

In Reply Refer To:
OEP/DEER/Gas Group 2
Millennium Pipeline Company, L.P.
Docket Nos. CP98-150 et al., and
Columbia Gas Transmission Company,
Docket No. CP98-151-000

TO THE PARTY ADDRESSED:

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared this final environmental impact statement (FEIS) on natural gas pipeline facilities proposed by Millennium Pipeline Company, L.P. (Millennium) and Columbia Gas Transmission Company (Columbia) in the above-referenced dockets.

The FEIS was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act and the Commission's implementing regulations under Title 18, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 380. Its purpose is to inform the public and the permitting agencies about the potential adverse and beneficial environmental impacts of the proposed project and its alternatives, and recommend mitigation measures which would reduce adverse impacts. The staff concludes that approval of the proposed Millennium Pipeline Project, with appropriate mitigation measures as recommended, would have limited adverse environmental impact. We note that our recommended mitigation measures would need to be included in the Commission certificate to address aspects of the proposal.

The FEIS addresses the potential environmental effects from construction and operation of the following proposed facilities:

373.5 miles of 36-inch-diameter pipeline;

43.8 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline;

3 measurement and regulating stations and regulator station; and

associated pipeline facilities, including pipeline and block valves, pig launchers and receivers, blowdown valves, and cathodic protection rectifier beds.

The FEIS also assesses the potential environmental effects of abandonment of these facilities by Columbia:

Abandonment by conveyance to Millennium

6.7 miles of 24-inch diameter pipeline in Rockland County that would be used for the new mainline system between mileposts (MPs) 376.4 and 383.3;

20.1 miles of laterals and 28 metering and regulation stations in New York and Pennsylvania, and one compressor station in Pennsylvania; and

Abandonment in place or by removal:

222 miles of Line A-5 in New York.

The purpose of the Millennium Pipeline Project would be to transport up to 700,000 decatherms per day and provide firm natural gas transportation service for nine shippers beginning on November 1, 2003.

The FEIS will be used in the regulatory decision-making process at the FERC and may be presented as evidentiary material in formal hearings at the FERC. While the period for filing interventions in this case has expired, motions to intervene out-of-time can be filed with the FERC in accordance with the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedures, 18 CFR 385.214(d). Further, anyone desiring to file a protest with the FERC should do so in accordance with 18 CFR 385.211.

The FEIS has been placed in the public files of the FERC and is available for inspection at:

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, D.C. 20426
(202) 208-1371

A limited number of copies are available from the Public Reference and Files Maintenance Branch identified above. In addition, copies of the FEIS have been mailed to Federal, state, and local agencies, public interest groups, individuals who have requested the FEIS, newspapers, and parties to this proceeding.

In accordance with the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations implementing the National Environmental Policy Act, no agency decision on a proposed action may be made until 30 days after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency publishes a notice of availability of the FEIS. However, the CEQ regulations provide an exception to this rule when an agency decision is subject to a formal internal process which allows other agencies or the public to make their views known. In such cases, the agency decision may be made at the same time the notice of the FEIS is published, allowing both periods to run concurrently. The Commission decision for this proposed action is subject to a 30-day rehearing period.

Additional information about the proposed project is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (202) 208-1088 or on the FERC Internet website (www.ferc.gov) using the "RIMS" link to information in this docket number. Click on the "RIMS" link, select "Docket #" from the RIMS Menu, and follow the instructions. Or assistance with access to RIMS, the RIMS helpline can be reached at (202) 208-2222.

Similarly, the "CIPS" link on the FERC Internet website provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings. From the FERC Internet website, click on the "CIPS" link, select "Docket #" from the CIPS menu, and follow the instructions. For assistance with access to CIPS, the CIPS helpline can be reached at (202) 208-2474.

David Boergers
Secretary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This final environmental impact statement (FEIS) for the Millennium Pipeline Project has been prepared by the staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) to fulfill the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act.

