

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

[Docket No. PF14-16-000]

**Columbia Gulf Transmission, LLC; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Planned Cameron Access 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 Cameron Access Project (Project) involving construction and operation of facilities by Columbia Gulf Transmission, LLC (Columbia Gulf) in Jefferson Davis, Calcasieu, and Cameron Parishes, Louisiana. The Commission will use this EA in its decision-making process to determine whether the planned 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 planned Project. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. Please note that the scoping period will close on October 27, 2014.

You may submit comments in written form. Further details on how to submit written comments are in the Public Participation section of this notice.

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

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, a pipeline company representative may contact you about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the planned facilities. The company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the Commission approves the planned Project, 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 where compensation would be determined in accordance with state law.

A fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility on My Land? What Do I Need

To Know?" is available for viewing on the FERC Web site ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)). 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.

**Summary of the Planned Project**

Columbia Gulf has announced their plans to expand and operate the existing Columbia Gulf West Lateral to increase the capacity of the Columbia Gulf system. The planned Cameron Access Project would provide improvements to the existing Columbia Gulf West Lateral pipeline and compression facilities to provide for additional market access to the existing Cameron LNG Terminal. Columbia Gulf plans to begin Project construction in September 2016 if all required permits, certificates, and authorizations are obtained. The Cameron Access Project would include the following facilities:

- 7.9 miles of 30-inch diameter natural gas pipeline loop<sup>1</sup> and associated ancillary facilities, designated West Lateral (WL) 400 Loop (400L), in Jefferson Davis Parish;
- 27.2 miles of 36-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline and associated ancillary facilities, designated WL 400, in Jefferson Davis, Cameron, and Calcasieu parishes (WL 400);
- one new point of delivery meter station, designated MS-4246, in Cameron Parish; and
- one new 10,200 horsepower compressor station, designated the Lake Arthur Compressor Station, in Jefferson Davis Parish.

Maps depicting the general location of the planned Project facilities are included in appendix 1.<sup>2</sup>

**Land Requirements for Construction**

Columbia Gulf is still in the planning phase for the planned Project and construction workspace requirements have not been finalized. However, construction would typically require a right-of-way width of 125 feet in uplands and 75 feet in wetlands. Columbia Gulf has estimated that 586 acres would be required for construction

<sup>1</sup> Looping is when one pipeline is laid parallel to another and is often used as a way to increase capacity along a right-of-way beyond what is possible on one line, or an expansion of an existing pipeline.

<sup>2</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed 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](http://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.

and 262 acres for operation of the Project.

**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<sup>3</sup> 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 Project under these general headings:

- geology and soils;
- water resources and wetlands;
- fish, wildlife, and vegetation;
- threatened and endangered species;
- land use, recreation, and visual resources;
- air quality and noise;
- cultural resources;
- socioeconomic;
- reliability and public safety; and
- cumulative environmental impacts.

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

Although no formal application has been filed, we have already initiated our NEPA review under the Commission's pre-filing process. The purpose of the pre-filing process is to encourage early involvement of interested stakeholders and to identify and resolve issues before the FERC receives an application. As part of our pre-filing review, we have begun to contact some federal and state agencies to discuss their involvement in the scoping process and the preparation of the EA.

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

<sup>3</sup> "We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the Commission's Office of Energy Projects.

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 on page 5.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues related to this Project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA.<sup>4</sup> 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.<sup>5</sup> 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.

### Public Participation

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. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. 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 October 27, 2014.

For your convenience, there are three methods which you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. In all instances, please reference the Project docket number (PF14-16-000) with your submission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or [efiling@ferc.gov](mailto:efiling@ferc.gov).

(1) You can file your comments electronically using the eComment feature on the Commission's Web site ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to Documents and Filings. This is an easy method for interested persons to submit brief, text-only comments on a project;

(2) You can file your comments electronically using the eFiling feature on the Commission's Web site ([www.ferc.gov](http://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." You must select the type of filing you are making. If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select "Comment on a Filing"; or

(3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426.

### Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Indian 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 send the information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the planned Project.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies 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

Once Columbia Gulf files its application with the Commission, you may want to become an "intervenor" which is an official party to the Commission's proceeding. Intervenor status 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 User's Guide under the "eFiling" link on the Commission's Web site. Please note that the Commission will not accept requests for intervenor status at this time. You must wait until the Commission receives a formal application for the Project.

### 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 Web site at [www.ferc.gov](http://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., PF14-16). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto: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 now 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](http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp).

Finally, public meetings or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at [www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx](http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx) along with other related information.

Dated: September 26, 2014.

**Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,**  
Deputy Secretary.

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<sup>4</sup> The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

<sup>5</sup> 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.