

under section 15(a)(1) of the FPA is renewed automatically without further order or notice by the Commission, unless the Commission orders otherwise.

If the projects are not subject to section 15 of the FPA, notice is hereby given that the licensee, Algonquin Power (Beaver Falls), LLC, is authorized to continue operation of the Upper Beaver Falls and Lower Beaver Falls Hydroelectric Projects, until such time as the Commission acts on its license application.

Dated: January 11, 2018.

**Kimberly D. Bose,**

Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2018-00751 Filed 1-17-18; 8:45 am]

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## DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

### Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP18-24-000]

#### Steel Reef Pipelines US LLC; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Saskatchewan Pipeline Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) will prepare an environmental assessment (EA) that will discuss the environmental impacts of the South Saskatchewan Pipeline Project involving construction and operation of facilities by Steel Reef Pipelines US LLC (Steel Reef) in Burke County, North Dakota. The Commission will use this EA in its decision-making process to determine whether the project is in the public convenience and necessity.

This notice announces the opening of the scoping process the Commission will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the project. You can make a difference by providing us with your specific comments or concerns about the project. Your comments should focus on the potential environmental effects, reasonable alternatives, and measures to avoid or lessen environmental impacts. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues they need to evaluate in the EA. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please send your comments so that the Commission receives them in Washington, DC on or before February 10, 2018.

If you sent comments on this project to the Commission before the opening of this docket on December 8, 2017, you will need to file those comments in Docket No. CP18-24-000 to ensure they are considered as part of this proceeding.

This notice is being sent to the Commission's current environmental mailing list for this project. State and local government representatives should notify their constituents of this proposed project and encourage them to comment on their areas of concern.

Steel Reef provided landowners with a fact sheet prepared by the FERC entitled *An Interstate Natural Gas Facility On My Land? What Do I Need To Know?* 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 website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)).

#### Public Participation

For your convenience, there are three methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov). Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

(1) You can file your comments electronically using the *eComment* feature on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to *Documents and Filings*. This is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;

(2) You can file your comments electronically by using the *eFiling* feature on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to *Documents and Filings*. With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on *eRegister*. If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select Comment on a Filing as the filing type; or

(3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address. Be sure to reference the project docket number (C18-24-000) with your submission: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426.

#### Summary of the Proposed Project

Steel Reef's proposed Saskatchewan Pipeline Project, referred to as the

Border Crossing Facilities in its application, includes a 250-foot-long 10.75-inch-outside-diameter pipeline along with aboveground facilities including a metering facility, a remote telemetry unit, and a pig trap launcher. The facilities are part of the southern end of Steel Reef's planned 2.2-mile-long 10.75-inch-outside-diameter South Saskatchewan Access Pipeline (SSA Pipeline) it plans to build connecting gathering facilities owned by Petro Harvester Oil & Gas, LLC near Portal, North Dakota to an interconnection with an existing natural gas processing plant owned by Steel Reef Infrastructure Corporation near North Portal in Saskatchewan, Canada. Steel Reef states that the Saskatchewan Pipeline Project's facilities would, as part of the SSA Pipeline, permit the transport of up to 30 million standard cubic feet per day of sour natural gas gathered from existing oil wells owned and operated by Petro Harvester Oil & Gas, LLC (Petro Harvester) within the Burke County region of North Dakota.

Steel Reef requests certification by July 2, 2018, and expects to perform its construction activities in a 30-day period.

The general location of the project facilities is shown in appendix 1.<sup>1</sup>

#### Land Requirements for Construction

Steel Reef would limit its construction activities to 0.75 acres of agricultural land, comprised of 0.35 acres of new permanent pipeline right-of-way and 0.40 acres of temporary workspace. The new permanent pipeline right-of-way width would be 65 feet. Steel Reef would restore the temporary right-of-way to pre-abandonment conditions. An 0.14 acre portion of the permanent right-of-way would overlap the Petro Harvester lease where Steel Reef would have a shared land use agreement. None of the route would be co-located with other existing utilities, roads or other infrastructure.