BACKGROUND

In December 1997, Millennium filed its initial application, under section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations, to construct, acquire, own, and operate a 422-mile-long natural gas pipeline that would extend from an interconnection in Lake Erie at the Canada/U.S. border, through southern New York to Mount Vernon, Westchester County, New York. The purpose of Millennium's proposed facilities would be to transport U.S. and Canadian gas to growth markets in the eastern U.S., including Pennsylvania, New York, and New Jersey. In a related application, Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (Columbia) proposes to abandon the majority of its Line A-5 mainline system and to convey to Millennium certain Line A-5 pipeline lateral facilities that would become part of the new Millennium pipeline system.

In April 1999, the draft environmental impact statement (DEIS) was issued. Among the commenters on the DEIS were the Public Service Commission of State of New York (PSCNY) and Consolidated Edison Company (ConEd) whose primary concern was the location of the pipeline within the ConEd powerline right-of-way in Westchester County. Both indicated that an accident associated with construction or operation of the pipeline within this critical right-of-way could result in a power outage in New York City. In June 2000, Millennium Pipeline Company L.P. (Millennium) filed an amendment (Docket No. CP98-150-002) to its pending certificate application that partially addressed this concern and reflected a new proposed route (designated the 9/9A Proposal) in Westchester County, New York.

A supplemental draft environmental impact statement (SDEIS) was issued on March 12, 2001. The SDEIS was in two parts. Part I only addressed the environmental impact associated with construction of the 25.4 miles of the proposed route between mileposts (MPs) 391.2 and 416.6, including about 2.7 miles, between MPS 404.1 and 406.8, where the route remained unchanged from the originally proposed project. Part II addressed some of the issues identified in comments on the DEIS where we¹⁷ believed updated project information on the pipeline route was needed. It only included issues associated with the black dirt area in Orange County, the Amish lands in Cattaraugus County, waterbody crossings (e.g., surface waters, Lake Erie, and the Hudson River), the Catskill Aqueduct in Westchester County, coastal zone management consistency, Hudson River Alternatives, and route variations identified during the public comment period on the DEIS.

In Part I of the SDEIS, we identified the ConEd Offset/State Route 100 Alternative as a potential alternate route to address the concerns of residents who opposed the 9/9A Proposal while acknowledging that the ConEd powerline right-of-way is a sensitive utility resource and needs to be protected. This alternative would place the pipeline adjacent to the ConEd right-of-way and about 100 feet from the electric towers instead of between and within 50 feet of the towers as originally proposed. Use of this alternative depended on whether the PSCNY could expand its Memorandum of Understanding with Millennium to incorporate the ConEd Offset/State Route 100 Alternative.

In March 2001, during the comment period on the SDEIS, the municipalities of Briarcliff Manor, Croton-on-Hudson, and Ossining, New York suggested a modification to the ConEd Offset/State Route 100 Alternative that would follow the Taconic State Parkway rather than State Route 100 for its last segment.

¹⁷We, "us" and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the Office of Energy Projects, part of the Commission staff.

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Then, during the April 9, 2001 public comment meeting, the PSCNY and Millennium announced that they had agreed to a Supplementary Memorandum of Understanding (SMOU) which specifically addresses the design, construction, and operation of the project along a variation to the alternative referred to as the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative. This alternative would also be along the ConEd segment, but it would be farther from the electric towers and would follow the Taconic State Parkway rather than State Route 100. The SMOU would be used if this alternative is approved by the Commission. This FEIS also provides an environmental analysis of this alternative.

PROPOSED ACTION

The Millennium Pipeline Project would transport up to 700,000 decatherms per day (dth/d) and provide firm transportation service for eight shippers for natural gas service beginning November 1, 2003. In addition, Millennium would transport 14,000 dth/d for customers on Columbia's existing Line A-5 pipeline. The proposed route is the original route proposed in Millennium's December 1997 application as amended in June 2000 to include the 9/9A Proposal. This would require construction and operation of a new interstate transmission system consisting of:

- 373.5 miles of 36-inch-diameter pipeline;
- 43.8 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline
- 3 measurement and regulating stations and 1 regulator station; and
- associated pipeline facilities, including pipeline and block valves, pig launchers and receivers, blowdown valves, and cathodic protection rectifier beds.

