



Midwestern Gas Transmission Company

A Northern Border Partners, L.P. Company

May 12, 2005

Ms. Magalie R. Salas, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20426

Re: Midwestern Gas Transmission Company
Docket No. PF05-2

Dear Ms. Salas:

Attached for filing with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in the above-referenced docket is: 1) a letter dated May 4, 2005 from the State of Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation Water Supply and 2) a letter dated May 4, 2005 from the United States Department of the Interior Fish and Wildlife Service.

Questions concerning this information should be directed to the undersigned at (402) 492-7575.

Sincerely,

Bambi Heckerman
Director, Regulatory Affairs
Northern Plains Natural Gas Company
Operator

Attachment

cc: Mr. David Gallo-OEP, Room 61-44



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

446 Neal Street
Cookeville, TN 38501

May 4, 2005

Mr. Jay Muschenheim
Midwestern Gas Transmission Company
P.O. Box 542500
Omaha, Nebraska 68154-8500

Re: FWS #05-1010

Dear Mr. Muschenheim:

Thank you for your letter and enclosures of April 11, 2005, concerning the proposed Midwestern Gas Transmission Eastern Extension Project in Sumner and Trousdale counties, Tennessee. Fish and Wildlife Service biologists have reviewed the information submitted and we offer the following comments.

In response to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's January 21, 2005, Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Assessment for the proposed project, we stated, by letter of March 4, 2005, that the federally endangered gray bat (*Myotis grisescens*) and leafy prairie clover (*Dalea foliosa*) might occur in the project impact area. We recommended that a biological assessment be prepared and submitted to this office with findings of effect for both listed species.

On April 27, 2005, you met with Jim Widlak of my staff to discuss the project and the reports that had been prepared to date. You informed Mr. Widlak that the preferred route, with the exception of sections on which landowner permission had not been obtained, had been surveyed for evidence of the presence of the two listed species. Suitable habitat for the leafy prairie clover was not found and no evidence of caves or karst habitat was observed. You also informed Mr. Widlak that the remaining sections will be surveyed as permission to access those sections is received, and that a geologist would be surveying the preferred route.

Based on our discussions and review of the information submitted, we offer the following recommendations:

1. As access is obtained, each remaining section should be evaluated to determine if suitable habitat for the leafy prairie clover is present. Areas of suitable habitat should be surveyed by botanists familiar with the

species during the flowering season (June 15 through August 31). If leafy prairie clover is found, you should determine if the proposed pipeline construction may affect it and contact this office. Copies of survey reports should be submitted to this office.

2. When completed, the results of the geological survey should be submitted to this office for review. If caves or karst habitat are found in the project impact area, you should continue coordination with us to develop means of avoiding adverse impacts to sensitive cave habitat and cave species.
3. Measures should be incorporated into the project to minimize impacts to streams and riparian vegetation.
4. If blasting is required, the minimum charge needed to achieve desired objectives should be used. Blasting should not be done in areas where the potential to disturb cave environments exists.
5. Best Management Practices should be employed throughout construction to avoid adverse impacts to fish and wildlife habitats. Removal of vegetation should be kept to the absolute minimum necessary to achieve project objectives.
6. Sediment controls should be employed at all stream crossings. Silt fences, staked hay bales, brush barriers, sediment basins, and rock checks should be used singly, or in combination, to provide maximum control of sediment. These structures should be installed before trenching begins and should be cleaned and repaired as needed. If sediment is observed running into the stream, work should cease and not resume until needed repairs are made and the sediment structures are properly functioning.
7. Native plant species should be used to revegetate areas disturbed by project-related activities.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Your concern for the protection of endangered and threatened species is greatly appreciated. If you have any questions, please contact Jim Widlak at 931/528-6481, ext. 202.

