

transportation with a capacity for approximately 56, barrels per day. The pipeline will facilitate crude oil imports from Canada.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), 42 U.S.C. 4231 *et seq.*, The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations, 40 CFR 1500–1508, and Department's regulations for implementation of NEPA (22 CFR Part 161), the Department of State has conducted an environmental assessment of the proposed construction by Portal Pipe Line Company of a crude oil pipeline across the international boundary near Portal, North Dakota. The Department of State is charged with the issuance of Presidential Permits authorizing construction of such international pipelines under Executive Order 11423 (1968), as amended by Executive Order 12847 (1993). Several federal agencies cooperated in preparation of the environmental assessment, reviewing and commenting on the analysis and conclusions presented therein. Agencies participating in this process together with the Department of State included: the Environmental Protection Agency, the Departments of Defense, Treasury, Interior, Commerce, Transportation, the Attorney General, the Chairman of the Surface Transportation Safety Board, and the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Interested parties were invited to comment on the proposed application in a Federal Register Notice, 60 FR 56384 (November 8, 1995).

Based on the final environmental assessment, which included a preliminary environmental assessment, comments received from interested agencies and responses to those comments, the Department of State has concluded that issuance of a Presidential Permit authorizing construction of the proposed pipeline (as described in the final environmental assessment) will not have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment within the United States. Therefore, in accordance with CEQ's NEPA regulations 40 CFR 1501.4 and 1508.13 and with State Department Regulations, 22 CFR 161.8 (c) an environmental impact statement will not be prepared.

Factors Considered

The environmental assessment carefully considered the route alternative that minimized environmental and human impacts while offering the most direct and economic route. The proposed pipeline

would allow the U.S. to move an additional 30,000 barrels a day of oil to major population centers in the Midwest through the construction of an 8 mile pipeline. The pipeline is also being constructed along an existing pipeline right-of-way for most of its length. The proposed pipeline also offers likely advantages over a no action alternative. The U.S. depends heavily on oil imports and other means of importing an additional 30,000 barrels of oil per day could involve greater incremental environmental risks than the proposed pipeline, such as increased shipments by tanker or new pipeline capacity of greater length or through more heavily populated or environmentally sensitive areas.

Further analysis and reasoning supporting the pipeline routing are presented in the original pipeline application. Copies of supporting information for this finding and the final environmental assessment can be obtained from the State Department's Office of International Energy and Commodities Policy, 202–647–2875.

Environmental Justice

In addition to the analysis conducted in accordance with NEPA, the Department of State addressed environmental justice considerations pursuant to Executive Order 12898 of February 11, 1994 ("Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations"). Based on its examination of environmental justice considerations, the Department has determined that the proposed pipeline will not have disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations. The analysis supporting this determination can be obtained from the State Department, Office of International Energy and Commodities Policy, 202–647–2887.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE PIPELINE PERMIT APPLICATION CONTACT: Susan Phillips, Office of International Energy and Commodities Policy, Room 3529, U.S. Department of State, Washington, DC, 20520, (202) 647–2887.

Dated: April 4, 1996.

Stephen J. Gallogly,

Acting Director, International Energy and Commodities Policy.

[FR Doc. 96–12367 Filed 5–16–96; 8:45 am]

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[Public Notice 2390]

Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation; Notice of Meeting

The Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic documentation will meet in the Department of State, June 6–7, 1996 in Conference Room 1205.

The Committee will meet in open session from 9:00 a.m. on the morning of Thursday, June 6, 1996, until 12:00 noon. The remainder of the Committee's sessions from 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 6, until 1:00 p.m. Friday, June 7, will be closed in accordance with Section 10(d) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (P.L. 92–463). It has been determined that discussions during these portions of the meeting will involve consideration of matters not subject to public disclosure under 5 U.S.C. 552b(c)(1), and that the public interest requires that such activities will be withheld from disclosure.

Questions concerning the meeting should be directed to William Z. Slany, Executive Secretary, Advisory Committee on Historical Diplomatic Documentation, Department of State, Office of the Historian, Washington, DC, 20520, telephone (202) 663–1123, (e-mail histoff@ix.netcom.com).

Dated: May 7, 1996.

William Z. Slany,
Executive Secretary.

[FR Doc. 96–12366 Filed 5–16–96; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4710–11–M

[Public Notice 2379]

Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs; Certifications Pursuant to Section 609 of Public Law 101–162

SUMMARY: On April 30, 1996, the Department of State certified, pursuant to Section 609 of Public Law 101–162 ("Section 609"), that 13 nations have adopted programs to reduce the incidental capture of sea turtles in shrimp fisheries comparable to the program in effect in the United States. In addition, the Department certified that the fishing environment in 23 other countries does not pose a threat of the incidental taking of sea turtles protected under Section 609. Shrimp imports from any nation not certified were prohibited effective May 1, 1996, pursuant to Section 609.