#### The EA Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (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

<sup>1</sup> The appendices referenced in this notice will not appear in the **Federal Register**. Copies of appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov) using the link called "eLibrary" or from the Commission's Public Reference Room, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, or call (202) 502-8371. For instructions on connecting to eLibrary, refer to the last page of this notice.

Necessity. NEPA also requires us<sup>2</sup> to discover and address concerns the public may have about proposals. This process is referred to as “scoping.” The main goal of the scoping process is to focus the analysis in the EA on the important environmental issues. By this notice, the Commission requests public comments on the scope of the issues to address in the EA. We will consider all filed comments during the preparation of the EA.

In the EA we will discuss impacts that could occur as a result of the construction and operation of the proposed project under these general headings:

- Geology and soils;
- land use;
- water resources, fisheries, and wetlands;
- cultural resources;
- vegetation and wildlife;
- air quality and noise;
- endangered and threatened species;
- public safety; and
- cumulative impacts.

We will also evaluate reasonable alternatives to the proposed project or portions of the project, and make recommendations on how to lessen or avoid impacts on the various resource areas.

The EA will present our independent analysis of the issues. The EA will be available in the public record through eLibrary. Depending on the comments received during the scoping process, we may also publish and distribute the EA to the public for an allotted comment period. We will consider all comments on the EA before making our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure we have the opportunity to consider and address your comments, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section, beginning on page 2.

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction by law and/or special expertise with respect to the environmental issues of this project to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA.<sup>3</sup> Agencies that would like to request cooperating agency status should follow the instructions for filing comments provided under the Public Participation section of this notice.

### Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s implementing regulations for section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, we are using this notice to initiate consultation with the applicable State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), and to solicit their views and those of other government agencies, interested Indian tribes, and the public on the project’s potential effects on historic properties.<sup>4</sup> We will define the project-specific Area of Potential Effects (APE) in consultation with the SHPO as the project develops. On natural gas facility projects, the APE at a minimum encompasses all areas subject to ground disturbance (examples include construction right-of-way, contractor/pipe storage yards, compressor stations, and access roads). Our EA for this project will document our findings on the impacts on historic properties and summarize the status of consultations under section 106.

#### Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American Tribes; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. This list also includes all affected landowners (as defined in the Commission’s regulations) who are potential right-of-way grantors, whose property may be used temporarily for project purposes, or who own homes within certain distances of aboveground facilities, and anyone who submits comments on the project. We will update the environmental mailing list as the analysis proceeds to ensure that we send the information related to this environmental review to all individuals, organizations, and government entities interested in and/or potentially affected by the proposed project.

If we publish and distribute the EA, copies of the EA will be sent to the environmental mailing list for public review and comment. If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the document instead of the CD version or would like to remove your name from the mailing list, please return the attached Information Request (appendix 2).

### Becoming an Intervenor

In addition to involvement in the EA scoping process, you may want to become an intervenor which is an official party to the Commission’s proceeding. Intervenor play a more formal role in the process and are able to file briefs, appear at hearings, and be heard by the courts if they choose to appeal the Commission’s final ruling. An intervenor formally participates in the proceeding by filing a request to intervene. Instructions for becoming an intervenor are in the Document-less Intervention Guide under the e-filing link on the Commission’s website. Motions to intervene are more fully described at <http://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/how-to/intervene.asp>.

#### Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission’s Office of External Affairs, at (866) 208–FERC, or on the FERC website at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov) using the “eLibrary” link. Click on the eLibrary link, click on “General Search” and enter the docket number, excluding the last three digits in the Docket Number field (*i.e.*, CP18–24–000). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at (866) 208–3676, or for TTY, contact (202) 502–8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to [www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp](http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp).

Finally, public sessions or site visits will be posted on the Commission’s calendar located at [www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx](http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx) along with other related information.

Dated: January 11, 2018.

**Kimberly D. Bose,**  
Secretary.

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<sup>2</sup> We, us, and our refer to the environmental staff of the Commission’s Office of Energy Projects.

<sup>3</sup> The Council on Environmental Quality regulations addressing cooperating agency responsibilities are at Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 1501.6.

<sup>4</sup> The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation’s regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Those regulations define historic properties as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure, or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.