



BILLING CODE 6717-01-P
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP18-186-000]

Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC **Southeastern Trail Project**, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Notice of Public Scoping Sessions

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 Southeastern Trail Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC (Transco) across Virginia, South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana. The Commission will use this EA in its decision-making process to determine whether the 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 project. 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. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. 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 5:00 pm Eastern Daylight Time on **July 2, 2018**.

If you sent comments on this project to the Commission **before** the opening of this docket on April 11, 2018, you will need to file those comments in Docket No. CP18-186-000 to ensure they are considered as part of this proceeding.

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for this project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this proposed 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 proposed facilities. The company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the Commission approves the 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.

Transco provided landowners with a fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" 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. It is also available for viewing on the FERC website (www.ferc.gov).

Public Participation

For your convenience, there are four methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission will provide equal consideration to all comments received, whether filed in written form or provided verbally. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

- 1) You can file your comments electronically using the [eComment](#) feature on the Commission’s website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). This is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;
- 2) You can file your comments electronically by using the [eFiling](#) feature on the Commission’s website (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](#).” If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select “Comment on a Filing” as the filing type; or
- 3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address. Be sure to reference the project docket number (CP18-186-000) with your submission:

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

- 4) In lieu of sending written or electronic comments, the Commission invites you to attend one of the public scoping sessions its staff will conduct in the project area, scheduled as follows:

Date and Time	Location
Monday, June 18, 2018 4:30 - 8:00 pm	Brentsville High School 12109 Aden Rd. Nokesville, VA 20181 (703) 594-2161
	Scottsville Public Library

<p style="text-align: center;">Tuesday, June 19, 2018</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:30 - 8:00 pm</p>	<p>330 Bird Street Scottsville, VA 24590-0759 (434) 286-3541</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Wednesday, June 20, 2018</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4:30 - 8:00 pm</p>	<p>Old Dominion Education Center 19783 U.S. Hwy. 29 South Chatham, VA 24531 (434) 432-8026</p>

The primary goal of these scoping sessions is to have you identify the specific environmental issues and concerns that should be considered in the EA to be prepared for this Project. Individual verbal comments will be taken on a one-on-one basis with a court reporter. This format is designed to receive the maximum amount of verbal comments, in a convenient way during the timeframe allotted.

Each scoping session is scheduled from 4:30 pm to 8:00 pm EDT. You may arrive at any time after 4:30 pm. There will not be a formal presentation by Commission staff when the session opens. If you wish to speak, the Commission staff will hand out numbers in the order of your arrival. Comments will be taken until 8:00 pm. However, if no additional numbers have been handed out and all individuals who wish to provide comments have had an opportunity to do so, staff may conclude the session at 7:30 pm. Please see appendix 1 for additional information on the session format and conduct.¹

Your scoping comments will be recorded by the court reporter (with FERC staff or representative present) and become part of the public record for this proceeding. Transcripts will be publicly available on FERC’s eLibrary system (see below for instructions on using eLibrary). If a significant number of people are interested in providing verbal comments in the one-on-one settings, a time limit of 5 minutes may be implemented for each commentator.

It is important to note that verbal comments hold the same weight as written or electronically submitted comments. Although there will not be a formal presentation, Commission staff will be available throughout the comment session to answer your questions about the environmental review process. Representatives from Transco will also be present to answer project-specific questions.

¹The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the Federal Register. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at 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.

Please note this is not your only public input opportunity; please refer to the review process flow chart in appendix 2.²

Summary of the Proposed Project

Transco proposes to construct and operate about 7.7 miles of new natural gas pipeline (Manassas Loop) located along the existing Transco Mainline, expand three existing compressor stations in Virginia (Stations 185, 175, and 165), and modify 21 existing facilities in South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana as part of the Southeastern Trail Project. According to Transco, its project would provide 296.4 million standard cubic feet of natural gas per day (MMcf /d) of additional firm transportation capacity from the Pleasant Valley Interconnect facility in Fairfax County, Virginia to the existing Station 65 pooling point in St. Helena Parish, Louisiana, to serve the following customers: Public Service Company of North Carolina Incorporated (60 MMcf /d), South Carolina Electric and Gas (215 MMcf /d), Virginia Natural Gas (14.6 MMcf /d), and the cities of Buford (3.8 MMcf /d) and LaGrange (3 MMcf /d) in Georgia.

