

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory
Commission

[Project No. 6879-019]

Southeastern Hydro-Power, Inc.;
Notice of Availability of Environmental
Assessment

October 21, 1999.

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (Commission's) regulations, the Office of Hydropower Licensing has reviewed the application requesting the Commission's authorization to amend the license for the proposed W. Kerr Scott Hydroelectric Project, to be located on the Yadkin River immediately below the existing W. Kerr Scott Dam, operated by the Wilmington District Corps of Engineers, in Wilkes County, North Carolina, and has prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the proposed action.

In the EA, Commission staff concludes that approval of the subject amendment of license with staff's recommended mitigative measures would not produce any significant adverse environmental impacts; consequently, the proposal would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Copies of the EA can be viewed at the Commission's Public Reference Room, Room 2A, 888 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20426, or by calling (202) 208-1371. The EA also may be viewed on the Web at www.ferc.fed.us/online/rims.htm. Call (202) 208-2222 for assistance.

For further information, please contact Jim Haines at (202) 219-2780.

David P. Boergers,

Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory
Commission

[Docket No. CP99-624-000]

Wyoming Interstate Company, Ltd.;
Notice of Intent To Prepare an
Environmental Assessment for the
Proposed Medicine Bow Lateral Phase
II Project and Request for Comments
on Environmental Issues

October 21, 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 Medicine bow Lateral Phase II Project involving the construction and operation of natural gas transmission facilities by Wyoming Interstate Company, Ltd. (WIC) in Weld County, Colorado and Converse County, Wyoming.¹ These proposed facilities primarily consist of about 5.6 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline and 7,170 horsepower (hp) of compression. 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 1.²

Summary of the Proposed Project

WIC wants to expand the capacity of its facilities in Colorado and Wyoming to transport an additional 120,000 Decatherms per day of natural gas on the Medicine Bow Lateral. WIC seeks authority to construct and operate:

¹ WIC's application was filed with the Commission under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations.

² 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, DC 20426, or call (202) 208-1371. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

Phase II Facilities (1999)

- About 5.6 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline in Weld County, Colorado;
- One 7,170-hp compressor unit at its existing Douglas Compressor Station in Converse County, Wyoming; and
- One check meter at its existing Cheyenne Compressor Station in Weld County, Colorado.

The location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 2.

Land Requirements for Construction

Construction of the proposed facilities would require about 61.3 acres of land. Following construction, about 33.3 acres would be maintained as permanent right-of-way. The remaining 28 acres of land would be restored and allowed to revert to its former use. All construction at WIC's Douglas Compressor Station in Converse County, Wyoming and its Cheyenne Compressor Station in Weld County, Colorado would occur within the existing sites.

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
- air quality and noise

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.