



national fuel

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February 4, 2016

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, N.E.
Washington, DC 20426

Re: National Fuel Gas Supply Corporation and Empire Pipeline, Inc.
Northern Access 2016 Project
Docket Nos. CP15-115-000 and CP15-115-001

Dear Ms. Bose:

National Fuel Gas Supply Corporation and Empire Pipeline, Inc. (collectively, "National Fuel") hereby submit their responses to comments submitted from November 21, 2015 to January 22, 2016. Similar to National Fuel's August 13, 2015, September 18, 2015, October 30, 2015, November 20, 2015 and January 11, 2016 Comment Responses, National Fuel reviewed each comment submitted during the aforementioned comment period, similar comments were grouped together, and comment summaries were developed with respect to new and previously unaddressed substantive issues/concerns.

National Fuel responds to each of these comment summaries in the attached document in comment/response format. National Fuel's responses are based on the pipeline route and facilities in National Fuel's March 17, 2015 certificate application, as updated by National Fuel's August 31, 2015 supplemental environmental data request response concerning above-ground facilities, and as further updated in National Fuel's November 2, 2015 Amendment to Joint Abbreviated Application.

Please contact the undersigned if you have questions concerning this filing.

Very truly yours,

/s/ Kenneth Webster

Kenneth Webster
Attorney
National Fuel Gas Supply Corporation and
Empire Pipeline, Inc.

Enc.

cc: Christine Allen

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day served, in accordance with the provisions of Rule 2010 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure, the foregoing document upon each person designated on the official service list compiled by the Secretary of the Commission in this proceeding.

Dated at Williamsville, New York this 4th day of February, 2016.

/s/ Matthew J. Luzzi

Matthew J. Luzzi

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Comments / Responses

November 21, 2015 to January 22, 2016

1. Concern that all trees and vegetation at the 20 acre site of the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station will be removed. Concern with the amount of time it will take for new landscaping and plantings to mature in order to screen visibility of the station.

Response: No existing trees will be removed from the Killian Road site in connection with Empire's construction of the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station. Empire has also proposed a robust landscaping and screening plan for the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station, featuring extensive berming along the front and back ends of the site, over fifty (50) new deciduous trees and over two hundred fifty (250) new evergreen trees on top of the berms and across the site.

2. Concern that stormwater runoff from the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station will be discharged into the Town of Pendleton's sewer system.

Response: In connection with the Empire application for local zoning approvals related to the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station, Empire has prepared and submitted a stormwater pollution prevention plan (SWPPP) to the Town of Pendleton's stormwater management officer for review and comment.

3. Concern about how odorant will be stored at the site of the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station.

Response: The odorization facilities at the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station will be of a different design than the current facility along Aiken Road, which has a separate 5,000 gallon bulk storage odorant tank. The new state-of-the-art design has an integral 500 gallon "day tank" housed within the odorizer enclosure, which will be located within the meter and regulator building.

4. Concern that temperature inversions at the site of the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station may trap emissions.

Response: As required by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) air permit application process, National Fuel must complete an ambient air quality impact modeling analysis to demonstrate that the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station will comply with applicable federal and New York State (NYS) ambient air quality standards at and beyond the proposed facility boundaries. The modeling analysis will be completed using an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) developed model and run according to prescribed EPA and NYSDEC methodology. Site-specific surface characteristics that influence the atmospheric boundary layer and terrain elevations will be utilized in the model to assess dispersion throughout the modeling domain. Additionally, a matrix of site-specific meteorological

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conditions is generated by the meteorological preprocessor using representative ambient air temperatures, minimum wind speed, and surface characteristics to simulate conservative atmospheric conditions that result in the maximum ground-level concentrations. Due to the buoyancy and momentum, significant plume rise from the compressor turbines is expected. The modeling analysis will be reviewed by the regulatory agencies to ensure conformance with acceptable modeling methodologies and input requirements.