In addition, Millennium would acquire the following facilities from Columbia:

- 6.7 miles of 24-inch-diameter pipeline in Rockland County that would be used for the new mainline system; and
- 20.1 miles of laterals and 28 metering and regulation stations in New York and Pennsylvania, and one compressor station in Pennsylvania.

Construction of Millennium's pipeline and aboveground facilities would disturb about 797.6 acres underwater in Lake Erie and 5,135.6 acres of land on shore for the construction right-of-way, extra work areas, and aboveground facilities. Following construction, Millennium would retain 797.6 acres of permanent right-of-way underwater in Lake Erie and 2,341.4 acres of land on shore for operation of the pipeline and associated aboveground facilities.

The following text summarizes affected resources and issues along the proposed route.

Soils- A unique portion of the Hudson Hills physiographic region known as the "black dirt" area is comprised of peat deposits in the Pine Island area in Orange County, New York. Millennium has prepared a site-specific plan for the black dirt area to address concerns identified by landowners and the State of New York Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDA&M). The final plan for the black dirt area (December 2000) is the result of numerous meetings and consultations, and is acceptable to the NYSDA&M. This plan ensures that the deep soil layers will not be mixed and that soil profiles will be reconstructed to protect the integrity of these unique soils.

Waterbodies - The Millennium Pipeline Project would cross a total of 507 waterbodies (including Lake Erie), of which 308 are perennial and 199 are intermittent waterbodies. A total of 21 waterbodies would be over 100 feet wide at the crossing. Millennium proposes to cross 493 waterbodies (97 percent of all waterbodies)

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using dry crossing techniques (e.g. directional drill, horizontal bore, coffer dam, dry ditch, or aerial), unless at the time of crossing there is no perceptible water flow.

Millennium received its section 401 Water Quality Certificate from the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection for the Lake Erie crossing on March 29, 2000. Millennium also received its section 401 Water Quality Certificate from the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation on December 8, 1999, for all waterbodies in New York that would be crossed by the proposed route which originally was within the ConEd right-of-way in Westchester County. This certification included waterbodies that would also be affected by the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative along the ConEd right-of-way such as Furnace Brook Lake, Teatown Lake, and the Croton River. Millennium would be required to obtain a revision to its section 401 Water Quality Certificate for waterbodies crossed along portions of the route that have changed since then, including any route changes that may be approved by the Commission.

Lake Erie - The pipeline would cross a total of about 32.9 miles of Lake Erie within U.S. waters and 60.4 miles within Canadian waters. In response to comments that the pipeline could be damaged from ice scour along the bottom of Lake Erie, the U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center (ERDC) at the Cold Regions Research and Engineering Laboratory reviewed the analyses prepared by Millennium on the proposed trench depth in the lake. As a result of this review, the ERDC recommended that the trench depth be increased from 9.2 feet (Millennium's original proposal) to 11.2 feet in the areas nearest the U.S. shore. Millennium has agreed to install its pipeline at the recommended depths. The ERDC also reviewed Millennium's revised turbidity modeling and determined it to be conservative. No additional sampling or analyses were recommended for contaminated sediments. The additional trench depth should provide adequate protection for the pipeline in Lake Erie.

Hudson River - The pipeline would cross the Hudson River in Haverstraw Bay, between Bowline Point in Haverstraw and the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Veteran's Administration Hospital in Cortlandt, about 11.3 miles north of Nyack, New York, and the Tappan Zee Bridge. The proposed crossing would be 2.1 miles long, making directional drilling infeasible as a construction option. The crossing would be within habitat for the federally endangered shortnose sturgeon, designated essential fish habitat (EFH) for seven species of fish, and the New York coastal zone. We submitted our EFH Assessment to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in January 2001.

