

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 this filing are on file with the Commission and are available for public inspection. This filing may also be viewed on the web at <http://www.ferc.gov> using the "RIMS" link, select "Docket#" and follow the instructions (call 202-208-2222 for assistance). Comments, protests and interventions may be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. See, 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's web site under the "e-Filing" link.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket Nos. CP00-232-000 and CP00-232-001]

Iroquois Gas Transmission System, L.P.; Notice of Availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Eastchester Project

December 14, 2001.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) on the natural gas pipeline facilities proposed by Iroquois Gas Transmission System, L.P. (Iroquois) in the above referenced docket.

The FEIS was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The staff concludes that approval of the proposed project, with the mitigation measures recommended in the DEIS, would have limited adverse environmental impact.

The FEIS addresses the potential environmental effects of the project proposed by Iroquois to convey natural gas from Northport, Long Island, to the Bronx, New York and evaluates alternatives to the proposed project. The pipeline would be constructed across

Long Island Sound and be comprised of the following facilities:

32.8 miles of 24-inch diameter pipe;
Pipeline maintenance facilities constructed in Northport and the Bronx;
Gas meter, regulator, heater, and mainline valve at the terminus in the Bronx;

Two new compressor stations along the existing Iroquois pipeline;
Additions and modifications to three existing compressor stations; and
Work space and access roads to construct, operate, and maintain the above facilities.

The purpose of the proposed facilities would be to provide natural gas for electric generation and to serve residential, industrial, and commercial customers in New York City. The proposed project would serve:

Consolidated Edison Energy, Inc. (Dth/day)—30,000 dekatherms per day
Keyspan Ravenswood, Inc.—60,000 Dth/day
Orion Power Holdings, Inc.—60,000 Dth/day
Miriant New York Management, Inc.—60,000 Dth/day
Virginia Power Energy Marketing, Inc.—20,000 Dth/day.

Consultation

The draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) was issued on August 2, 2001 and distributed to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) as our biological assessment under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Written concurrence that the project, with the recommendations proposed by staff, would not likely affect listed species or critical habitat are anticipated from both FWS and NMFS.

Pursuant to section 305(b) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, federal agencies are required to consult with the NMFS on any action that may result in adverse effects to essential fish habitat (EFH). Our DEIS, containing an EFH assessment, was provided to NMFS. No Conservation Recommendations have been received from NMFS.

Availability

The FEIS has been placed in the public files of the FERC and is available for public inspection at: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch, 888 First Street, NE, Room 2A, Washington, DC 20426, (202) 208-1371.

Copies of the FEIS have been mailed to federal, state and local agencies, public interest groups, individuals who

have requested the FEIS, newspapers, and parties to this proceeding. It has also been distributed to the commentators and libraries listed in Appendix A of the FEIS. Those individuals who filed form letters were sent copies of this cover letter and the executive summary.

On October 11, 2001, the Commission issued a policy statement in Docket No. PL02-1, regarding previously public documents. The Commission advised the public that documents that were previously available through the Public Reference Room, the Internet, and RIMS were no longer to be considered public, and that anyone wishing to obtain these documents were to file a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Several figures in the FEIS are subject to the new Commission policy including: Figures 2.13.1, 2.13.2, and B-3 through B-12. Accordingly, these figures are not included in the public version of the FEIS. Anyone wishing to obtain these documents should file a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) and the Commission's regulations at 18 CFR 388.108. Further guidance may be obtained at the FERC Internet website (www.ferc.gov).

In accordance with Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA, no agency decision on a proposed action may be made until 30 days after the Environmental Protection Agency publishes a notice of availability of an FEIS. However, the CEQ regulations provide an exception to this rule when an agency decision is subject to a formal internal appeal process that allows agencies or the public to make their views known. In such cases, the agency decision may be made at the same time the notice of the FEIS is published, allowing both periods to run concurrently. The Commission decision for this proposed action is subject to a 30-day rehearing period.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (202) 208-1088 or on the FERC Internet website (www.ferc.gov) using 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 text 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.

Linwood A. Watson Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP02-31-000]

Iroquois Gas Transmission System, L.P.; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment and Request for Comments

December 14, 2001.

On November 20, 2001, Iroquois Gas Transmission System, L.P., (Iroquois) filed an application to construct and to operate a new compressor station at Brookfield, Connecticut. Iroquois' application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations. The application was noticed on November 29, 2001. On December 5, 2001, Commission staff conducted a site visit and met with numerous Brookfield property owners. Based on review of the application, the site visit, and comments received during the site visit, we have decided to prepare an environmental assessment (EA) to evaluate the environmental impacts of the proposed project. Comments received in response to this notice will be used in a scoping process to identify the issues to be evaluated in the EA. The Commission will consider the EA prior to taking any final action on the application.

Summary of the Proposed Project

Iroquois requests authorization to construct and to operate a compressor station near an existing meter station on High Meadow Road, in the county of Fairfield, in Brookfield, Connecticut. Iroquois has an option to purchase a 65 acre parcel bounded by High Meadow Road, an existing meter station, residential property, Whisconier Middle School, railroad tracks, and a pond. On that parcel, Iroquois would install or construct:

- a new 10,000 horsepower compressor;
- a turbo-compressor building and 3 additional control/monitoring/maintenance buildings;
- a 500-foot long access road;
- security fence;
- water well; and septic system.

All proposed construction would occur either on the 65-acre parcel

described above or on the existing 3.3 acre meter station, owned by Iroquois.

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 Commission staff to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. This is called "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 to be addressed 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 to encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

We have already identified several issues that we think deserve attention based on our preliminary review. This list may change based on receipt of additional information and comments.

- Any potential threat of operation of the compressor station to life, health, and property at Whisconier Middle School and adjoining properties.
- Noise from compressor operation and system blow downs.
- Visual compatibility of existing and proposed structures with local architecture and visual setting.
- Visual screening of existing and proposed facilities.
- Degradation of local air quality and the potential for formation of a steam plume from the cooling vents.
- Design constraints that limit the potential location of alternative sites.
- Impacts of construction and operation to property values in the adjoining community.

By this notice, Iroquois is encouraged to provide any additional information regarding the above issues to supplement its application by the close of the comment period described in the public participation section.

The EA will also evaluate possible alternatives to the proposed project and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts. An independent analysis of 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 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 section that follows.

Public Participation

Your comments are requested. To ensure that your comments are addressed in the EA, we request that you file your environmental comments with the Commission as directed below:

- Send an original and two copies of your letter to Linwood Watson, Jr., Acting Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Room 1A Washington, DC 20426.
- Label one copy for the attention of GHG.
- Reference Docket No. CP02-31-000 in the cover letter.
- Mail your comments so that they are received on or before January 18, 2002.

Comments may also be filed electronically via the Internet in lieu of paper. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the "efiling" link and the link to the User's Guide.

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become a party to the proceeding known as an "intervenor". Intervenor has the right to receive copies of material filed with the Commission and any case-related issuances by the Commission. Further, an intervenor also has the right to request rehearing on the Commission's decision. An intervenor has certain responsibilities including, providing 14 copies of its filings to the Secretary of the Commission and must send a copy of its filings to the applicant and all other parties that intervened in the proceeding (Commission's service list). If you want to become an intervenor, you must file a motion to intervene according to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practices and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214). Requests to intervene may also be filed electronically.

Affected landowners and parties with environmental concerns may be granted intervenor status upon showing clear and direct interest in this proceeding which would not be adequately represented by any other parties. You do not need to be an intervenor to have