



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE 37243-0435

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COMMISSIONER

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December 2, 2016

Via Electronic Submittal at FERC.gov

Attn: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Office of Energy Projects
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street NE, Room 1A
Washington, DC 20426

Dear Ms. Bose:

The Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (TDEC) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments on the Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C. (TGP) *Abandonment and Capacity Restoration Project (ACRP) Draft Environmental Assessment* (Draft EA) prepared by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). TGP proposes to abandon, construct, modify, and operate natural gas pipeline facilities in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio. More specifically, the project aims to disconnect and abandon pipeline segments from interstate natural gas service and construct and operate new natural gas infrastructure as a replacement to maintain service to existing customers. Following abandonment, TGP intends to sell the pipeline to Utica Marcellus Texas Pipeline LLC (UMTP), an affiliate of TGP, for transportation of natural gas liquids (NGL).

Actions considered in detail within the Draft EA include:

- Proposed Action Alternative – The Project would consist of the abandonment of about 964 miles of pipeline and associated facilities and the construction and operation of new and modified pipeline facilities and additional compression to replace the natural gas capacity of the abandoned facilities. The abandonment would require activities at about 160 sites along the pipeline route.
- No-Action Alternative – Under the no-action alternative, TGP would not abandon the existing lines or construct the capacity restoration facilities and none of the adverse or beneficial impacts of the ACRP would occur. The Draft EA notes that it is unknown whether these impacts would be greater than, similar to, or less than the impacts proposed.
- Pipeline Abandonment Alternative – A possible alternative to the proposed abandonment-in-place is abandonment by removal. Under this alternative, the pipeline would be taken out of service and removed from the right-of-way. As identified in the Draft EA, removal would result in a considerably greater amount of ground disturbance than the abandonment proposed by TGP.

- Capacity Restoration Facility Alternative – A capacity restoration facility alternative includes two variations of possible alternatives; a system alternative and an overall design of capacity restoration facilities alternative. Under a “System Alternative” it would be unnecessary to construct all or part of the ACRP by utilizing other existing natural gas pipelines in the region. Other pipeline companies would likely need to build new pipeline facilities and add compression and/or looping to their existing systems in order to deliver the additional capacity to the natural gas system remaining, which would likely result in impacts similar to or greater than the impacts resulting from the proposed ACRP. An “Overall Design of Capacity Restoration Facilities Alternative” would have TGP construct a fifth new midpoint compressor station, which would eliminate the long-term impacts of the 7.7-mile-long new-build pipeline. However, construction of another new midpoint compressor station would also have environmental impacts, including the clearing and permanent use of at least 20 acres of land, and also create long-term effects on air quality and noise.
- Alternative Route for New-build Pipeline – As an alternative TGP provided information on a possible route to the north of the proposed route. For this alternative, the length of the pipeline would need to increase to obtain the same hydraulic benefit, and the pipeline would not be collocated in an existing pipeline corridor. To obtain the same hydraulic benefit as the proposed route, an alternative pipeline route ending immediately downstream of Compressor Station 200 would result in a 9.7-mile-long pipeline, and would also require additional installations. The alternative route would affect more land overall because of its greater length. As such, the Draft EA determines that the alternative route would not provide a significant environmental advantage over the proposed action.
- Alternative New Compressor Station Locations – In evaluating alternative locations for a compressor location, the Draft EA did not identify any alternative locations for compressor stations that would satisfy the extensive site evaluation criteria beyond those already indicated in the Draft EA.

As the environmental and natural resources regulatory authority in Tennessee, TDEC’s comments will focus on proposed actions and associated impacts that will occur in Tennessee. Proposed actions supporting the ACRP project in Tennessee will include 32 abandonment and construction activities, consisting of mostly short segments of pipe being connected to existing pipelines, or being completely removed. These 32 construction activities will total approximately 0.9 miles in length. In addition, as part of the UMTF project to convert the TGP pipeline to NGL, 6.0 miles of new 24-inch-diameter pipeline will be completed near Dickson, Tennessee.

TDEC’s **Office of Energy Programs and the Tennessee Geological Survey (TGS)** have reviewed the Draft EA and have no specific comments regarding the proposed action or its alternatives.

TDEC’s **Division of Underground Storage Tanks (UST)** has reviewed the Draft EA and has no specific comments regarding the proposed action or its alternatives. With respect to the additional temporary workspaces that will be utilized during the project, detailed maps and information regarding the specific locations of the additional temporary workspaces would be necessary to assess whether possible conflicts with existing UST sites would arise. UST recommends including such specifics where available in the Final EA.

TDEC’s **Tennessee State Parks and Real Property Management** has reviewed the Draft EA and notes that the proposed action may cross state land. However, Tennessee State Parks and Real Property Management recommends that the Final EA contain more detailed maps and GIS data of the pipeline, which would allow for a better analysis of whether state land is impacted. If the proposed action does cross state land, the project will have to work within State of Tennessee protocols for work requested on state property.