Millennium currently proposes to use an open-water, lay-barge construction method. This would involve installing the pipeline in 1,300-foot-long segments, dredging with a closed bucket, storing the dredge spoil in barges, and backfilling the trench using bottom-dump barges. Based on turbidity modeling, the total area affected by operation on any given day would range between 0.06 acre and 5.23 acres depending on the operation, with periodic impacts involving about 9.18 acres during backfill in deep water using the bottom dump barges. Proposed construction would affect about 1.5 percent of the bay over the duration of the crossing. After a collaborative process with appropriate Federal and state agencies, Millennium proposes to cross the Hudson River within the agreed upon window between September 1 and November 15. We concur with this timing. The proposed construction methods should minimize construction impacts to the habitat in Haverstraw Bay at the proposed crossing location and are recommended.

Endangered and Threatened Species - Seven federally listed endangered or threatened species could possibly occur in the vicinity of the project area: endangered shortnose sturgeon, dwarf wedge mussel, clubshell, Northern riffleshell, and the threatened bald eagle, bog turtle, and northern wild monkshood. Since northern wild monkshood is not known or likely to occur with the project area, the project would not affect this species or suitable habitat for this species. We issued our Biological Assessment for the project in January

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2001 on the seven federally listed or proposed species and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service provided its comments in March and July 2001.

The shortnose sturgeon occurs in the Hudson River between the George Washington Bridge in Manhattan and the Federal Lock and Dam in Troy, New York, and in particular, in the Haverstraw Bay area. The formal consultation process began on June 1, 2001, and on September 14, 2001, the NMFS submitted its biological opinion and an incidental take statement to the FERC. The NMFS concluded that the proposed action may adversely affect, but is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the federally endangered shortnose sturgeon. The incidental take statement authorizes the take of one shortnose sturgeon from either injury or mortality, and includes three non-discretionary terms and conditions that must be complied with, as well as four discretionary conservation recommendations. The recommendation of the FWS and the NMFS should help protect the federally listed threatened or endangered species in the project area.

Catskill Aqueduct - The pipeline would cross the Catskill Aqueduct in Yonkers, New York (at the Bryn Mawr Siphon). The New York City Department of Environmental Protection (NYCDEP) expressed concern about this crossing because the top of the aqueduct is about 8 feet below the surface in this area. The NYCDEP believes that a failure of the pipeline could result in an interruption of water supplied to New York City via the aqueduct. Millennium states it has met with the NYCDEP on several occasions and has prepared a conceptual crossing design for the crossing. This plan would be finalized after site access has been obtained and the plan has been reviewed by an independent engineering consultant reporting to the NYCDEP. The final site-specific engineering design for the crossing of the Catskill Aqueduct should protect the integrity of this water supply.

Coastal Zone Management Consistency - No part of the project would be on land in Pennsylvania, and the only affected area within the Pennsylvania coastal zone would be in Lake Erie. No impacts are anticipated on cultural resources or endangered and threatened species within the designated Pennsylvania coastal zone. Millennium received a coastal zone consistency determination from Pennsylvania in April 2000. Millennium initiated consultation with the New York State Department of State (NYSDOS) in November 1998 for the segments of pipeline within the coastal zone of New York (the Lake Erie and Hudson River areas). In March 2001, Millennium provided an updated Coastal Zone Management consistency application to the NYSDOS that addressed the project as currently proposed. The NYSDOS indicates that it will complete its review of the project in the fall 2001.

Wetlands - According to field delineations conducted by Millennium and our review of the NWI maps, the proposed pipeline would cross about 673 wetlands for a total crossing length of 41.4 miles, affecting about 414.3 acres during construction. No wetlands would be affected by aboveground facilities. Millennium's proposed and our recommended mitigation would minimize construction impacts on wetlands.