Sincerely,



Lee A. Barclay, Ph.D.
Field Supervisor



STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND CONSERVATION
WATER SUPPLY

9th Floor, 401 Church Street
Nashville, Tennessee 37243-1539
Phone: (615) 532-0191; Fax: (615) 532-0503

May 4, 2005

Mr. J. H. Rumpp
TRC Environmental Corporation
Boott Mills South
Foot of John Street
Lowell, Massachusetts 01852

RE: Ground Water & Source Water Protection Issues in Sumner and Trousdale
Counties; Midwestern Gas Transmission Company

A review of the community water supplies in the area show that the proposed route will run in the vicinity of the City of Portland's three water intakes (Drakes Creek, City Lake and Sportsmans Lake). The water system will need to be notified a minimum of one week prior to construction in the area commencing. Erosion controls will obviously need to be strictly adhered to so as to prevent impacts on the intakes. The system will also need to note the crossings in the potential contaminant source inventory of their Source Water Protection Plan. See Attachment A for locations. There are no community water systems utilizing ground water in the area of the proposed pipeline route. The only noncommunity system utilizing ground water is Garretts Creek Baptist Church; 2535 Pleasant Grove Road; Westmoreland, TN 37186 in Sumner County.

The plan for the proposed project locates the project in a karst area, the counties where the pipeline will be installed are in mature karst terrain and have abundant sinkholes and other karst features. Construction and drainage around/through sinkholes will have to be addressed.

In Tennessee the modification of sinkholes is regulated under the Underground Injection Control (UIC) Program, which is housed in the Ground Water Management Section. Please be advised that the sinkhole is considered the entire closed depression whether there is an open throat or not and not just the area near an open throat. If there is to be a modification of any sinkhole on this project it will be necessary for you to have a letter of authorization from the UIC program to proceed. You will need to contact Scotty Sorrells of my staff at (615) 532-9224 to file the application and obtain the authorization.

Our requirements for erosion control in the vicinity of sinkholes is basically the same as erosion control plan around streams required by, the Division of Water Pollution Control. The erosion control plan for sinkholes will need to show a similar workway corridor as for streams. The following are what we require for those entities we regulate:

- 1) If at any time during the clearing or construction of the property a karst feature is discovered then all work around the area is to stop. Erosion control devices straw bales and silt fence are to be placed and this Division is to be notified within twenty-four (24) hours of the discovery.
- 2) Install silt fence and straw bales along the entire edge of the sinkhole and around any potential conduit that the water may use to enter the ground water prior to any construction.
- 3) Note that silt fences are used as a temporary diversion features and generally have a life expectancy of three (3) months.
- 4) All straw bales shall be placed in a single row, with ends of adjacent bales tightly abutting on another. The barrier shall be entrenched and back filled. A trench shall be excavated the width of a bale and the length of the proposed barrier to a minimum depth of four (4) inches. After the bales are staked and chinked, the excavated soil shall conform to the ground level on the down gradient side and shall be built up to four (4) inches against the up gradient side of the barrier.
- 5) After every storm event the entire silt fence must be inspected and any needed repairs done at that time. Should any damage occur due to traffic or any other activity the fence must be repaired before the end of each work day.
- 6) Straw bale barriers shall be inspected immediately after each rainfall and at least daily during prolonged rainfall. Necessary repairs to barriers or replacement of bales shall be accomplished promptly. Sediment deposits must be removed when the level of deposition reaches approximately one-half the height of the barrier. Any sediment deposits remaining in place after the straw bale barrier is no longer required shall be dressed to conform to the existing grade, prepared and seeded.
- 7) The silt fence and straw bales must remain in place and in good working condition throughout the entire development of the property, and until the disturbed area has been stabilized.

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Once the final route of the project has been determined, we will also need a map(s) showing the sinkholes identified before construction that will be modified. At the completion of construction we will also need a map with all the sinkholes that have been modified showing notations with latitudes and longitudes as to the modification performed on the sinkhole. Note that the sinkholes which show on a 7 ½ minute quadrangle topographic map are by no means a complete representation (they typically represent about 5 - 20% of the actual sinkholes).

Extreme caution should be used in the filling and construction on or in a sinkhole. It may be necessary to add extra support over the expanse of a sinkhole, even after the sinkhole has been filled. A sinkhole by nature is an unstable geologic area, which has no permanent means of stabilization and is subject to times of movement and settling. This uncontrollable movement may cause some damage to any permanent structure placed on or around the karst feature. The State of Tennessee assumes no responsibility in potential consequences of building on filled depressions of any kind at any time.

Feel free to contact me at (615) 532-0170 or tom.moss@state.tn.us if you have further questions.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Moss
Source Water Protection Coordinator
Manager, Ground Water Management Section
Division of Water Supply

