

preliminary permit, exemption, license, or license amendment order for a water power project under Part I of the Federal Power Act;

(31) Abandonment of facilities by sale that involves only minor or no ground disturbance to disconnect the facilities from the system;

(32) Conversion of facilities from use under the NGPA to use under the NGA;

(33) Construction or abandonment of facilities constructed entirely in Federal offshore waters that has been approved by the Minerals Management Service and the Corps of Engineers, as necessary;

(34) Abandonment or construction of facilities on an existing offshore platform;

(35) Abandonment, construction or replacement of a facility (other than compression) solely within an existing building within a natural gas facility (other than LNG facilities), if it does not increase the noise or air emissions from the facility, as a whole; and

(36) Conversion of compression to standby use if the compressor is not moved, or abandonment of compression if the compressor station remains in operation.

(b) *Exceptions to categorical exclusions.*

(1) In accordance with 40 CFR 1508.4, the Commission and its staff will independently evaluate environmental information supplied in an application and in comments by the public. Where circumstances indicate that an action may be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, the Commission:

(i) May require an environmental report or other additional environmental information, and

(ii) Will prepare an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

(2) Such circumstances may exist when the action may have an effect on one of the following:

(i) Indian lands;

(ii) Wilderness areas;

(iii) Wild and scenic rivers;

(iv) Wetlands;

(v) Units of the National Park System, National Refuges, or National Fish Hatcheries;

(vi) Anadromous fish or endangered species; or

(vii) Where the environmental effects are uncertain.

However, the existence of one or more of the above will not automatically require the submission of an environmental report or the preparation of an environmental assessment or an environmental impact statement.

[Order 486, 52 FR 47910, Dec. 17, 1987, as amended at 53 FR 8177, Mar. 14, 1988; Order 486-B, 53 FR 26437, July 13, 1988; 54 FR 48740, Nov. 27, 1989; Order 603, 64 FR 26611, May 14, 1999; Order 609, 64 FR 57392, Oct. 25, 1999]

#### § 380.5 Actions that require an environmental assessment.

(a) An environmental assessment will normally be prepared first for the actions identified in this section. Depending on the outcome of the environmental assessment, the Commission may or may not prepare an environmental impact statement. However, depending on the location or scope of the proposed action, or the resources affected, the Commission may in specific circumstances proceed directly to prepare an environmental impact statement.

(b) The projects subject to an environmental assessment are as follows:

(1) Except as identified in §§ 380.4, 380.6 and 2.55 of this chapter, authorization for the site of new gas import/export facilities under DOE Delegation No. 0204-112 and authorization under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act for the construction, replacement, or abandonment of compression, processing, or interconnecting facilities, onshore and offshore pipelines, metering facilities, LNG peak-shaving facilities, or other facilities necessary for the sale, exchange, storage, or transportation of natural gas;

(2) Prior notice filings under § 157.208 of this chapter for the rearrangement of any facility specified in §§ 157.202 (b)(3) and (6) of this chapter or the acquisition, construction, or operation of any eligible facility as specified in §§ 157.202 (b)(2) and (3) of this chapter;

(3) Abandonment or reduction of natural gas service under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act unless excluded under § 380.4 (a)(21), (28) or (29);

(4) Except as identified in § 380.6, conversion of existing depleted oil or natural gas fields to underground storage

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fields under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act.

(5) New natural gas curtailment plans, or any amendment to an existing curtailment plan under section 4 of the Natural Gas Act and sections 401 through 404 of the Natural Gas Policy Act of 1978 that has a major effect on an entire pipeline system;

(6) Licenses under Part I of the Federal Power Act and part 4 of this chapter for construction of any water power project—existing dam;

(7) Exemptions under section 405 of the Public Utility Regulatory Policies Act of 1978, as amended, and §§ 4.30(b)(27) and 4.101–4.106 of this chapter for small hydroelectric power projects of 5 MW or less;

(8) Licenses for additional project works at licensed projects under Part I of the Federal Power Act whether or not these are styled license amendments or original licenses;

(9) Licenses under Part I of the Federal Power Act and part 4 of this chapter for transmission lines only;

(10) Applications for new licenses under section 15 of the Federal Power Act;

(11) Approval of electric interconnections and wheeling under sections 202(b), 210, 211, and 212 of the Federal Power Act, unless excluded under § 380.4(a)(17); and

(12) Regulations or proposals for legislation not excluded under § 380.4(a)(2).

(13) Surrender of water power licenses and exemptions where project works exist or ground disturbing activity has occurred and amendments to water power licenses and exemptions that require ground disturbing activity or changes to project works or operations.

[Order 486, 52 FR 47910, Dec. 17, 1987; Order 486, 53 FR 4817, Feb. 17, 1988, as amended by 53 FR 8177, Mar. 14, 1988; Order 486-B, 53 FR 26437, July 13, 1988]

### § 380.6 Actions that require an environmental impact statement.

(a) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, an environmental impact statement will normally be prepared first for the following projects:

(1) Authorization under sections 3 or 7 of the Natural Gas Act and DOE Delegation Order No. 0204–112 for the siting,

construction, and operation of jurisdictional liquefied natural gas import/export facilities used wholly or in part to liquefy, store, or regasify liquefied natural gas transported by water;

(2) Certificate applications under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act to develop an underground natural gas storage facility except where depleted oil or natural gas producing fields are used;

(3) Major pipeline construction projects under section 7 of the Natural Gas Act using right-of-way in which there is no existing natural gas pipeline; and

(4) Licenses under Part I of the Federal Power Act and Part 4 of this chapter for construction of any unconstructed water power project.

(b) If the Commission believes that a proposed action identified in paragraph (a) of this section may not be a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, an environmental assessment, rather than an environmental impact statement, will be prepared first. Depending on the outcome of the environmental assessment, an environmental impact statement may or may not be prepared.

(c) An environmental impact statement will not be required if an environmental assessment indicates that a proposal has adverse environmental effects and the proposal is not approved.

[Order 486, 52 FR 47910, Dec. 17, 1987, as amended at 53 FR 8177, Mar. 14, 1988; Order 486-B, 53 FR 26437, July 13, 1988]

### § 380.7 Format of an environmental impact statement.

In addition to the requirements for an environmental impact statement prescribed in 40 CFR 1502.10 of the regulations of the Council, an environmental impact statement prepared by the Commission will include a section on the literature cited in the environmental impact statement and a staff conclusion section. The staff conclusion section will include summaries of:

(a) The significant environmental impacts of the proposed action;

(b) Any alternative to the proposed action that would have a less severe environmental impact or impacts and the action preferred by the staff;