The specific facilities proposed as part of the Southeastern Trail Project are as follows:

- Construction of approximately 7.7 miles of new 42-inch-diameter pipeline loop³ (referred to as the Manassas Loop) in Fauquier and Prince William Counties, Virginia. The Manassas Loop would be collocated along the Transco Mainline from milepost 1568.13 to 1575.85 between Station 180 and Station 185.
- Expansion of existing compressor stations in Virginia
 - Upgrading the existing electric-driven compression unit driver from 25,000 to 30,000 horsepower (HP) and re-gearing the associated variable speed drive at Station 185 in Prince William County.
 - Addition of one new 22,490 HP turbine-driven compression unit and station cooling, and upgrading of the existing electric driven compression unit driver from 33,000- to 41,250-HP and rewheeling the associated centrifugal compressor at Station 175 in Fluvanna County.
 - Addition of two new 22,490 HP turbine-driven compression units, station cooling, and miscellaneous piping modifications; the abandonment and removal of ten reciprocating compressor units totaling 20,000 HP; and demolition of an existing compressor building at Station 165 in Pittsylvania County.
- Mainline Facility Modifications in South Carolina, Georgia, and Louisiana

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³ A pipeline loop is a segment of pipe constructed parallel to an existing pipeline to increase capacity.

- Flow reversal modifications to existing Station 65 in St. Helena Parish, Louisiana and existing Station 140 in Spartanburg County, South Carolina.
- Flow reversal modifications and installation of deodorization at existing Station 130 in Madison County, Georgia and existing Station 115 in Coweta County, Georgia.
- Installation of deodorization at existing Stations 116, 120, and 125 in Carroll, Henry, and Walton Counties, Georgia and Station 135 in Anderson County, South Carolina.
- Installation of deodorization at 13 existing mainline valve facilities in South Carolina and Georgia along the Transco Mainline.

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 3.

Land Requirements for Construction

Construction of the proposed facilities would disturb about 185 acres of land for the aboveground facilities and the pipeline, the majority of which is associated with the Manassas Loop (76.4 acres) in Fauquier and Prince William Counties, Virginia, and the Station 165 expansion (72.8 acres) in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. About 96 percent of the proposed Manassas Loop pipeline route would be co-located at a 25-foot offset from the existing Transco Mainline C pipeline, expanding the existing permanent right-of-way by 25 feet. In addition, one new permanent access road would be constructed and maintained to provide access to the new mainline valve for the Manassas Loop at Station 180. In total, Transco would maintain about 34.2 acres for permanent operation of the project's facilities, including 24.0 acres for the Manassas Loop and 10.0 acres for the Station 165 expansion. The remaining acreage would be restored and revert to former uses.

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 us⁴ 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 proposed project under these general headings:

- Geology and soils;
- Land use;

⁴ "We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the Commission's Office of Energy Projects.

- Water resources, fisheries, and wetlands;
- Cultural resources;
- Vegetation and wildlife;
- Air quality and noise;
- Endangered and threatened species;
- Public safety; and
- Cumulative impacts

We will also evaluate reasonable 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.

The EA will present our independent analysis of the issues. The EA will be available in the public record through eLibrary. We will publish and distribute the EA to the public for an allotted comment period. We will consider all comments on the EA before making our 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, beginning on page 2.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues of this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA.⁵ 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 Offices (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.⁶ We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPOs 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.

⁵ The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

⁶ 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.

Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American 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 proposed project.

Copies of the EA 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).**

Notice of Onsite Review

On June 18-20, 2018, the Office of Energy Projects staff will be in Fauquier, Prince William, Fluvanna, and Pittsylvania Counties, Virginia to gather data related to the environmental analysis of the Southeastern Trail Project. Staff will review environmental resources on the proposed Manassas Loop and visit Stations 175 and 165 to review the extent of proposed ground-disturbing activities. This will assist staff in completing its comparative evaluation of environmental impacts of the proposed project. Viewing of these facilities is anticipated to be from existing Transco right-of-way and at existing Transco stations.

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 website at 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., CP18-186). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at 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 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.

Finally, public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx along with other related information.

DATED: June 1, 2018

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,
Deputy Secretary.

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