

libraries and newspapers. We encourage government representatives to notify their constituents of this planned project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

Summary of the Proposed Project

SES proposes to construct and operate a liquefied natural gas (LNG) import terminal facility on a 27-acre site on a portion of Pier T, designated Berth T-126, on Terminal Island within the Port of Long Beach, California. The proposed site, which was formerly part of a naval shipyard, would require a limited amount of dredging (between 75,000 and 125,000 cubic yards) to support the ship berth and achieve uniform water depth. The dredged material would be disposed of in a confined landfill within the Port. The project would not require the intake or discharge of sea water and/or process water. During construction, SES would require an additional 20- to 30-acre site in the project area for materials storage and fabrication. The location of this construction laydown area has not yet been identified.

The Long Beach LNG Import Project would provide about 700 million standard cubic feet of natural gas per day to the local transmission and distribution systems. In addition, a portion of the LNG would be distributed locally to fuel LNG-powered vehicles. According to SES, its project would provide large volumes of natural gas to southern California markets to enhance reliability of supply and ensure price competition. The distribution of LNG as vehicle fuel would enable diesel trucks and other vehicles to convert to natural gas, which would reduce vehicle pollutant emissions in the region.

The project facilities would include:

- a ship berth and unloading facilities capable of receiving LNG tankers ranging in capacity from 95,000 to 145,000 cubic meters;
- two LNG storage tanks, each with a capacity of 160,000 cubic meters;
- vaporization equipment, boil-off gas compressors, and natural gas liquids recovery system;
- truck loading facilities;
- associated hazard detection, control, and prevention systems;
- ancillary service facilities; and
- up to 4.4 miles of pipeline currently proposed to interconnect with the existing Southern California Gas Company pipeline system.

Maps depicting the proposed terminal site, site layout, and various pipeline routes under consideration are provided in appendix 1.²

SES proposes to place the project in service in late 2007 or early 2008. To achieve this in-service date, SES is requesting approval to begin construction of the terminal facilities in the fall of 2004. The approximate duration of construction would be 3 years.

The EIS/EIR/ASR Process The FERC will use the EIS/EIR/ASR to consider the environmental impact that could result if it issues SES an Order Authorizing Approval of a Place of Import under Section 3 of the Natural Gas Act. The POLB will use the document to determine the project's consistency with the certified Port Master Plan and the California Coastal Act as well as to consider the environmental impact that could result if it issues SES a Harbor Development Permit.

This notice formally announces our preparation of the EIS/EIR/ASR and the beginning of the process referred to as "scoping." We are soliciting input from the public and interested agencies to help us focus the analysis in the EIS/EIR/ASR on the potentially significant environmental issues related to the proposed action.

Our independent analysis of the issues will be included in a draft EIS/EIR/ASR. The draft EIS/EIR/ASR will be mailed to Federal, state, and local government agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; affected landowners; POLB tenants; other interested parties; local libraries and newspapers; and the FERC's official service list for this proceeding. A 45-day comment period will be allotted for review of the draft EIS/EIR/ASR. We will consider all comments on the draft EIS/EIR/ASR and revise the document, as necessary, before issuing a final EIS/EIR/ASR.

The POLB is initiating its CEQA review based on SES' submittal of a Harbor Development Permit application on July 25, 2003. Although no formal application for import authorization has been filed, the FERC staff is initiating its NEPA review now. The purpose of the FERC's NEPA Pre-filing Process is to encourage the early involvement of interested stakeholders and to identify and resolve issues before an application is filed with the FERC. The POLB has agreed to conduct its CEQA review in conjunction with the NEPA Pre-filing

available on the Commission's Internet Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>) at the "eLibrary" link or from the Commission's Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch at (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the end of this notice. Copies of the appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail.

Process. A diagram depicting the lead agencies' joint environmental review process is attached to this notice as appendix 2.

We have held early discussions with other jurisdictional agencies to identify their issues and concerns. These agencies include the California Coastal Commission; California Department of Fish and Game; National Marine Fisheries Service; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Los Angeles Region; South Coast Air Quality Management District; U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE), U.S. Coast Guard; and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. By this notice, we are asking these and other Federal, state, and local agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EIS/EIR/ASR. Agencies that would like to request cooperating status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided below. Currently, the ACOE has expressed its intention to participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of the EIS/EIR/ASR to satisfy its NEPA responsibilities under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act and Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act.

Public Participation

You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the proposal. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives (including alternative terminal sites and pipeline routes), and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impact. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please mail your comments so that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before October 30, 2003, and carefully follow these instructions:

- 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 your comments for the attention of Gas Branch 1, DG2E;
- Reference Docket No. PF03-6-000 on the original and both copies;
- Send an additional copy of your letter to: Robert Kanter, Ph.D., Planning Division, 925 Harbor Plaza, Port of Long Beach, Long Beach, CA 90807; and
- Reference Application No. HDP 03-079 on your letter.

² The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the **Federal Register**. Copies are