

**In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application by
Columbia Gas of Ohio for a Certificate of Environmental
Compatibility and Public Need for the SWACO Project,
Grove City, Franklin County, OH**) **Case Number**
) **13-0957-GA-BLN**
)

Todd Snitchler, Chairman, PUCO
David Goodman, Director, ODSA
Dr. Ted Wymyslo, Director, ODH
David Daniels, Director, ODA
Scott Nally, Director, Ohio EPA
Jim Zehringer, Director, ODNR
Jeffery J. Lechak, PE, Public Member

Kim Wissman
Executive Director
Ohio Power Siting Board
(614) 466-6692
ContactOPSB@puc.state.oh.us

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 13-0957-GA-BLN
Project Name: SWACO Project
Project Location: Grove City, Franklin County
Applicant: Columbia Gas of Ohio
Application Filing Date: April 18, 2013
Filing Type: Letter of Notification
Inspection Date: June 20, 2013
Report Date: July 8, 2013
Automatic Approval Date: July 18, 2013
Applicant's Waiver Requests: none
Staff Assigned: E. Steele, G. Zeto

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Conditions
Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

Project Description

The proposed project involves the installation of approximately 10,005 feet (1.9 miles) of 12-inch diameter coated steel high pressure gas main and 230 feet (0.04 mile) of 4-inch diameter coated steel high pressure gas main totaling 10,235 linear feet of proposed pipeline. In addition, Point of Delivery ("POD") facilities will be constructed to receive gas from SWACO. The POD facilities allow for natural gas to be transferred from SWACO to Columbia.

The majority of the 12-inch natural gas main will be constructed within permanent pipeline easements with the exception of the crossing of Interstate 71 and the two crossings of State Route 665. The majority of the 12-inch pipe will be installed by open cutting construction methods. Conventional boring or directional drilling is expected at the following locations, totaling 3,302 feet (0.6 mile) as depicted in the construction plans in Appendix B.

4" Pipeline Installation along SR 665: Directional Drill 202 feet of 4-inch pipe.

- Forested Area along SR 665: Directional Drill 200 feet of 12-inch pipe.
- Stream 1 Crossing along SR 665: Directional Drill 420 feet of 12-inch pipe.
- Gateway West Drive Road Crossing: Directional Drill 120 feet of 12-inch pipe.
- Stream 2 Crossing at intersection of SR 665 and SWACO access road: Directional Drill 200 feet of 12-inch pipe.
- SR 665 Road Crossing: Directional Drill 365 feet of 12-inch pipe.
- Stream 3 Crossing adjacent to SWACO access Road: Directional Drill 200 feet of 12-inch pipe.
- Interstate 71 Road Crossing and Stream 4 Crossing South of I-71: Directional Drill 1,593 feet of 12-inch pipe.

Site Description

The current land use along the preferred route is primarily comprised of agricultural land, industrial land (Solid Waste Authority of Central Ohio), and transportation land areas including SR 665 and Interstate 71. The preferred route follows SR 665 and turns south to parallel the SWACO facility and crosses Interstate 71, then turning east and then south in an agricultural field before ending at the district regulator station on Seeds Road.

Currently, there are approximately 10 residential homes along Seeds Road that are in the vicinity of the proposed project area. There is 1 residential home that is adjacent to the south of the proposed pipeline route near the district regulator station on Seeds Road where the proposed project will tie into the existing infrastructure.

Need

The primary purpose of the proposed pipeline is to deliver gas produced by the SWACO landfill into Columbia's high pressure distribution main for the purpose of transportation by Columbia. Landfill Energy Services ("LES") and Columbia have entered into an agreement to provide LES the opportunity to turn biogenic gas produced by the SWACO landfill into pipeline quality gas, which meets Columbia's gas quality standards.

Nature of Impacts

According to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service ("USFWS") federally listed species by Ohio Counties published in October 2012 was reviewed to determine the threatened and endangered species in Franklin County. USFWS's publication listed the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), endangered; Scioto madtom (*Noturus trautmani*), endangered; Clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*), endangered; Northern riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*), endangered; Rabbitsfoot (*Quadrula cylindrical cylindrical*), proposed as threatened; Rayed bean (*Villosa fabalis*), endangered; and Snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*), endangered.

There are four streams located within the proposed pipeline route, of which all of the streams will be avoided by the directional drilling of the proposed pipeline in those locations as to avoid impacts to the stream channel and associated riparian forest habitat surrounding them. Therefore, impacts to threatened or endangered aquatic species are not anticipated for the proposed project.

The proposed project contains forested habitat in the form of fence rows and single trees between agricultural fields, isolated woodlots containing riparian forests along stream channels, and previously disturbed scrub-shrub habitat adjacent to the SWACO access road within the proposed project area. Forested habitat impacts will also be minimized to the maximum extent as practicable for fence rows and single standing trees throughout the proposed pipeline route during construction. Please see the included construction plans for impacted locations of forested habitat and locations where forested habitat is preserved by the horizontal directional drilling (HDD) of the proposed pipeline. Conventional boring or directional drilling is expected at the locations listed in the project description above.

Conclusion

The preferred route ties-in with the existing 12-inch coated steel main at Columbia's existing district regulator station on Seed Road. The route follows a northerly path west of Seeds Road crossing I-71, across SWACO property to the north side of State Route 665. It turns west on State Route 665 to the location of the proposed POD. This route is approximately 9,500 feet and has minimum impact to residential and commercial properties along the route. This route provides service to the anticipated commercial/industrial development in the area of the newly reconstructed exit on I-71 at State Route 665. Staff recommends automatic approval of this case on **July 18, 2013** provided that the following conditions are satisfied.

Conditions

- (1) The Applicant shall obtain and comply with all applicable permits and authorizations as required by federal and state laws and regulations for any activities where such permit or authorization is required. Copies of such permits and authorizations, including all supporting documentation shall be provided to Staff. The Applicant shall provide a schedule of construction activities and acquisition of corresponding permits for each activity at the preconstruction conference;
- (2) The Applicant shall adhere to seasonal cutting dates of September 30 through April 1 for removal of suitable Indiana bat habitat trees, if avoidance measures cannot be achieved;
- (3) Construction in upland sandpiper nesting habitat must be avoided during the species' nesting period of April 15 to July 31;
- (4) The Applicant shall utilize BMPs when working in the vicinity of environmentally sensitive areas. This includes, but is not limited to, the installation of silt fencing (or similarly effective tool) prior to initiating construction near streams and wetlands. The installation shall be done in accordance with generally accepted construction methods and shall be inspected regularly;
- (5) Prior to construction, the Applicant shall submit to OPSB Staff, for review and acceptance, a detailed frac-out contingency plan for stream crossings that are expected to be completed via HDD. Such contingency plan may be incorporated within the required stream and/or wetland crossing plan, and shall include the following:
 - (a) Site-specific construction diagrams that show the location of bore pits, mud pits, pipe assembly areas, and all areas disturbed for the HDD;
 - (b) A description of the containment and clean-up procedures to be implemented should an inadvertent release of drilling mud occur on land, in a stream, or in a wetland;
 - (c) A plan to inspect and ensure the integrity of the bore hole throughout the HDD process;
 - (d) An alternate HDD plan for crossing the waterbody or wetland in the event that directional drilling is unsuccessful, and how the abandoned drill hole would be plugged.

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Summary: Report of investigation electronically filed by Mr. Adam S Bargar on behalf of Staff of OPSB