City of Mount Vernon - The last approximate 1.9 miles of the pipeline would be constructed within the boundaries of the City of Mount Vernon where the project would interconnect with existing ConEd facilities. About 1 mile of this total would be along the Bronx River Parkway and the rest would be within the residential and commercial streets. Concerns raised by the citizens of Mount Vernon, a community that is about 72.4 percent minority, included environmental justice as well as concerns about pipeline construction and operation near residential neighborhoods, high rise apartments, the Hamilton Elementary School, two fire stations, the Mount Vernon Hospital, the Greater Centennial African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, and a neighborhood health center. Objections were also raised about the location of the Mount Vernon Metering and Regulating Station in the parking area near the neighborhood clinic near South 8th Avenue and West 4th Street. The pipeline terminus was modified to tie into ConEd's existing 20-inch-diameter pipeline

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at the intersection of South 7th Avenue and West 4th Street, which would avoid construction next to the church and the neighborhood health center. This variation would require relocation of the Mount Vernon Meter and Regulating Station to a parking area near Oak Street and MacQuesten Parkway. This variation would reduce the impact of construction in the City of Mount Vernon by decreasing the amount of pipeline construction in the city near community resources and moving the meter station to a more commercial site.

Alternatives - We evaluated 15 possible system alternatives using varying combinations of the existing pipeline systems (or proposed expansions of these systems). These system alternatives were identified mostly to minimize or avoid impacts associated with Lake Erie and Hudson River crossings, or to minimize overall environmental impact. We found none of the system alternatives to be reasonable or practical for varying reasons, including the potential for at least equal or greater environmental impact, construction constraints, and the cost differential associated with the expansion that would affect the likelihood of the project ever being proposed.

We also evaluated 9 major route alternatives, the most significant being the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative discussed below. These included two major route alternatives around Lake Erie and one alternative across Lake Erie with a different landing location, one major route alternative across New York State, two alternative locations for the Hudson River crossing, and three major route alternatives in Westchester County. With the exception of the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative discussed below, we found none of these major route alternatives reasonable or practical. In addition, we reviewed 26 route variations proposed by landowners and 17 line changes proposed by Millennium to address landowner concerns. Of these, we agreed that Millennium should incorporate the 17 line changes and 14 of the variations. These line changes and route variations would reduce impacts on environmental resources or accommodate development plans.

ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative - This alternative in Westchester County is one of the most controversial portions of the project and accounted for the majority of comments received on the SDEIS. It was proposed by the municipalities of Briarcliff Manor, Croton-on-Hudson, and Ossining in response to our suggestion in the SDEIS of the ConEd Offset/State Route 100 Alternative as a compromise between the original proposal that was located entirely within the ConEd right-of-way and Millennium's amended route, the 9/9A Proposal that minimized use of the ConEd right-of-way but required construction along U.S. Route 9 and State Routes 9A and 100.

There is no clear environmental advantage between the 9/9A Proposal and the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative. Neither route is popular with the people who would be affected by its construction. Either route could be constructed with limited adverse impacts. Further, we have recommended additional mitigation measures to reduce impacts. However, the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative has the advantage of co-location on an existing utility right-of-way for over half of its length, rather than imposing a utility within a narrow transportation corridor. Millennium and the PSCNY have agreed to stringent safety specifications that would be part of the design of the pipeline and to allow the pipeline to be installed about 35 feet closer to the powerlines to take advantage of the existing cleared right-of-way, thus minimizing tree clearing in sensitive areas and minimizing construction disturbance on adjacent property owners. Based on the filed comments, local governments object to both routes but generally prefer the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative over the 9/9A Proposal. We recommend the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative to the Commission since it would be less disruptive to affected communities.

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PUBLIC COMMENTS

In February 1998, the FERC issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Millennium Pipeline Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues (NOI). The NOI was sent to about 2,237 individuals and organizations. Public scoping meetings were held in North East, Pennsylvania (March 16, 1998); and in Wellsville (March 17, 1998), Binghamton (March 18, 1998), Yonkers (March 24, 1998), and Port Jervis, New York (March 25, 1998). We received comments from a total of 85 individuals at the scoping meetings and additional written comments (including 330 form letters and 95 requests to intervene) from a total of 752 individuals representing Federal and state agencies, counties, municipalities, organizations, and concerned citizens.

