or protest with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426, in accordance with Rules 211 and 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.211 and 385.214). All such motions or protests should be filed on or before the comment date. Protests will be considered by the Commission in determining the appropriate action to be taken, but will not serve to make protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party must file a motion to intervene. Copies of these filings are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection. This filing may also be viewed on the Internet at <http://www.ferc.fed.us/online/rims.htm> (call 202-208-2222 for assistance).

David P. Boergers,
Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP00-34-000]

Algonquin Gas Transmission Corporation; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Fore River Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

January 7, 2000.

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 Fore River Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Algonquin Gas Transmission Corporation (Algonquin) in Norfolk County, Massachusetts.¹ These facilities would consist of about 7.4 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline and construction of measurement facilities. 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 addressing a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain, is attached to this notice as appendix 1.²

Summary of the Proposed Project

Algonquin proposes to construct facilities to provide transportation service of up to 140,000 dekatherms per day of natural gas for Sithe Power Marketing (Sithe). Sithe has requested

¹ Algonquin's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

² The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the **Federal Register**. Copies are available on the Commission's website at the "RIMS" link or from the Commission's Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426, or call (202) 208-1371. For instructions on connecting to RIMS refer to the last page of this notice. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

firm natural gas transportation service to fuel the Fore River Station a 750-megawatt gas-fired electronic power plant being constructed near Weymouth, Massachusetts. Algonquin seeks authority to:

- Replace approximately 6.9 miles of existing 10-inch-diameter pipeline (I-3 Lateral) with 24-inch-diameter pipeline from milepost (MP) 0.0 in Canton, Massachusetts to MP 6.9 in Braintree, Massachusetts; and

- Construct a new 0.5-mile-long, 24-inch-diameter pipeline (I-9 Lateral) and measurement facilities in Braintree and Weymouth, Massachusetts.

The location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 2.

Land Requirements for Construction

Construction of the proposed facilities would require about 85.5 acres of land. Following construction, about 26.5 acres would be maintained as permanent right-of-way. The remaining 59 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
- Hazardous waste
- Land use
- Cultural resources
- Endangered and threatened species
- Public safety

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 beginning on page 4.

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 Algonquin. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- The project would cross 31 wetlands and 25 streams.
- The project would be within 50 feet of 178 residences.
- The project may cross historic or prehistoric archeological sites.

Also, we have made a preliminary decision to not address the impacts of the nonjurisdictional facilities. Approval of the Sithe Energy Fore River Station is currently pending before the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board. We will identify the location, and its permit approval and/or construction status in the EA.

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 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, Secretary Federal

Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426;

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

- Reference Docket No. CP00-34-000; and

- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before February 7, 2000.

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 status is 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.

The date for filing timely motions to intervene in this proceeding has passed. Therefore, parties now seeking to file late interventions must show good cause, as required by section 385.214(b)(3), why this time limitation should be waived. Environmental issues have been viewed as good cause for late intervention.

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 or on the FERC website (www.ferc.fed.us) using the "RIMS" link to information in this docket number. Click on the "RIMS" link, select "Docket #" from the RIMS Menu, and follow the instructions. For assistance with access to RIMS, the RIMS helpline can be reached at (202) 208-2222.

Similarly, the "CIPS" link on the FERC Internet website provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings. From the FERC Internet website, click on the "CIPS" link, select "Docket #" from the CIPS menu, and follow the instructions. For assistance with access to CIPS, the

CIPS helpline can be reached at (202) 208-2474.

Linmwood A. Watson, Jr.,
Acting Secretary.

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ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

[FRL-6522-8]

Agency Information Collection Activities: Proposed Collection; Comment Request; State Water Quality Program Management Gap Analysis

AGENCY: Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (44 U.S.C. 3501 *et seq.*), this document announces that EPA is planning to submit the following proposed Information Collection Request (ICR) to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB): Information Collection Request for the State Water Quality Program Management Gap Analysis. Before submitting the ICR to OMB for review and approval, EPA is soliciting comments on specific aspects of the proposed information collection as described below.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before March 13, 2000.

ADDRESSES: Public Comments. All public comments shall be submitted to: State Water Quality Program Management Gap Analysis ICR Comment Clerk (Mail Code 4201), Environmental Protection Agency, Office of Wastewater Management, Resource Management and Evaluation Staff, Ariel Rios Building, 1200 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20460. Commentors who want EPA to acknowledge receipt of their comments should enclose a self-addressed stamped envelope. Comments may also be submitted electronically to: crow.carol@epa.gov.

Interested persons may obtain a copy of the ICR and supporting analysis without charge by contacting the individual listed below.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Carol Crow, Telephone: (202) 260-6742, Facsimile Number: (202) 260-1156, E-mail: crow.carol@epa.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Electronic comments must be submitted as an ASCII file avoiding the use of special characters and forms of encryption. Electronic comments must be identified