5. Concern that the site of the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station is in a floodplain.

Response: The 100-year floodplain of Bull Creek extends along Killian Road and includes a portion of a roadside swale near the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station Project (Project). Per the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Panels 36063C0358E and 36063C0354E, Bull Creek and its associated floodplain and floodway have been designated as part of a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) Zone AE. The project is located approximately 3,500 feet beyond the limits of the delineated floodway in the flood fringe, and the only portion of the Project located within the floodplain is the portion of the proposed access road that crosses the Killian Road swale.

Empire has submitted and received approval of the Floodplain Development Permit from the Town of Pendleton for the proposed Project. Per the request of the Town of Pendleton's Floodplain Administrator, the Floodplain Development Application also included a Hydrologic and Hydraulic (H&H) analysis by a licensed professional engineer demonstrating that the proposed activity meets the Town of Pendleton Code (Chapter 135, Flood Damage Prevention) and FEMA's requirements for development within the flood fringe of a SFHA Zone AE. The H&H analysis discussed how the impact to flood levels with respect to Bull Creek is negligible due to the size and location of the proposed crossing with respect to the overall floodplain and floodway of Bull Creek. The analysis also shows that increases in water surface elevation in the roadside swale as a result of the proposed Project are within FEMA and the Town of Pendleton's allowable limits, and there is no anticipated increased risk of flooding or erosion due to the proposed development and installation of the culvert crossing Bull Creek's floodplain.

6. Concern as to whether a grassland raptor monitoring survey will be completed with respect to the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station.

Response: In response to a request from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Region 9, Empire has agreed to complete winter raptor surveys for the proposed Pendleton Compressor Station site, specifically to monitor the Short-eared Owl and the Northern Harrier. The survey will use the State listed Wintering Grassland Raptor Species protocols. NYSDEC Region 9 has reviewed and approved this plan and the monitoring is underway.

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7. Concern that residents with property in close proximity to the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility were not notified of Empire's public meeting regarding the facility.

Response: On January 13, 2016, Empire held a public information forum concerning the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility. In advance of this forum, Empire purchased bi-weekly full-page advertisements in two local papers, the Niagara Gazette and the Niagara Wheatfield Tribune. Local media outlets also ran stories on the public information forum beginning in late December 2015 and continuing through the week of the event. In addition, a notice was sent to a community stakeholder group known as the "Wheatfield Action Team" on December 28 requesting that this group post such notice on their Facebook page. In response, the Wheatfield Action Team posted several reminders about the January 13 meeting on their Facebook page for interested area residents. Empire also provided notice to various public officials concerning the forum beginning on December 18, 2015, with subsequent follow-up notices. Notices were couriered on January 5 to all landowners within 0.5 miles of the proposed facility that referenced the forum, in addition to a tour of a similar dehydration facility in Cambria, New York. Out of more than 19,000 Town of Wheatfield residents, under 100 Wheatfield residents attended Empire's public information forum.

8. Concern that the noise level of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility will be disruptive to surrounding residents.

Response: Empire's proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility will utilize state of the art noise control mitigation to achieve sound level contributions significantly below FERC's 55 dBA Ldn requirement at the nearest noise sensitive area (NSA). As indicated in Empire's Ambient Sound Survey and Noise Impact Analysis (see Accession No. 20151113-5155 for Docket No. CP15-115-000 et al.), the estimated contribution of the proposed Dehydration Facility ranges from 29 to 31 dBA at the closest NSA. In addition, Empire's analysis did not include a building to enclose the proposed Dehydration Facility reboilers (now part of Empire's design), which will further reduce sound levels for the facility.

In sum, the estimated Wheatfield Dehydration Facility sound level contributions at the nearest NSA will be approximately 15 dB below FERC's 55 dBA Ldn requirement, which is consistent with a minimum impact.

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9. Concern regarding emissions from the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility.

