

Date	Action
September 10, 1999 .....	Commission notifies applicant that its application has been accepted and specifies the need for additional information and due date.
September 15, 1999 .....	Commission issues public notice of the accepted application establishing dates for filing motions to intervene and protests.
September 30, 1999 .....	Commission's deadline for applicant for filing a final amendment, if any, to its application.
September 30, 1999 .....	Commission notifies all parties and agencies that the application is ready for environmental analysis.

Upon receipt of any additional information and the information filed in response to the public notice of the acceptance of the application, the Commission will evaluate the application in accordance with applicable statutory requirements and take appropriate action on the application.

Any questions concerning this notice should be directed to William Guey-Lee at (202) 219-2808, or email at william.gueylee@ferc.fed.us.

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 99-21500 Filed 8-18-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP99-191-000]

#### Northern Natural Gas Company; Notice of Availability of the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Elk River Loop '99 Project

August 13, 1999.

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 Northern Natural Gas Company (Northern) in the above-referenced docket. It also addresses alternative routes for the proposed pipeline.

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 concludes there is an environmentally preferable alternative and requests comments about it.

The EA assesses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of about 15 miles of 16-inch-diameter pipeline loop and appurtenances in Anoka and Sherburne Counties, Minnesota.

The purpose of the proposed facilities would be to provide about 23,873

million British thermal units per day of natural gas to meet increased market demand served by Northern's Elk River Branchline. Minnegasco, a Division of NorAm Energy Corporation and Northern States Power Company—Minnesota have contracted with Northern for this incremental service.

The EA has been placed in the public files of the FERC. A limited number of copies of the EA are available for distribution and 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 EA have been mailed to Federal, state and local agencies, public interest groups, landowners crossed by the proposed route or the alternatives, interested individuals, newspapers, and parties to this proceeding.

Any person wishing to comment on the EA may do so. To ensure consideration prior to a Commission decision on the proposal, it is important that we receive your comments before the date specified below. Please carefully follow these instructions to ensure that your comments are received in time and properly recorded:

- Send *two* copies of your comments to: Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St., NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426;
- Label *one* copy of the comments for the attention of the Environmental Review and Compliance Branch, PR-112;
- Reference Docket No. CP99-191-000; and
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before September 13, 1999.

Comments will be considered by the Commission but will not serve to make the commentor a party to the proceeding. Any person seeking to become a party to the proceeding must file a motion to intervene pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedures (18 CFR 385.214).

The date for filing timely motions to intervene in this proceeding has passed. Therefore, parties now seeking to file late interventions must show good cause, as required by section 385.214(b)(3), why this time limitation

should be waived. Environmental issues have been viewed as good cause for late intervention. You do not need intervenor status to have your comments considered.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from Paul McKee in the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (202) 208-1088 or on the FERC Internet website ([www.ferc.fed.us](http://www.ferc.fed.us)) using the "RIMS" link to information in this docket number. Click on 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 texts 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.*

[FR Doc. 99-21490 Filed 8-18-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Project No. 11574-000; Connecticut]

#### City of Norwich, Department of Public Utilities

#### Notice of Availability of Final Environmental Assessment

August 13, 1999.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (Commission) regulations, 18 CFR part 380 (Order No. 486, 52 F.R. 47897), the Office of Hydropower Licensing has reviewed the application for an original minor license for the Occum Hydroelectric Project, located on the Shetucket River in New Loudon County, Connecticut, and has

prepared a Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) for the project.

Copies of the FEA are available in the Public Reference Branch, Room 2-A, of the Commission's offices at 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426. For further information, contact Ed Lee at (202) 219-2809.

**Linwood A. Watson, Jr.,**

*Acting Secretary.*

[FR Doc. 99-21497 Filed 8-18-99; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP99-584-000]

#### **Koch Gateway Pipeline Company; Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Index 301-08L2 Prichard Loop Project and Request For Comments On Environmental Issues**

August 13, 1999.

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 construction of about 3.9 miles of 24-inch-diameter mainline loop, proposed in the Index 301-08L2 Prichard Loop Project.<sup>1</sup> This EA will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

If you are a landowner receiving this notice, you may be contacted by a pipeline company representative about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities. The pipeline company would seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable agreement. However, if the project is approved by the Commission, 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 in accordance with state law. A fact sheet addressing a number of typically asked questions, including the use of eminent domain, is attached to this notice as appendix 1.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Koch's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

<sup>2</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the **Federal Register**. Copies are available from the Commission's Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20426, or call (202) 208-1371. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

#### **Summary of the Proposed Project**

The Prichard Loop Project would be located entirely within the Prichard, Alabama city limits. Koch Gateway Pipeline Company (Koch) seeks authority to:

- Construct about 3.9 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline requiring about 31 acres of land;
- Use, as temporary workspace, about 12.4 acres of land;
- Construct a horizontal directional drill crossing of Chickasaw Creek;
- Use about 16 existing access roads; and
- At Whistler's Junction, replace the existing orifice meter with a 20-inch ultrasonic meter and install bypass and pigging facilities.

The location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 2. The proposed loop starts at Whistler's Junction (Station No. 11+95 on the Index 301-08L pipeline) and ties back into the mainline at Station No. 204+53, southwest of the Interstate 65 interchange with State Route 158. If you are interested in obtaining procedural information, please write to the Secretary of the Commission.

#### **Land Requirements for Construction**

About ninety-four percent of the proposed route of the Prichard Loop would occur within or adjacent to existing permanent rights-of-way of either Koch or the Alabama Power Company. Construction of the proposed facilities would require about 43.4 acres of land, including 14.2 acres of new permanent right-of-way. About 3.6 acres of existing pipeline and powerline rights-of-way would be used. The remaining 25.6 acres would be temporary construction areas (e.g., workspaces or construction right-of-way). All temporary construction areas would be allowed to revert to their former use.

#### **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 to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. We call this "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 it will address 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 encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

The EA 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.
- Water resources, fisheries, and wetlands.
- Vegetation and wildlife.
- Endangered and threatened species.
- Land use.
- Cultural resources.
- Public safety.

We will also evaluate possible 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.

Our independent analysis of the 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 interest groups, interested individuals, affected landowners, newspapers, libraries, and the 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 public participation section on page 4 of this notice.

#### **Currently Identified Environmental Issues**

We have already identified some issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information provided by Koch. This preliminary list of issues may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Four residences are located within 50 feet of the proposed construction right-of-way.
- The federally threatened gopher tortoise has been identified in the project area.
- Construction would include clearing 1.6 acres of forested wetlands.

#### **Public Participation**

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. By becoming a commentator, your