

public may have about proposals. This is called "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:

- Water resources.
- Wetlands.
- Fisheries and essential fish habitat.
- Vegetation and wildlife.
- Endangered and threatened species.
- Land use, recreation, and visual resources.
- Cultural resources.
- Socioeconomics.
- Geologic and soil resources.
- Air and noise quality.
- Reliability and safety.
- System or route alternatives.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be in the EA. The EA will be mailed to Federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, interested individuals, affected landowners, newspapers, libraries, and the Commission's official service list for this proceeding. A 45-day comment period will be allotted for review of the EA. We will consider all comments on the EA and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a Final EA. The Final EA will include our responses to comments received and will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether to approve the project.

To ensure your comments are considered, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation and Scoping Meeting section of this Notice of Intent.

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

The EA will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed project. We have already identified a number of issues that deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities, the environmental information provided by AGT, and early input from intervenors. Some of these issues are listed below. This list is preliminary

and may be changed based on your comments and our analysis.

- Effect of construction on groundwater or surface water supplies;
- Potential failure of the HDD segments, or inadvertent releases of drilling lubricant or hazardous materials during the drilling activities;
- Extent and effects of turbidity and sedimentation that may result from pipeline trenching or directional drilling in shallow waters;
- Potential fuel spills from the pipelay barges and associated vessel traffic;
- Construction and operational effects on marine and estuarine habitats that support commercial or recreational fisheries;
- Potential effects to wildlife and fisheries, including essential fish habitat and other fishery resource of concern, and other biological resources of concern;
- Potential effects on federally endangered and threatened species including the piping plover, northern right whale, humpback whale, fin whale, loggerhead sea turtle, green sea turtle, hawksbill sea turtle, Kemp's ridley sea turtle, and leatherback sea turtle;
- Potential effects to onshore and offshore submerged cultural resources;
- Noise generated as a result of pipeline construction;
- Temporary disruption of local roadways and recreational trails during construction;
- Potential effect of the project on Logan Airport operations;
- Cumulative impacts and temporal loss of habitat function from additive effects of the proposed project with other projects, including natural gas pipelines and other utilities, which have been recently constructed or are proposed to be built in the same region;
- Public Safety in the vicinity of the proposed facilities.

Public Participation and Scoping Meeting

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. By becoming a commentor, your concerns will be addressed in the EA and considered by the Commission. You should focus on the potential environmental effects of the proposal, alternatives to the proposal (including alternative locations/routes), and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. Please carefully follow these instructions to ensure that your

comments are received in time and properly recorded:

- Send an original and two copies of your letter to: Magalie R. Salas, 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 Gas 2 Branch.
- Reference Docket No. CP01-5-003.
- Mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before April 18, 2003.

Please note that we are continuing to experience delays in mail deliveries from the U.S. Postal Service. As a result, we will include all comments that we receive within a reasonable time frame in our environmental analysis of this project. However, the Commission strongly encourages electronic filing of any comments or interventions or protests to this proceeding. See 18 CFR 385.2001(a)(1)(iii) and the instructions on the Commission's Web site at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the "e-Filing" link and the link to the User's Guide. Before you can file comments you will need to create a free account which can be created by clicking on "Login to File" and then "New User Account."

If you do not want to send comments at this time but still want to remain on our mailing list, please return the Information Request (Appendix 4). If you do not return the Information Request, you will be taken off the mailing list.

In addition to or in lieu of sending written comments, we invite you to attend a public scoping meeting. The FERC will conduct this public meeting together with the Massachusetts Energy Facilities Siting Board, at the time and location listed below:

Time: Wednesday April 9, 2003, at 7 PM, *Location:* Curtis Guild Elementary School, 195 Leyden Street, East Boston, MA 02128.

The public meeting is designed to provide you with more detailed information and another opportunity to offer your comments on the proposed project. Prior to the start of the meeting, company representatives will be available to informally discuss the project. Interested groups and individuals are encouraged to attend the meeting and to present comments on the environmental issues they believe should be addressed in the EA. A transcript of the meeting will be made so that your comments will be accurately recorded.

Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an official party to the