

parties collaboratively devise long-term conservation strategies.

On the basis of our independent analysis, the proposed amendments for the Lewis River Projects, with the recommended mitigation measures, would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP03–75–000]

Freeport LNG Development, L.P.; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Freeport LNG Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting and Site Visit

May 13, 2003.

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the Freeport LNG Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Freeport LNG Development, L.P. (Freeport) in Texas.¹ These facilities would consist of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal and storage facilities and 9.38 miles of 36-inch-diameter pipeline in Brazoria County. This EIS will be used by the Commission in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

This notice is being sent to residences within 0.5 mile of Freeport's proposed

¹ Freeport's application was filed with the Commission under Section 3(a) of the Natural Gas Act and Parts 153 and 380 of the Commission's regulations.

LNG facilities and to landowners along the proposed pipeline route. 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 prepared by the FERC entitled "An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?" was attached to the project notice Freeport provided to landowners. 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 available for viewing on the FERC Internet Web site (www.ferc.gov).

Summary of the Proposed Project

Freeport proposes to build a new LNG import, storage, and vaporization terminal on Quintana Island, southeast of Freeport, Texas; and a natural gas pipeline to transfer up to 1.5 billion cubic feet per day of imported natural gas to the Texas market. This would help satisfy the demand for natural gas in the state of Texas. Freeport seeks authority to construct and operate the following new facilities at its proposed site:

- LNG ship docking and unloading facilities with a protected single berth equipped with mooring and breasting dolphins, three liquid unloading arms, and one vapor return arm;
- Reconfiguration of a storm protection levee and a permanent access road;
- Two 26-inch-diameter (32-inch outside diameter) LNG transfer lines and one 16-inch-diameter vapor return line;
- Service lines (instrument air, nitrogen, potable water, and firewater);
- Two double-walled LNG storage tanks each with a usable volume of 1,006,000 barrels (3.5 billion cubic feet of gas equivalent);
- Six 3,240 gallon-per-minute (gpm) in-tank pumps;
- Seven 2,315 gpm high pressure LNG booster pumps;
- Three boil-off gas compressors and a condensing system;
- Six high-pressure LNG vaporizers using a primary closed circuit water/