

Similar to the March 14, 2003 notice, this Notice is being mailed to: Landowners whose properties are currently within a 200-foot-wide corridor centered on the proposed route; Federal, state, and local government agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; and local libraries and newspapers. We encourage government representatives to notify their constituents of this planned action and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

If you are an affected landowner, you should have already been contacted by a pipeline company representative about the acquisition of an easement to construct, operate, and maintain the proposed facilities. The pipeline company will seek to negotiate a mutually acceptable easement agreement. However, if the project is certificated by the Commission, that approval conveys with it the right of eminent domain. At that time, if easement negotiations have failed to produce an agreement, the pipeline company could initiate condemnation proceedings in accordance with applicable state laws in Colorado and Kansas.

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 CPG provided to affected 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 also available for viewing on the FERC Internet Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>).

The EIS Process

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 address issues and concerns the public may have about a proposed action. This process is referred to as "scoping." The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EIS on the important environmental issues.

For the Cheyenne Plains Pipeline Project, the scoping process began in February 2003 when the El Paso Corporation Western Pipelines Group/CPG⁶ held open houses at six locations

along the proposed pipeline route to provide an opportunity for the public to learn about the proposed facilities and ask questions and express concerns about the project. During the same time frame, the FERC staff held agency scoping meetings in the project area. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, Pawnee National Grassland; National Park Service, Long Distance Trails Office; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Colorado and Kansas State Historic Preservation Offices; Colorado Division of Wildlife; and Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks participated in these agency scoping meetings. The FERC staff attended the open houses and agency scoping meetings to hear verbal comments and concerns and subsequently issued the March 14, 2003 notice requesting written comments and concerns about the project.

By this notice, we are requesting additional comments from you. Specifically, we are seeking new issues that were not identified during the pre-filing period. To ensure your comments are considered, please carefully follow the instructions in the public participation section beginning on page 5. We are also asking governmental agencies, including those which are participating agencies in the Commission's NEPA Pre-filing Process, to express their interest in becoming cooperating agencies for the preparation of the EIS. If you are an agency with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues in the project area and would like to request cooperating agency status, please file a written request by following the instructions for filing comments described in the public participation section. Cooperating agencies will be given special consideration for reviewing preliminary documents and requesting information from the project sponsors and their contractors. To date, only the USDA Forest Service, Pawnee National Grassland has agreed to be a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS.

Our independent analysis of the project-related impacts will be included in a draft EIS. The draft EIS will be mailed to Federal, state, and local government agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; affected landowners; local libraries and newspapers; other interested parties; and the FERC's official service list for this proceeding. A 45-day comment

period will be allotted for review of the EIS. We will consider all comments on the draft EIS and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a final EIS. In addition, we will consider all comments on the final EIS before we make our recommendations to the Commission.

Currently Identified Environmental Issues

In the March 14, 2003 notice, we listed several issues that we think deserve attention based on a preliminary review of the proposed facilities and the environmental information. Other issues that were raised by agencies and the public during the NEPA pre-filing process include construction or operation impacts on:

- Actively cultivated cropland and actively used grazing land;
- Crop irrigation systems;
- Federally listed endangered or threatened species;
- The Pawnee National Grassland;
- The Santa Fe Trail (listed on the National Register of Historic Places);
- Unmarked graves;
- Drought-plagued vegetation that is susceptible to wildfires; and
- Areas proposed for future use or development.

Copies of comment letters already filed with the Commission can be examined by following the instructions for using our FERRIS link at the end of this notice.

Public Participation

As described in the March 14, 2003 notice, you can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. If you provided comments to us during the pre-filing period, you do not need to resubmit them. For those who will submit comments for the first time, you should focus the comments on the potential environmental effects of the proposal, alternatives to the proposal (including alternative locations and 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;
- Reference Docket Nos. CP03-302-000 and PF03-1-000 on the original and both copies;

David Anderson, Manager—Land Department, El Paso Corporation, (877) 598-5263, david.r.anderson@elpaso.com. Be as specific as you can about the location(s) of your area(s) of interest.

⁶ The original sponsor of the Cheyenne Plains Pipeline Project was El Paso Corporation Western

Pipelines Group (El Paso). El Paso's subsidiary, CPG, has taken over the role as project sponsor.