Response: National Fuel is committed to complying with applicable Federal Clean Air Act (CAA) and New York State air quality and emissions-related regulatory requirements at the Wheatfield Dehydration Facility. As part of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) air permitting process, the NYSDEC will review anticipated emissions from the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility to ensure that the proposed facility will not adversely impact human health or the environment. In addition Empire has designed a thermal oxidizer into the facility - see response to comment #12.

10. Concern that the site of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility is in close proximity to residences and statement that it should be located in an industrially zoned location.

Response: The proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility will be located entirely within the Town of Wheatfield M-1 Industrial zone. The Facility will occupy approximately one (1) acre in the southeast corner of a forty (40) acre parcel adjacent to Liberty Drive – the roadway through an existing industrial park. The Facility will be located entirely on upland acreage, impacting no delineated wetlands. The closest residences to the south of the Facility are more than 0.5 mile from the proposed site, and are separated from the site by the Niagara County Sewer District Treatment Plant, and two manufacturing plants on Liberty Drive. Approximately 0.9 miles west of the Facility is an industrial park housing various industrial and manufacturing facilities, and the Town of Wheatfield's fire hall. The closest resident to the north and northeast of the proposed Facility is over 0.5 miles away, separated by the 40 acre parcel to be acquired by Empire, and another large parcel containing extensive forested wetlands. To the east of the proposed Facility is a utility corridor housing a railroad track and the existing Empire natural gas transmission pipeline, beyond which is an abandoned quarry and vacant land.

11. Concern as to whether there will be chemicals and/or processing fluids stored at the site of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility.

Response: There will be no bulk fluid storage at the Wheatfield Dehydration Facility. The facility will have a condensate tank which will serve as an interim staging vessel. Pipeline condensate collected in the filter separators will be transferred into a staging vessel before being pumped into a truck for hauling and disposal off site.

12. Concern about what emissions, if any, will be present at the site of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility and concern as to whether emissions and/or air quality testing will be conducted.

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Response: Gas entering the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility will be processed and dehydrated upstream, which reduces the already trace levels of pollutants possible in natural gas. The vent stream generated by the natural gas dehydration process at the Wheatfield Dehydration Facility will consist of water vapor and trace levels of pollutants, removed from the natural gas stream. This stream will be routed to a thermal oxidizer with a destruction efficiency of at least 99 percent that will significantly reduce emissions prior to venting to atmosphere.

Based on the Facility's low anticipated potential-to-emit emissions, due to the pipeline quality natural gas and applicable regulatory requirements for the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility, emissions testing is not required. However, the natural gas within the system is continuously monitored to ensure that the natural gas passing through the system meets pipeline gas quality standards. In addition, the natural gas dehydrator and thermal oxidizer will be operated and maintained according to the manufacturer's specifications to ensure proper thermal oxidizer operation and emissions destruction is achieved.

13. Concern regarding the procedures for monitoring the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility.

Response: Empire Gas will follow established company procedures and Industry Control Room Management best practices, and will monitor the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility 24 hours per day from its Gas Control Operations Center. When dehydration is required and the facility is being utilized, Operations personnel will inspect the facility daily.

14. Concern that maps used to select the site for the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility did not identify recently developed residential areas.

Response: The site selection of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility was based on the location of industrial zoned areas in relation to the existing corridor of Empire's natural gas pipeline. Several current maps were used during the site selection process, including Empire's internal pipeline system map, the Town of Wheatfield Zoning Map, the Town of Wheatfield Tax Maps, Niagara County Real Property GEO Mapping, and Google Earth.

15. Concern that vibrations from railroad traffic near the site of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility could damage the facility.

Response: The new section of pipeline that will be installed adjacent to and under the railroad will be designed with extra heavy wall thickness pipe, which will be evaluated to ensure allowable pipeline stresses caused by the railroad use are

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within design safety factors, and which will be compliant to the installation standards and depths required by the railroad's pipeline crossing permit.

