

application for approval of a ground water withdrawal project to supply up to 21 million gallons (mg)/30 days of water to the applicant's distribution system from existing Well Nos. 2 and 4, and to limit the withdrawal from all wells to 21 mg/30 days. The project is located in Camden-Wyoming, Kent County, Delaware.

Documents relating to this item may be examined at the Commission's offices. A preliminary docket is available upon request. Please contact Thomas L. Brand at (609) 883-9500 ext. 221 concerning docket-related questions. Persons wishing to testify at this hearing are requested to register with the Secretary at (609) 883-9500 ext. 203 prior to the hearing.

Dated: May 12, 1998.

Susan M. Weisman,

Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Notice of Floodplain and Wetlands Involvement of Bayou Choctaw Pipeline Extension to Placid Refinery, Iberville and West Baton Rouge Parishes, Louisiana

AGENCY: Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Energy (DOE) hereby provides notice that the proposed construction of an approximately 16-mile crude oil pipeline segment to connect the existing DOE-owned Bayou Choctaw pipeline in Iberville Parish, Louisiana, to the Placid Oil Refinery in Port Allen, West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana, would occur in a 100-year floodplain and would involve wetlands. Pursuant to 10 CFR Part 1022, DOE will prepare a floodplain and wetlands assessment which will be incorporated in an environmental assessment (EA) being prepared in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

DATES: Written comments should be postmarked or transmitted electronically or by facsimile by June 5, 1998.

ADDRESSES: Written comments, questions about the proposed action, and requests to review the draft EA should be directed to Mr. Hal Delaplaine, Strategic Petroleum Reserve (FE-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585, Telephone (202) 586-4730, Fax (202) 586-7919, E-mail = hal.delaplaine@hq.doe.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON GENERAL DOE FLOODPLAIN AND WETLANDS ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW REQUIREMENTS, CONTACT: Carol M. Borgstrom, Director, Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance (EH-42), U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20585, Telephone (202) 586-4600 or (800) 472-2756.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under Executive Order 11988, Floodplain Management, and 10 CFR Part 1022, Compliance with Floodplain-Wetlands Environmental Review Requirements (http://tis-nt.eh.doe.gov/nepa/tools/regulate/nepa_reg/1022/1022.htm), notice is given that DOE is considering a request from Shell Pipe Line Corporation (Shell) to amend Shell's lease of DOE's Bayou Choctaw crude oil pipeline. Shell has asked for the change to enable it to construct its own 16-mile pipeline from a tie-in to the DOE pipeline at the Strategic Petroleum Reserve Bayou Choctaw Facility in Iberville Parish, Louisiana, to the Placid Oil Refinery near Port Allen, West Baton Rouge Parish, Louisiana. This project would not occur within the Coastal Zone of Louisiana but would be within a 100-year floodplain and would involve wetlands.

Before it approves Shell's request, DOE will prepare an EA of the construction and operation of the extended Bayou Choctaw pipeline to Placid Refinery pursuant to 10 CFR Part 1021, DOE NEPA Implementing Procedures (http://tis-nt.eh.doe.gov/nepa/tools/regulate/nepa_reg/1021

/nepa1021.htm). Shell has also applied to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New Orleans District, for a construction permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. DOE is coordinating its NEPA compliance process with the USACE permit process (33 CFR Parts 320-330, http://ceres.ca.gov/wetlands/permitting/404/corps_permit_regulations.html).

The 24-inch steel pipeline would be constructed in existing pipeline and utility corridors for all but about 2 miles of its length. As shown in the map below, about 7.7 miles of the proposed route is within the 100-year floodplain. The pipeline would cross sugarcane fields and about 8.5 miles of forested wetlands. About 86 acres of bottomland hardwoods would be impacted.

Push-site construction would be used in wetland areas. The pipeline would be directionally drilled under the Intracoastal Waterway and Interstate 10. Eight additional road crossings and two railroad crossings would be by slick bore or directional drill. Crossings of Bayou Bourbeaux and six drainage canals would be by open cut trench or directional drill.

