of the potential environmental effects of the proposed change from run-of-river to load-following operations of the projects and concludes that authorizing the amendments, with appropriate environmental protective measures would not constitute a major federal action that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment.

A copy of the Draft Environmental Assessment is available for review at the Commission in the Public Reference Room or may be viewed on the Commission's Web site at *http://www.ferc.gov* using the ''eLibrary'' link. Enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the docket number field to access the document. For assistance, contact FERC Online Support at *FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov* or toll-free at (866) 208–3676, or for TTY contact (202) 502–8695.

Any comments should be filed within 30 days from the date of this notice. Comments may be filed electronically via the Internet. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site at *http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/efiling.asp*. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support. Although the Commission strongly encourages electronic filing, documents may also be paper-filed. To paper-file, mail an original and seven copies to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Washington, DC 20426. All comments must include the docket numbers P–1975–102 and P–2061–086.

For further information, contact Rachel Price by telephone at 202–502–8907 or by email at *Rachel.Price@ferc.gov.*

Dated: June 26, 2012.

Kimberly D. Bose,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2012–16367 Filed 7–3–12; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717–01–P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP12–468–000]

Atlas Pipeline Mid-Continent WestTex, LLC; Pioneer Natural Resources USA, Inc.; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Driver Residue Pipeline Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

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 Driver Residue Pipeline Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Atlas Pipeline Mid-Continent WestTex, LLC and Pioneer Natural Resources USA, Inc. (Atlas and Pioneer), as joint applicants, in Midland County, Texas. 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. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. Please note that the scoping period will close on July 27, 2012.

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.

Atlas and Pioneer 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 Web site (*www.ferc.gov*).

Summary of the Proposed Project

Atlas and Pioneer propose to construct and operate 10.2 miles of 16-inch-diameter pipeline in Midland County, Texas. According to Atlas and Pioneer, increased natural gas production in the Permian Basin has brought about the need for additional natural gas processing facilities including the facilities to deliver residue gas to downstream markets from the Driver Plant that is presently under construction. The Driver Residue Pipeline Project would provide access to markets via two intrastate and one interstate natural gas pipeline systems for approximately 150 million standard cubic feet of natural gas per day.

The Driver Residue Pipeline Project would consist of the following facilities:

- Construction of 10.2 miles of 16-inch-diameter pipeline and appurtenant facilities between the Driver Plant and interconnections with Atmos Energy Corporation, Northern Natural Gas Company, and Enterprise Products Partners, LP.
- Installation of a pig launcher [1] east of the Driver Plant at the south end of the proposed pipeline at milepost (MP) 0.0, and a pig receiver at the north end at MP 10.2.
- Installation of about 40 feet of 6-inch-diameter pipeline to connect the proposed pipeline to the existing Atlas/Pioneer Shackleford Station near MP 8.3.

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.[2]

Land Requirements for Construction

Construction of the proposed facilities would disturb about 93.4 acres of land. Following construction, Atlas and Pioneer would maintain about 39.7 acres for permanent operation of the project's facilities; the remaining acreage would be restored and revert to former uses. The proposed pipeline would be installed using a 75-foot-wide construction right-of-way, of which a 30-foot-wide strip would remain as permanent right-of-way. The proposed pipeline route parallels existing pipeline rights-of-way.

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 [3] to discover and address concerns the

[1] A ''pig'' is a tool that the pipeline company inserts into and pushes through the pipeline for cleaning the pipeline, conducting internal inspections, or other purposes.

[2] The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the **Federal Register**. Copies of 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.

[3] ''We,'' ''us,'' and ''our'' refer to the environmental staff of the Commission's Office of Energy Projects.

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;
- 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. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, we may also 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 below.

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.[4] 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 applicable State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and to solicit its views and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project's potential effects on historic properties.[5] We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO 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 EAS for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

Public Participation

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. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. 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 July 27, 2012.

For your convenience, there are three methods which you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. In all instances please reference the project docket number (CP12–468) with your submission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502–8258 or *efiling@ferc.gov*.

