

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application** )  
**by Columbia Gas of Ohio for the Willard Lateral** ) **Case No. 17-2497-GA-BLN**  
**Pipeline Replacement Project** )

Members of the Board:

Chairman, Public Utilities Commission	Ohio House of Representatives
Director, Development Services Agency	Ohio Senate
Director, Department of Health	
Director, Department of Agriculture	
Director, Environmental Protection Agency	
Director, Department of Natural Resources	
Public Member	

To the Honorable Power Siting Board:

Please review the attached Staff Report of Investigation, which has been filed in accordance with Ohio Power Siting Board (Board) rules. The accelerated certificate application in this case is subject to an automatic approval process as required by Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 4906.03 and Ohio Administrative Code (Ohio Adm. Code) 4906-6.

Staff recommends the application for automatic approval on March 22, 2018, unless suspended by the Board, an administrative law judge, or the chairperson or executive director of the board for good cause shown. If suspended, the Board must render a decision on the application within 90 days from the date of suspension.

Please present any concerns you or your designee may have with this case to my office at least four business days prior to March 22, 2018, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Raymond W. Strom  
Chief of Siting, Efficiency and Renewables Division  
Rates and Analysis Department  
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
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## OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Case No.:** 17-2497-GA-BLN  
**Project Name:** Willard Lateral Pipeline Replacement  
**Project Location:** Huron and Richland counties  
**Applicant:** Columbia Gas of Ohio  
**Application Filing Date:** December 21, 2017  
**Filing Type:** Letter of Notification  
**Inspection Date:** January 22, 2018  
**Report Date:** March 15, 2018  
**Recommended Automatic Approval Date:** March 22, 2018  
**Applicant's Waiver Requests:** none  
**Staff Assigned:** E. Morrison, G. Zeto, A. Holderbaum

### Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application:  Approval  Disapproval  Approval with Conditions

Waiver:  Approval  Disapproval  Not Applicable

### Project Description

Columbia Gas of Ohio (Applicant) proposes to retire 40 feet of 4-inch diameter coated steel pipe, 1.6 miles of 6-inch diameter coated steel pipe, and 12 feet of 8-inch diameter coated steel pipe. The retired pipe would be replaced by 1.64 miles of 12-inch diameter coated steel pipe. The replacement pipeline would have a maximum allowable operating pressure of 175 pounds per square inch gauge. The proposed pipeline would be constructed of standard wall X52 grade coated steel with a minimum yield strength of 52,000 pounds per square inch.

The Applicant would utilize open cut trench construction methods for the entire pipeline except the road crossing at Baseline Road. Auger bore technology would be utilized for installation under Baseline Road. The existing pipeline would be abandoned in place, and the proposed pipe would lay parallel to the abandoned facility. The Applicant proposes to begin construction on April 2, 2018 and place the line in service by June 29, 2018. The Applicant estimates the total cost of the project at \$3,050,000.

### Site Description

The project begins with a tie-in to existing facilities on the south side of Baseline Road in Plymouth Township, Richland County, approximately 200 feet east of the intersection with Ladow Road. The proposed pipeline then heads generally north to a tie-in point with existing facilities on the south side of May Road in New Haven Township, Huron County, approximately 0.27 mile east of the intersection with Ladow Road. The surrounding land use is a mix of agricultural fields, wood

lots, and lawns. The entire length of the replacement pipeline would be located within existing easements owned by the Applicant, except for one road crossing at Baseline Road approximately 200 feet east of the intersection with Ladow Road. This crossing would be located in road right-of-way. Construction would occur within the existing 50-foot wide permanent easement with an additional 25-foot wide temporary work easement adjacent to the existing easement.

### **Basis of Need**

The Applicant identified the stated section of pipeline for replacement to alleviate the existing pipeline's small diameter. The pipeline to be replaced was originally installed in 1958. The transportation capacity of the system is bottlenecked, and is operating at capacity. The Applicant's ability to serve potential growth downstream and guarantee reliable service to existing customers is limited by this restriction. The proposed project would eliminate the bottleneck, subsequently allowing increased, more reliable transportation of product to downstream distribution systems.

### **Nature of Impacts**

#### *Socioeconomic Impacts*

The Applicant sent notification about the project to area public officials on December 21, 2017. The Applicant has already been in contact with the affected landowners. A letter would be sent out to all affected property owners in accordance with the Ohio Adm.Code. The Applicant intends to send a second letter at a later date to update affected property owners with pertinent information including the project schedule. Temporary construction easements have been acquired, and easements for staging areas would be acquired as needed.

#### *Agricultural Land*

The proposed construction of the pipeline would affect eight parcels zoned for agricultural use, two of which are classified as agricultural districts.

#### *Cultural Resources*

The Applicant completed a literature review and a Phase I cultural resources investigation for the project area to identify any potential impacts. The literature review did not identify any recorded cultural resources, and fieldwork for the Phase I investigation was completed on November 3, 2017 and again on January 24, 2018. The review identified three prehistoric archaeological sites within the project corridor. However, the Applicant concluded that those sites were insignificant and construction of the pipeline would not impact any significant cultural resources. The Applicant would monitor this location during construction for the presence/absence of any cultural artifacts. The Applicant submitted the results of the literature review to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office.

#### *Surface Waters*

The proposed project would not impact any streams.

The project would impact one category 2 wetland. Potential impacts would include open cut techniques for pipeline installation and temporary construction access. Impacts would be covered under the Army Corps of Engineers Nationwide Permit 12.

The project would impact greater than one acre of land and would require an Ohio Environmental Protection Agency General Permit OHC000004. The project would not cross a 100-year floodplain and no floodplain permit would be required.

### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

The project area is within the range of the state and federal endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the federal threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). As tree roosting species in the summer months, the habitat of these species may be impacted by the project. In order to avoid impacts to the Indiana bat and the northern long-eared bat, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Staff recommend the Applicant adhere to seasonal tree cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for removal of any trees greater than or equal to three inches in diameter.

### **Conclusion**

Staff's review of the application included consideration of the requirements listed in R.C. 4906.10. Based on Staff's review, the application meets the necessary criteria for granting a certificate. Staff recommends automatic approval of this application on March 22, 2018, provided that the following conditions are satisfied.

### **Conditions**

- (1) Prior to the commencement of construction activities in areas that require permits or authorizations by federal or state laws and regulations, the Applicant shall obtain and comply with such permits or authorizations. The Applicant shall provide copies of permits and authorizations, including all supporting documentation, to Staff within seven days of issuance or receipt by the Applicant.
- (2) The Applicant shall maintain traffic along public roadways and shall maintain access for adjacent land uses during construction.
- (3) Prior to construction, the Applicant shall submit to Staff, for review and confirmation that it complies with this condition, a project construction plan that provides the specific locations of its laydown areas and access roads and is responsive to Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) concerns about state listed species and ecological areas of significance. If the specific laydown locations chosen appear to have additional adverse impacts, the Applicant shall either propose different specific locations without such impacts, or refile its application
- (4) The Applicant shall adhere to seasonal cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for removal of any trees greater than three inches in diameter, unless coordination with the ODNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allows a different course of action.

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities**

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

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**in**

**Case No(s). 17-2497-GA-BLN**

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Adam Bargar on behalf of Staff of OPSB