TDEC's **Division of Water Resources (DWR)** has reviewed the Draft EA and encourages TGP to follow appropriate erosion control measures, as discussed in the Draft EA. DWR also concurs that an Aquatic Resource Alteration Permit (ARAP) will be necessary for the proposed action in Tennessee.

TDEC's **Division of Archaeology (DoA)** has reviewed the Draft EA and provided the following comments regarding the proposed action occurring within Tennessee. The segments of new pipeline in Tennessee will be investigated by archaeologists prior to construction in compliance with the FERC and State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), Section 106 process. At this time, DoA concurs with FERC findings and suggestions related to this project as discussed within the Draft EA.

TDEC's **Division of Natural Areas (DNA)** has reviewed the Draft EA and provides the following comments regarding the proposed action occurring within Tennessee. More detailed investigation of possible impacts to rare species will be handled as part of the ARAP review process. For stabilization of disturbed areas, the Tennessee Natural Heritage Program advocates for the use of native trees, shrubs, and warm season grasses, where practicable. Care should be taken to prevent re-vegetation of disturbed areas with plants listed by the Tennessee Exotic Pest Plan Council as harmful exotic plants.¹

TDEC's **Division of Solid Waste Management (SWM)** has reviewed the Draft EA and provides the following comments regarding the proposed action occurring within Tennessee.

- If being disposed of in the State of Tennessee, contaminated soil generated as a result of this project will be subject to a Special Waste Evaluation before being accepted at a permitted Tennessee disposal facility.² SWM recommends that this consideration be included if applicable in the Final EA.
- All asbestos-containing materials (ACM) generated as a result of the project must be disposed of at an approved disposal facility. TDEC SWM has two policies which detail asbestos disposal in the State of Tennessee, which would be useful in the event ACM are identified during the project.³ SWM recommends that this consideration be included if applicable in the Final EA.
- Tennessee's SWM program only dates back to 1972, so there could conceivably be disposal in a project area that predates the program. Any wastes which may be unearthed during the project would be subject to a hazardous waste determination, and must be managed appropriately. SWM recommends that this consideration be included if applicable in the Final EA.

TDEC's **Division of Air Pollution Control (APC)** has reviewed the Draft EA and provides the following comments regarding the proposed action occurring within Tennessee.

- Dust emissions generated by construction activities can vary substantially depending on levels of activity, specific operations, and prevailing meteorological conditions. However, dust emissions due to construction activities are likely to be short-term and temporary in nature. It is recommended that ordinary dust control measures, such as wetting by water spray, be employed to mitigate any dust emissions generated. APC recommends that mitigation of dust emissions be addressed in the Final EA.

¹ Additional information regarding harmful exotic plants in Tennessee can be found at <http://www.tnepc.org/>

² TDEC SWM Rule 0400-11-01-.01(2). Additional information on the Special Waste Evaluation process can be found at <http://www.tn.gov/environment/article/permit-waste-special-waste-approval>.

³ The Solid Waste Policies pertaining to Asbestos disposal are pn118 (non-friable asbestos) and pn043 (friable asbestos), which can be found in the SWM Policy Manual at <http://www.tn.gov/environment/article/sw-solid-waste-policy-manual>.

- The proposed project does not reference demolition of buildings. However, if demolition is to occur, fugitive dust emissions produced may require mitigation. Demolition would also require an asbestos demolition notification in advance of any activity as well as proper pre-demolition surveys to identify any regulated asbestos-containing materials (ACM) that may be present. Should any ACM be present, it would need to be handled and disposed of according to applicable Federal, state, and local regulations. This should be addressed in the Final EA.
- Should any land clearing activities or disposal of brush or trees/tree limbs occur, APC prefers that wood waste be disposed of by chipping, grinding, or composting rather than open burning. However, if open burning does occur during site preparation and construction, open burning regulations should be followed.⁴ APC recommends that detailed clearing activities, total amount of areas where soils are to be disturbed, and associated impacts be addressed in the Final EA.

TDEC appreciates the opportunity to comment on this Draft EA. Please note that these comments are not indicative of approval or disapproval of the proposed action or its alternatives, nor should they be interpreted as an indication regarding future permitting decisions by TDEC. Please contact me should you have any questions regarding these comments.

Sincerely,



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cc: Bill Avant, TDEC, TSP
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⁴ TDEC APC Rule 1200-3-4-.01 et seq., <http://share.tn.gov/sos/rules/1200/1200-03/1200-03-04.pdf>. Additional information on open burning in Tennessee is available at <https://tn.gov/environment/article/apc-open-burning> and <http://www.burnsafetn.org/>.