The proposed Dehydration Facility is located over 295 feet from the railroad tracks. Any vibrations from railroad traffic will be dampened by distance and the surrounding soil.

16. Statement that methanol injections should be considered to mitigate risks associated with the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility. Statement that alternate technology, such as a desiccant dehydrator, should be considered for the project instead of the proposed glycol dehydrator.

Response: Triethylene glycol dehydration is the proven technology in the natural gas industry for reliable high volume dehydration of natural gas. Dessicant systems are better suited for low volume production gas streams or instrumentation and plant utility service. Methanol injection is not a dehydration process and does not lower the water content of natural gas. Methanol injection is a method for de-icing individual pipeline components or isolated sections of pipe which may be prone to ice blockage due to the presence of free water.

17. Concern that the frequency of blowdowns at the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility may be disruptive and dangerous to the surrounding areas.

Response: Venting of gas at the Wheatfield Dehydration Facility will occur infrequently, potentially less than once per year, and be limited to interval maintenance activity for specific components. Maintenance venting will always occur under the control and supervision of qualified operating personnel.

18. Concern that all affected landowners were not notified about the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility.

Response: In connection with the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility, Empire properly notified all "affected landowners" in accordance with, and as defined in, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's regulations (see 18 CFR 157.6(d)). This included the owner of the parcel on which the proposed Facility is expected to be constructed, as well as all landowners whose property abuts the proposed Facility site.

19. Statement that the dehydration facility for the Northern Access 2016 Project should be located in Canada since the purpose of dehydrating the gas is to meet Canadian standards.

Response: All applicable gas quality standards, including the standard related to water content, must be met at the international border crossing (the beginning of the TransCanada Pipeline system), which is under the Chippawa Channel of the

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Niagara River. The dehydration facility must therefore be located in the United States.

20. Statement that the dehydration facility for the Northern Access 2016 Project should be located in Grand Island, New York because the gas will collect additional moisture as it passes under the Niagara River, thus requiring further dehydration.

Response: Natural gas transported through the Empire and National Fuel Gas Supply Corporation transmission pipeline systems must meet stringent gas quality criteria. This criteria includes a water content and water vapor dewpoint which eliminates condensation from occurring during transportation. This includes condensation which could occur at river crossings if the gas was saturated with water.

21. Concern that residents within 0.50 miles of the site of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility received notice of a site tour just four days prior to the date of the tour.

Response: Empire invited all property owners within a 0.50 mile radius of the proposed Wheatfield Dehydration Facility (total of 13) to attend scheduled site tours of a similar dehydration facility. Bus transportation for the tours was provided to reduce the number of personal vehicles at the site and property owners were each permitted to bring a guest. Unfortunately, there was a mailing error discovered on the morning of Tuesday, January 5, which Empire promptly rectified using a delivery service that hand delivered new invitations for tours scheduled on January 9 and January 16. None of the 13 Wheatfield land owners signed up for either tour. However, members of a group of community stakeholders known as the “Wheatfield Action Team” requested to attend the tours, which was accommodated by Empire.

Additionally, at Empire’s January 13, 2016 public information forum concerning the Wheatfield Dehydration Facility, Empire announced that a tour was scheduled for January 16 and that anyone interested should contact its Corporate Communications Department (multiple representatives were present at the meeting). Out of the 101 attendees at the January 13 public information forum, one person requested information regarding the tour. That person declined attendance. In addition, a Town of Wheatfield Councilman offered the name of an individual who was interested in attending the tour, but that person did not commit to attend the tour after information was emailed on January 14. Further, on January 14, a member of the “Wheatfield Action Team” advised there were three individuals interested in a dehydration facility tour. Later that day, Empire received a further request from the “Wheatfield Action Team” that a fourth individual was interested in attending. Empire again accommodated these requests. Although all parties that requested to attend a dehydration site tour were accommodated, only 4 individuals (including 2 elected officials) attended the January 16 dehydration facility tour.

Document Content(s)

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