(1) You can file your comments electronically using the eComment feature on the Commission's Web site (*www.ferc.gov*) under the link to Documents and Filings. This is an easy method for interested persons to submit brief, text-only comments on a project;

(2) You can file your comments electronically using the eFiling feature on the Commission's Web site (*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.'' You must select the type of filing you are making. If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select ''Comment on a Filing''; or

(3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426.

Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; Native American Tribes; 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.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies 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).

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an ''intervenor'' which is an official party to the Commission's proceeding. Intervenors play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission's final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in the proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the User's Guide under the ''e-filing'' link on the Commission's Web site.

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 Web site at *www.ferc.gov* using the ''eLibrary'' link. Click on the eLibrary

[4] The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, § 1501.6.

[5] 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.

link, click on ''General Search'' and enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field (i.e., CP12–468). 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 now 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/esubscribenow.htm.*

Finally, public meetings 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 27, 2012.

Kimberly D. Bose,

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2012–16370 Filed 7–3–12; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. RM98–1–000]

Records Governing Off-the-Record Communications; Public Notice

This constitutes notice, in accordance with 18 CFR 385.2201(b), of the receipt of prohibited and exempt off-the-record communications.

Order No. 607 (64 FR 51222, September 22, 1999) requires Commission decisional employees, who make or receive a prohibited or exempt off-the-record communication relevant to the merits of a contested proceeding, to deliver to the Secretary of the Commission, a copy of the communication, if written, or a summary of the substance of any oral communication.

Prohibited communications are included in a public, non-decisional file associated with, but not a part of, the decisional record of the proceeding. Unless the Commission determines that the prohibited communication and any responses thereto should become a part of the decisional record, the prohibited off-the-record communication will not be considered by the Commission in reaching its decision. Parties to a proceeding may seek the opportunity to respond to any facts or contentions made in a prohibited off-the-record communication, and may request that the Commission place the prohibited communication and responses thereto in the decisional record. The Commission will grant such a request only when it determines that fairness so requires. Any person identified below as having made a prohibited off-the-record communication shall serve the document on all parties listed on the official service list for the applicable proceeding in accordance with Rule 2010, 18 CFR 385.2010.

Exempt off-the-record communications are included in the decisional record of the proceeding, unless the communication was with a cooperating agency as described by 40 CFR 1501.6, made under 18 CFR 385.2201(e)(1)(v).

The following is a list of off-the-record communications recently received by the Secretary of the Commission. The communications listed are grouped by docket numbers in ascending order. These filings are available for review at the Commission in the Public Reference Room or may be viewed on the Commission's Web site at *http://www.ferc.gov* using the eLibrary link. Enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits, in the docket number field to access the document. 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.

Docket No.	Communication date	Presenter or requester
Prohibited:		
1. P–2114–000	6–7–12	Tim Culbertson.
2. ER12–1346–000 [1]	6–11–12	Peter Pry.
Exempt:		
1. ER12–1699–000	6–7–12	Hon. Ben Ray Luján.
2. P–14241–000	6–12–12	Hon. Mia Costello.
3. P–12690–005	6–12–12	Craig Trueblood.[2]
4. CP11–72–000	6–13–12	Members of Congress.[3]
5. P–12690–005	6–19–12	Craig Trueblood.[4]
6. CP12–72–000	6–19–12	Mr. and Mrs. G. Heinsohn
7. CP12–11–001	6–21–12	Jason Wallace.
8. CP11–161–000	6–26–12	PA House of Representatives.[5]
9. CP11–56–000	6–26–12	Hon. Nita M. Lowey.
10. CP11–161–000	6–26–12	Robert M. Ewbank.

[1] Pertains to Docket Nos. ER12–1346–000, ER12–1347–001, ER12–1338–000, ER12–1343–000 and ER12–1345–000.
[2] Email record.
[3] Hons. Rodney Alexander, Steve Scalise, John Fleming, Charles Boustany Jr., MD, Bill Cassidy, MD and Jeff Landry.
[4] Email record.
[5] Hons. Rosemary Brown, Michael Peifer and Elisabeth Baker.