

not be served on persons other than the Applicant.

The Commission encourages electronic submission of protests and interventions in lieu of paper, using the FERC Online links at <http://www.ferc.gov>. To facilitate electronic service, persons with Internet access who will eFile a document and/or be listed as a contact for an intervenor must create and validate an eRegistration account using the eRegistration link. Select the eFiling link to log on and submit the intervention or protests.

Persons unable to file electronically should submit an original and 14 copies of the intervention or protest to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First St. NE., Washington, DC 20426.

The filings in the above proceedings are accessible in the Commission's eLibrary system by clicking on the appropriate link in the above list. They are also available for review in the Commission's Public Reference Room in Washington, DC. There is an eSubscription link on the Web site that enables subscribers to receive e-mail notification when a document is added to a subscribed docket(s). For assistance with any FERC Online service, please e-mail FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call (866) 208-3676 (toll free). For TTY, call (202) 502-8659.

Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr.,
Deputy Secretary.

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP10-50-000]

Petal Gas Storage, L.L.C.; Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Cavern 12A Conversion Gas Storage Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues

March 19, 2010.

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 Cavern 12A Conversion Gas Storage Project involving construction and operation of facilities proposed by Petal Gas Storage, L.L.C. (Petal) in Forrest County, Mississippi. This EA 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 announces the opening of the scoping process we will use to gather input from the public and interested agencies on the project. Your input will help the Commission staff determine what issues need to be evaluated in the EA. Please note that the scoping period will close on April 23, 2010.

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

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 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 that Petal 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 also available for viewing on the FERC Web site (<http://www.ferc.gov>).

Summary of the Proposed Project

Petal proposes to purchase an existing salt-brine storage cavern (12A) from an affiliate, and convert it into a natural gas storage cavern. The proposed facilities would mostly be within Petal's existing storage field on the Petal Salt Dome. The project would increase Petal's firm natural gas storage capacity to meet anticipated growing demand for storage services in the Southeastern United States. Petal would rework the existing well and expand the underground storage capacity of Cavern 12A through solution mining. Cavern 12A would have an overall capacity of about 8.2 billion cubic feet (Bcf), consisting of 5.0 Bcf of working gas and 3.2 Bcf of cushion gas.

The proposed facilities include:

- Existing Cavern 12A to be converted from brine storage to natural gas storage;
- New 16-inch-diameter pipeline, about 1,525-feet-long, connecting Cavern 12A with Petal's existing withdrawal header between existing Caverns 6 and 7; and
- New appurtenant facilities grouped near existing Petal Compressor Station 2, including a withdrawal separator, heat exchanger, hot oil pump, pressure regulator, and Triethylene Glycol contactor and regeneration skid.

The general location of the proposed facilities is shown in Appendix 1.¹

Land Requirements for Construction

Petal estimated that about 39 acres of land would be disturbed by construction of the proposed facilities. About 5.8 acres would be retained for Petal's permanent operational easement, following construction. The remaining temporary construction acreage would be restored to its former condition and uses.

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 Necessity. NEPA also requires us² 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 be addressed in the EA. All comments received will be considered 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;
- Water resources and wetlands;
- Vegetation and wildlife;
- Cultural resources;
- Land use;
- Air quality and noise; and
- Safety and reliability.

¹ The appendices referenced in this notice are not being printed in the *Federal Register*. Copies of appendices were sent to all those receiving this notice in the mail and are available at <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.

² "We," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the Commission's Office of Energy Projects.

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 various resources. Our independent analysis of the environmental issues will be presented in the EA.

The EA will be placed in the public record and, depending on the comments received during the scoping process, may be published and distributed to the public. A comment period will be allotted if the EA is published for review. We will consider all comments on the EA before we make our recommendations to the Commission. To ensure your comments are considered, please carefully follow the instructions in the Public Participation section of this notice (below).

With this notice, we are asking agencies with jurisdiction and/or special expertise with respect to environmental issues to formally cooperate with us in the preparation of the EA. These agencies may choose to participate once they have evaluated the proposal relative to their responsibilities. 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 (below).

Consultations Under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act

In accordance with the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's implementing regulations, we are using this notice to solicit the views of the public on the project's potential effects on historic properties.³ We will document our findings on the impacts on cultural resources, and summarize the status of consultations under section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act in our EA.

Public Participation

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. The more specific your comments, the more useful they will be. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please send your comments so

that they will be received in Washington, DC on or before April 23, 2010.

For your convenience, there are three methods which you can use to submit your written comments to the Commission. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert eFiling staff available to assist you at 202-502-8258 or efiling@ferc.gov.

(1) You may file your comments electronically by using the Quick Comment feature, which is located at <http://www.ferc.gov> under the link called "Documents and Filings." Quick Comment is an easy method for interested persons to submit text-only comments on a project;

(2) You may file your comments electronically by using the "eFiling" feature that is listed under the "Documents and Filings" link. eFiling involves preparing your submission in the same manner as you would if filing on paper, and then saving the file on your computer's hard drive. You will attach that file to your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on the links called "Sign up" or "eRegister." You will be asked to select the type of filing you are making. A comment on a particular project is considered a "Comment on a Filing;" or

(3) You may file a paper copy of your comments at the following address: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE., Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426.

Environmental Mailing List

The environmental mailing list includes federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Indian tribes that historically used or occupied the project area; 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 the EA is published for distribution, copies 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 included in the User's Guide under the "e-filing" link on the Commission's Web site.

Additional Information

Additional information about the project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at 1-866-208-FERC or on the Internet at <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., CP10-50). Be sure you have selected an appropriate date range. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or toll free at 1-866-208-3676, 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 now 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 <http://www.ferc.gov/esubscribenow.htm>.

Finally, public meetings or site visits will be posted on the Commission's calendar located at <http://www.ferc.gov/EventCalendar/EventsList.aspx> along with other related information.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

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³ The Advisory Council on Historic Preservation's regulations are at Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Part 800. Historic properties are defined in those regulations as any prehistoric or historic district, site, building, structure or object included in or eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.