EFFECTIVE DATE: May 17, 1996.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Hollis Summers, Office of Marine Conservation, Bureau of Oceans and

International Environmental and Scientific Affairs, Department of State, Washington, DC 20520-7818; telephone: (202) 647-3940.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 609 prohibits imports of shrimp from foreign nations unless the President certifies to the Congress by May 1 of each year either: (1) that the harvesting nation has adopted a program governing the incidental capture of sea turtles in its commercial shrimp fishery comparable to the program in effect in the United States; or (2) that the fishing environment in the harvesting nations does not pose a threat of the incidental taking of sea turtles. The President has delegated the authority to make this certification to the Department of State. Revised State Department guidelines for making the required certifications were published in the Federal Register on April 19, 1996 (FR Vol. 61, No. 77, pp. 17342-17344).

A December, 1995 U.S. Court of International Trade decision expanded the scope of Section 609 to include all countries which harvest shrimp. On April 30, 1996, the Department of State certified that 36 of the affected countries have met the requirements of the law. As a result, shrimp imports from all other countries harvested with commercial fishing technology which may adversely affect sea turtles were prohibited pursuant to Section 609 effective May 1, 1996. The ban on shrimp imports from Suriname (in effect since May 1, 1993) and French Guiana (in effect since May 1, 1992) remain in place.

The countries that were certified on April 30, 1996, are Argentina, the Bahamas, Belgium, Belize, Brunei, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Denmark, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Germany, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Jamaica, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Norway, Oman, Panama, Peru, Russia, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Trinidad and Tobago, the United Kingdom, Uruguay and Venezuela.

Of these, the Department certified that the fishing environment in some countries does not pose a threat of the incidental taking of sea turtles protected by Section 609. The following 15 nations have shrimp fisheries only in cold waters where there is essentially no risk of taking sea turtles: Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Chile, Denmark, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and Uruguay. The following 8 nations only harvest shrimp using manual

rather than mechanical means to retrieve nets: the Bahamas, Brunei, the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Oman, Peru and Sri Lanka. Use of such small-scale technology does not adversely affect sea turtles.

The following countries were certified as having adopted programs to reduce the incidental capture of sea turtles in shrimp fisheries comparable to the program in effect in the United States: Belize, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Guyana, Indonesia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Panama, Trinidad and Tobago, and Venezuela.

In implementing the ban on shrimp imports from all countries not certified, any shipment with a recorded date of export prior to May 1, 1996, will be allowed entry into the United States even if it arrives on or after May 1, 1996. That is, shipments in transit prior to the effective date of the ban are not barred from entry.

The Department of State communicated the certifications under Section 609 to the Office of Trade Operations of the United States Customs Service in a letter transmitted on May 2, 1996.

As is clear from the revised guidelines issued by the Department of State on April 19, 1996, the implementation of the Court of International Trade's order has required certain procedural refinements. The Department will keep these guidelines under close review throughout the upcoming year to ensure the effective implementation of Section 609, and will carefully review their effectiveness and enforceability before making any 1997 certifications. It is the intention of the Department to promote the development of comprehensive TED programs in all harvesting nations where shrimp trawl fisheries pose a risk to sea turtles. Any comments on or information regarding the effectiveness of the implementation process is welcome.

Technical Revision

Public Notice 2368, "Revised Notice of Guidelines for Determining Comparability of Foreign Programs for the Protection of Turtles in Shrimp Trawl Fishing Operations," (61 FR 17342), is revised as follows:

"IV. Related Determinations" is amended to read "III. Related Determinations".

In Section III (as amended above), paragraph (b), the reference to "Sections II and III" is amended to read "Sections I and II".

Dated: May 13, 1996.

David A. Colson,

Ambassador, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Oceans.

[FR Doc. 96-12371 Filed 5-16-96; 8:45 am]

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OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES TRADE REPRESENTATIVE

Trade Policy Staff Committee; Public Comments on the Accessions of Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine to the World Trade Organization (WTO), and on U.S. Participation in Negotiations for the Terms of Those Accessions

ACTION: Notice and request for comments.

SUMMARY: The Trade Policy Staff Committee (TPSC) is requesting written public comments concerning U.S. commercial interests and other issues related to the accession of Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine to the WTO. Public comments should include, but not be limited to, information concerning these countries' current trade policies and practices which affect (A) market access for U.S. exports, e.g., tariffs, non-tariff measures; (B) trade and investment in services, and (C) other aspects of their trade regimes subject to WTO provisions that affect U.S. trade interests. Comments received will be considered in developing U.S. positions and objectives for the multilateral and bilateral negotiations that will determine the terms of WTO accession for Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine.

DATES: Public comments are due by noon on Friday, June 21, 1996.

ADDRESSES: Office of the U.S. Trade Representative, 600 17th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20508.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Barbara Chattin, Director for Tariff Negotiations (202-395-5097), Peter Collins, Deputy Assistant USTR for Services and Investment (202-395-7271) or Cecilia Leahy Klein, Director for WTO Accessions (202-395-3063), Office of the U.S. Trade Representative.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Chairman of the Trade Policy Staff Committee invites written comments from the public on market access and other issues to be addressed in the course of negotiations with Albania, Armenia, Croatia, Saudi Arabia, and Ukraine for accession to the WTO. Each of these countries has applied for membership in the WTO and has