

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA 109 FERC ¶62,047
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation

Docket No. CP04-399-000

ORDER APPROVING ABANDONMENT

(October 22, 2004)

On August 19, 2004, Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (Columbia) filed an application under Section 7(b) of the Natural Gas Act (NGA) for authority to abandon certain pipeline compression facilities on its system in Ohio. Since Columbia proposes to abandon facilities which are obsolete and no longer needed, the requested authorization is required by the public convenience and necessity and is granted herein.

PROPOSAL/DISCUSSION

Columbia proposes to abandon, by removal, two compressor stations, the Abbeyville and Zane Compressor Stations, including compression and appurtenant facilities, located, respectively, in Medina and Muskingum Counties, Ohio. Columbia states that the abandonment will not result in any loss of service to its customers.

The Abbeyville Compressor Station, consisting of one 560-horsepower compressor unit and approximately 75 feet of 6-inch station piping, was constructed in 1985 in Medina County in order to prevent the migration of gas from the Medina Storage Field toward the City of Medina. In addition, the compressor station gave Columbia the ability to pump gas volumes from the field and deliver them to its mainline system for delivery to Columbia Gas of Ohio's (COH) markets. The compressor station, which Columbia has not used in over 5 years, is no longer needed because of recent development in the area and the expansion and reconfiguration of COH's distribution system.

The Zane Compressor Station, consisting of one 125-horsepower unit and approximately 185 feet of 6-inch piping, was constructed in 1955 as part of the Zane Storage Field to enable Columbia to use the storage field as an alternate

source of supply for the City of Zanesville during the winter heating season. The compression facilities are no longer needed as an alternate supply source, because changes in the configuration of Columbia's system have made it possible for Columbia to meet its contractual service obligation without these facilities. In fact, Columbia has already received authorization to abandon the Zane Storage Field (in 2001), but inadvertently omitted the compressor station from that filing.¹ Columbia ceased using the Zane Compressor Station in 2001 when the storage field was abandoned. The abandonment will result in minor operation and maintenance savings and eliminate the potential for costly repairs or replacement.

INTERVENTIONS

After due notice by publication in the Federal Register on September 9, 2004, (69 Fed. Reg. 54657), no interventions to the application were filed. No protests or petitions to intervene in opposition have been filed.

ENVIRONMENTAL

An environmental assessment (EA) was prepared for Columbia's proposal. The EA addresses geology, soils, fisheries, wetlands, wildlife, water resources, cultural resources, air quality, noise, hazardous wastes, and alternatives.

Based on the discussion in the EA, if the abandonment is carried out in accordance with Columbia's application and supplements filed September 17 and 30, 2004, and with the environmental conditions in the appendix attached hereto, approval of the proposal would not constitute a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment.

Any state or local permits issued with respect to the jurisdictional facilities authorized herein must be consistent with the conditions of this certificate. The Commission encourages cooperation between interstate pipelines and local authorities. However, this does not mean that state and local agencies, through application of state or local laws, may prohibit or unreasonably delay the construction or operation of facilities approved by this Commission. Columbia shall notify the Commission's environmental staff by telephone or facsimile of any environmental noncompliance identified by other federal, state, or local agencies on the same day that such agency notifies Columbia. Columbia shall file written

¹96 FERC ¶ 61,082 (2001).

confirmation of such notification with the Secretary of the Commission within 24 hours.

FINDINGS

At a hearing held on the date noted above, there was received and made a part of the record in this proceeding all evidence, including the application and exhibits thereto, submitted in support of the authorization sought herein.

Since Columbia's customers would achieve operating and maintenance savings by abandoning unneeded compressor facilities, and since there would be no adverse impact on its ability to meet its service obligations, Columbia's proposal is required by the public convenience and necessity.

This action is taken under 18 CFR §375.308, and it is ordered that:

- (A) Permission for and approval of the abandonment by Columbia of the subject facilities, as described above and in the application, are granted.
- (B) Columbia shall notify the Commission of the effective date of the abandonment authorized in paragraph (A) above within 10 days thereof.
- (C) This order constitutes final agency action. Requests for rehearing by the Commission may be filed within 30 days of the date of issuance of this order pursuant to 18 CFR §385.713.
- (D) Columbia shall notify the Commission's environmental staff by telephone and/or facsimile of any environmental noncompliance identified by other Federal, state, or local agencies on the same day that such agency notifies Columbia. Columbia shall file written confirmation of such notification with the Secretary of the Commission within 24 hours.

Berne L. Mosley
Director
Division of Pipeline Certificates
Office of Energy Projects

Appendix

Environmental Conditions

1. Columbia shall follow the abandonment procedures and mitigation measures described in the application and supplement (including responses to staff data requests) and as identified in the environmental assessment (EA), unless modified by this Order. Columbia must:
 - a. request any modification to these procedures, measures, or conditions in a filing with the Secretary;
 - b. justify each modification relative to site-specific conditions;
 - c. explain how that modification provides an equal or greater level of environmental protection than the original measure; and
 - d. receive approval in writing from the Director of the OEP before using that modification.

2. The Director of OEP has delegation authority to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure the protection of all environmental resources during abandonment activities associated with the project. This authority shall allow:
 - a. the modification of conditions of this Order; and
 - b. the design and implementation of any additional measures deemed necessary (including stop work authority) to assure continued compliance with the intent of the environmental conditions as well as the avoidance or mitigation of adverse environmental impact resulting from project abandonment.

3. **Prior to any abandonment**, Columbia shall file an affirmative statement with the Secretary, certified by senior company officials, that all company personnel, environmental inspectors, and contractor personnel will be informed of the environmental inspector's authority and have been or will be trained on the implementation of the environmental mitigation measures appropriate to their jobs **before** becoming involved with abandonment and restoration activities.