

addressed in a separate response published today in the **Federal Register**.) Industry representatives described in detail the difficulties of applying the current definition of "identified site".

The Committee also heard from Mr. Steve Halford, the Fire Chief for the City of Nashville, who was representing the International Association of Fire Chiefs, in discussing a study on excess flow valves not related to the integrity management rulemakings. Although Chief Halford made a presentation to the advisory committee on another topic, he graciously agreed to answer impromptu questions about the knowledge of public officials with respect to locations that RSPA/OPS intends to be "identified sites." Chief Halford readily asserted that fire departments and other public safety and emergency response officials would normally have information about these sites. Chief Halford also suggested that local planning bodies and the local emergency planning committees would be good sources for the information. Based on the discussion, the Committee advised RSPA/OPS to clarify the meaning of the rule.

RSPA/OPS did not intend that identification of locations outside of Class 3 and 4 be burdensome and decided to provide relief. Industry commenters, including petitioners NYGAS and INGAA, had suggested that use of available sources such as licensing and publicly available lists would be a good avenue. Thus the HCA definition includes a definition of "identified sites" that provides both the types of areas to be identified and the means for an operator to locate these sites.

Although the regulation is stated as a list of steps, RSPA/OPS has never intended that an operator perform an exhaustive search of every possible source of information that may be available. RSPA/OPS requires only a good faith effort to discover "identified sites." As discussed in the advisory, pipeline operators who consult public safety or emergency response or planning officials who indicate that they have knowledge of the identified sites need not do more.

Further, at a meeting of the Committee scheduled for July 31, RSPA/OPS has added to the agenda further discussion about the advisability of modifying the final rule language to include this advice.

Subsequent to the publication of the HCA final rule, and in support of the need to assure that "identified sites" are clearly known, RSPA/OPS initiated extensive efforts to involve local and State officials in sharing responsibility

for pipeline safety. We believe that public safety and emergency response officials are likely to have the knowledge needed on "identified sites." In addition, RSPA/OPS expects that the knowledge of these officials will improve for several reasons. First, section 5 of the Pipeline Safety Improvement Act of 2002 requires pipeline operators to review and enhance their public education programs by December 17, 2003. Among other things, these public education programs will provide better information to officials from municipalities and school districts about the possible hazards from an unintended release from a pipeline. This enhanced information about the risks will improve local emergency response planning efforts.

Further, under its Community Assistance and Technical Service Program, RSPA/OPS has already hired at least one senior inspector in each Federal region who is providing local officials briefings and data to enhance their efforts to protect pipelines from damage, target community awareness programs, and improve the response capabilities in the event of a pipeline failure. In addition, RSPA/OPS provides grant funding to the National Association of State Fire Marshals and the Common Ground Alliance for public education initiatives among other things. These initiatives will result in local officials who are better informed about where pipelines are located, how to avoid damaging them, how to recognize and report emergencies that may arise, and the need to determine isolated population areas near pipelines that need additional protection.

In addition, RSPA/OPS realizes that some tribal lands may not have traditional, readily identifiable safety or emergency response officials. Thus RSPA/OPS intends to consult with the Council of Energy Resource Tribes, a coalition of tribes who have energy resources, about the best way to locate "identified sites" on these tribal lands. RSPA/OPS will then share the results of that consultation with the affected pipeline operators and provide any additional guidance that may be needed before the effective date of a final rule imposing substantive requirements for integrity management programs.

Issued in Washington, DC, on July 11, 2003.

Stacey L. Gerard,

Associate Administrator for Pipeline Safety.

[FR Doc. 03-18121 Filed 7-16-03; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-60-P

VALLES CALDERA TRUST

National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) Procedures of the Valles Caldera Trust for the Valles Caldera National Preserve

AGENCY: Valles Caldera Trust.

ACTION: Notice of final procedures to implement NEPA.

SUMMARY: The Board of Trustees of the Valles Caldera Trust adopts these final NEPA procedures, hereafter referred to as "procedures", for implementation of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and to aid in the overall management and public use of the Valles Caldera National Preserve. The procedures for the Trust are intended to supplement federal NEPA procedures of the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) found at 40 CFR 1500 through 1508 and adopted by the Board of Trustees on August 8, 2001. The Trust's procedures are to be maintained by the Trust and are readily available to the public. It is anticipated that as experience is gained in the implementation of the Trust's procedures, appropriate improvements will be proposed. The procedures will apply to the fullest extent practicable to analyses and documents by the Board of Trustees of the Valles Caldera Trust.

EFFECTIVE DATE: These procedures are effective on July 17, 2003.

ADDRESSES: Gary Ziehe, Executive Director, Valles Caldera Trust, 2201 Trinity Drive, Suite C, Los Alamos, NM 87544. email: nepaprocedures@vallescaldera.gov.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Gary Ziehe, Executive Director, Valles Caldera Trust, 2201 Trinity Drive, Suite C, Los Alamos, NM 87544. Telephone: (505) 661-3333.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

I. Introduction

These NEPA procedures add direction to guide employees of the Valles Caldera Trust regarding requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. The Council on Environmental Quality does not direct agencies to prepare a NEPA document before establishing agency procedures that supplement the CEQ regulations for implementing NEPA. Agency NEPA procedures are internal procedural guidance intended to assist agencies in the fulfillment of agency responsibilities under NEPA, but are not the agency's final determination of what level of NEPA analysis is required for a particular proposed action. The requirements for establishing agency NEPA procedures are set forth at 40 CFR