April 14, 1997, file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, a motion to intervene or a protest in accordance with the requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214 and 18 CFR 385.211) and the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.10). All protests filed with the Commission will be considered by it in determining the appropriate action to be taken but will not serve to make the protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party to the proceeding or to participate as a party in any hearing therein must file a motion to intervene in accordance with the Commission's Rules.

Take further notice that, pursuant to the authority contained in and subject to the jurisdiction conferred upon the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission by Sections 7 and 15 of the Natural Gas Act and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a hearing will be held without further notice before the Commission or its designee on this application if no motion to intervene is filed within the time required herein, if the Commission on its own review of the matter finds that the request should be granted. If a motion for leave to intervene is timely filed, or if the Commission on its own motion believes that a formal hearing is required, further notice of such hearing will be duly given.

Under the procedure herein provided for, unless otherwise advised, it will be unnecessary for Ashland to appear or be represented at the hearing.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97–7849 Filed 3–27–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–M

[Docket No. CP97–263–000]

Ashland Exploration, Inc.; Notice of Application

March 24, 1997.

Take notice that on March 21, 1997, Ashland Exploration, Inc. (Ashland), 14701 Saint Mary's Lane, Houston, Texas 77079, completed the filing of an abbreviated application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity pursuant to section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act initially submitted on February 24, 1997. Ashland requests authorization to modify its remaining Martha Field pipeline facilities to accept the interconnection of a tap with the facilities to be constructed by Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company (Tennessee) and to install and operate compression associated with the Tennessee tap. Ashland also requests modification of its current certificate authority to deliver gas from Kentucky to West Virginia for sale to Mountaineer Gas Company to permit it to deliver gas to any buyer, all as more fully set forth in the application which is on file with the Commission and open to the public for inspection.

The remaining Martha Field pipeline facilities consist of approximately 6.9 miles of pipeline in the State of Kentucky which terminates in the State of West Virginia, approximately 6,000 feet from Ashland's Catlettsburg, Kentucky refinery.

Any persons desiring to be heard or to make any protest with reference to said application should, on or before April 14, 1997, file with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, a motion to intervene or a protest in accordance with the requirements of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure (18 CFR 385.214 and 18 CFR 385.211) and the Regulations under the Natural Gas Act (18 CFR 157.10). All protests filed with the Commission will be considered by it in determining the appropriate action to be taken but will not serve to make the protestants parties to the proceeding. Any person wishing to become a party to the proceeding or to participate as a party in any hearing therein must file a motion to intervene in accordance with the Commission's Rules.

Take further notice that, pursuant to the authority contained in and subject to the jurisdiction conferred upon the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission by Sections 7 and 15 of the Natural Gas Act and the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, a hearing will be held without further notice before the Commission or its designee on this application if no motion to intervene is filed within the time required herein, if the Commission on its own review of the matter finds that the request should be granted. If a motion for leave to intervene is timely filed, or if the Commission on its own motion believes that a formal hearing is required, further notice of such hearing will be duly given.

Under the procedure herein provided for, unless otherwise advised, it will be unnecessary for Ashland to appear or be represented at the hearing.

Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,

Acting Secretary.

[FR Doc. 97–7850 Filed 3–27–97; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–M

[Docket Nos. CP96–213–000, –001, and –004, and CP96–559–000]

Columbia Gas Transmission Corp. and Texas Eastern Transmission Corp.; Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Market Expansion Project

March 24, 1997.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared an environmental assessment (EA) on the natural gas pipeline facilities proposed by Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (Columbia) and Texas Eastern Transmission Corporation (Texas Eastern) in the above-referenced dockets.

The EA was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. The staff concludes that approval of the proposed project, with appropriate mitigating measures, would not constitute a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

The EA assesses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the proposed natural gas transmission pipelines, compression, storage field pipeline and well head facilities, and points of delivery and measurement facilities in Ohio, West Virginia, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Maryland. The activities and facilities proposed by Columbia include:

- construct 50 miles of new, loop, and replacement pipeline and uprate the maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) of about 282 miles of pipeline;
- construct, relocate, and/or uprate about 32,209 horsepower (hp) of compression at 12 existing compressor stations, construct 20,975 total hp at two new compressor stations, and abandon about 8,280 hp of compression at five existing compressor stations;
- increase the performance capability of 13 existing storage fields, including construction of 36 new wells, construction of about 23 miles of 4- to 24-inch-diameter storage field pipeline, abandonment of about 7 miles of 2- to 10-inch-diameter storage field pipeline, and ''well enhancement'' work at about 277 existing storage wells; and
- upgrade or replace facilities at 12 existing meter stations and construct 2 new meter stations.

The activities and facilities proposed by Texas Eastern include:

- replace about 26 miles of idled 20- and 24-inch-diameter pipeline in three sections;
- upgrade two existing compressor stations by a total of 6,000 hp and