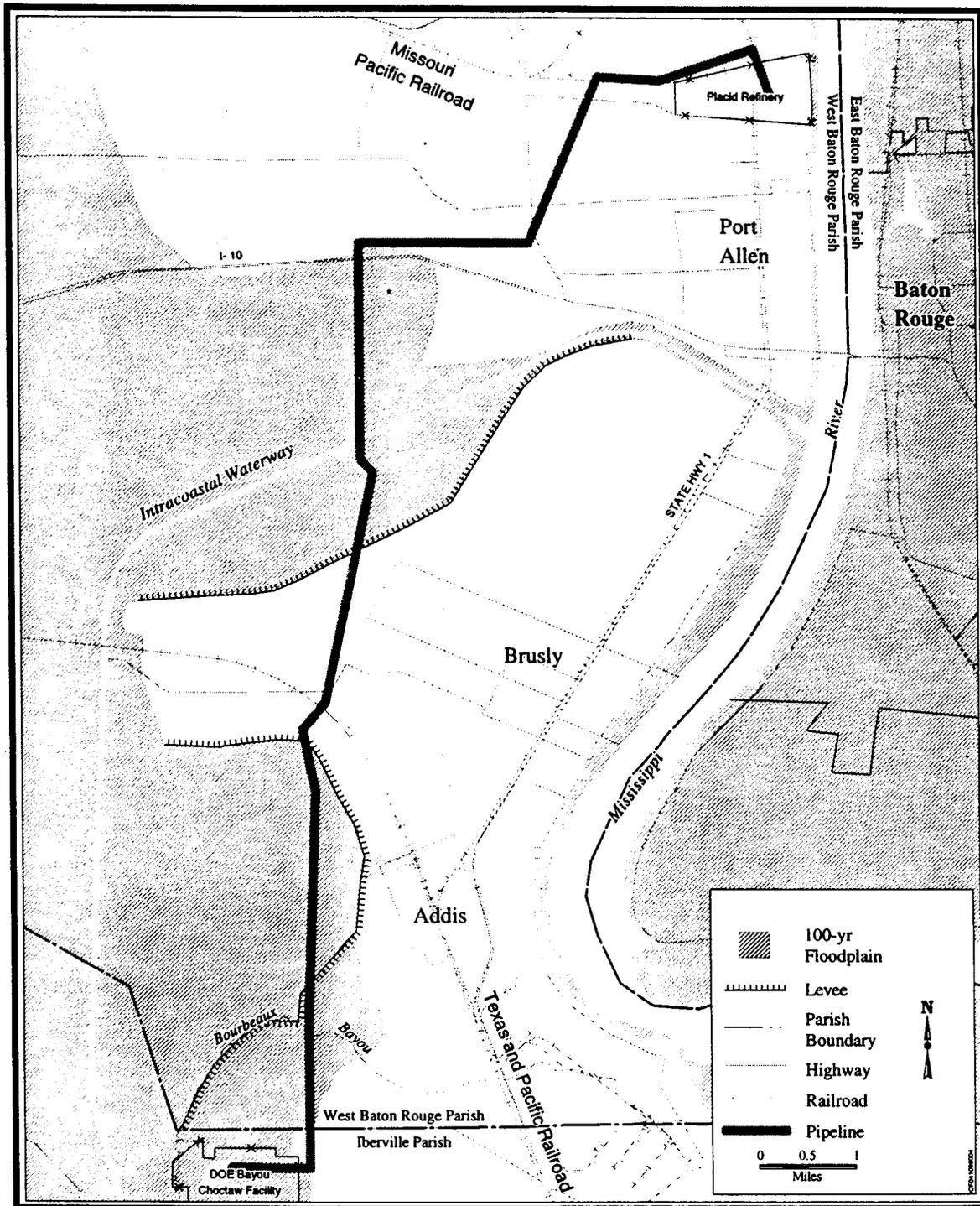
In accordance with DOE regulations for compliance with floodplain and wetlands environmental review requirements (10 CFR Part 1022), DOE will prepare a floodplain and wetlands assessment for this proposed action. The assessment will be incorporated in the EA being prepared for the proposed project in accordance with NEPA. DOE expects to have a draft of the EA available for public review in June 1998. Copies may be requested by telephone, facsimile, or e-mail from the address given above. A floodplain statement of findings will be included in any finding of no significant impact that is issued following completion of the EA or may be issued separately.

Issued in Washington, DC, on May 1, 1998.

Robert S. Keipowig,

Acting, Assistant Secretary for Fossil Energy.

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Floodplains Near Proposed Pipeline