In December 1998, we sent copies of the Preliminary DEIS to the cooperating agencies (the NYSDA&M and the COE, Buffalo District) to solicit specific comments on issues and to allow them to take part in the actual drafting of the document. We received comments from both agencies and incorporated them into the DEIS, as appropriate. We issued the DEIS in April 1999, and mailed it to 1,680 agencies, groups, and individuals. In response to requests to extend the comment period, the Commission granted an extension from June 7 to June 22, 1999. Within the comment period, we received a total of 182 comment letters, representing 13 Federal agencies, 19 state agencies and state representatives, the Seneca Indian Nation, 27 county and municipal agencies, and 122 individuals and groups. In addition, public meetings to receive comments on the DEIS were held along the pipeline route in New York in: Goshen (May 17, 1999), Yonkers and Mayville (May 18, 1999), Horseheads (May 19, 1999), and Binghamton and Wellsville (May 20, 1999).

On August 9, 2000, the FERC issued a Notice of Intent to Prepare a Supplement to the Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Millennium Pipeline Project, As Amended; Request for Comments on Environmental Issues; and Notice of Public Scoping Meeting and Site Visit (SNOI). The SNOI was sent to about 2,014 individuals and organizations. A public scoping meeting to provide the general public with an opportunity to learn more about the 9/9A Proposal and to comment on environmental issues to be addressed in the SDEIS was held in Croton-On-Hudson, New York, on September 14, 2000.

The SDEIS was issued on March 12, 2001, and was mailed to 2,262 agencies, groups, and individuals. The public meeting to receive comments on the SDEIS was held on April 9, 2001, in Ossining, New York. At that meeting, Millennium and the PSCNY announced that they had worked out the details of the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative. On April 26, 2001, the FERC notified landowners and abutters along the ConEd Offset/Taconic Parkway Alternative informing them of the proposed alternative. Comments were requested as soon as possible and within 30 days of the date of the notice. Then, in response to requests from elected officials and the City of Mount Vernon, we held an additional comment meeting on September 4, 2001, in Mount Vernon.

As of September 7, 2001, we received a total of over 2,213 comment letters, representing 4 Federal agencies, 10 elected officials, 7 state agencies, 16 county and municipal agencies, 20 organizations, 11 individuals residing outside of Westchester County, and 2,077 individuals from Westchester County. Many of the state, county, municipal, and individuals commented more than once.

MAJOR CONCLUSIONS

We conclude that construction and operation of the Millennium Pipeline Project would result in impacts from Lake Erie to eastern New York and would be locally significant. Most notably during the

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construction period, the project would cause a variety of adverse impacts. Although these may be mitigated extensively through proposed and recommended mitigation, many are unavoidable.

The most significant unavoidable impacts are turbidity and sedimentation in Lake Erie and the Hudson River; direct and indirect impacts on the federally-endangered shortnose sturgeon and federally-managed EFH in the Hudson River; damage to farm soils especially in the black dirt area in Orange County; permanent conversion of about 26.3 acres of forested wetland to non-forested wetland within the permanent right-of-way; and disturbance of residential communities throughout Westchester County, including disruption caused by in-street construction in the densely populated City of Mount Vernon. Although we have examined many alternatives, including expansion of existing pipeline systems both north and south of Lake Erie and from different directions into New York City, we have been unable to find an alternative that would not create similar disturbances to other locations, other landowners, and other environmentally sensitive areas in New York or neighboring states.

Impacts would be most significant during the construction period. As part of our analysis, we have developed specific mitigation measures, in addition to those proposed by Millennium, that we believe to be appropriate and reasonable for construction and operation of the proposed facilities. Millennium would implement the construction and restoration procedures identified in its Environmental Construction Standards, which incorporate our Upland Erosion Control, Revegetation and Maintenance Plan and Wetland and Waterbody Construction and Mitigation Procedures, and in this FEIS. Millennium would also complete compliance with the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act, Coastal Zone Management Act, and the National Historic Preservation Act before it would be allowed to begin construction. We believe that these measures would reduce environmental impact, and have concluded that this project can be constructed and operated in accordance with these mitigation measures. Further, after review of the impacts of and alternatives for this project, as modified by staff, we believe that this project is the preferred alternative for providing up to 700,000 dth/d of natural gas transportation service to this area.