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January 14, 2008

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street NE, Room 1A  
Washington, DC 20426

Re: Docket No. CP07-208-000

Dear Madame Secretary:

We represent a group of approximately forty Illinois landowners from Pike, Scott, Morgan and Sangamon Counties. On behalf of our clients, we are pleased to submit the following comments on the draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Rockies Express East Project. While we wholeheartedly endorse all 149 recommendations of the Commission's staff, we believe that the following additions are critical to maintaining some of the best producing soils in the world.

1. Recommendation No. 1 - Since individual landowner's may negotiate additional protections into their agreements with Rocky Express, we recommend inserting the following language following the parenthetical in the introductory paragraph:

"requirements contained in individually negotiated easements or confidentiality agreements".

2. Recommendation No. 4 - Since landowners have a vital interest in any modification of environmental requirements, we recommend that the following language be added at the end of the first paragraph:

"and include documentation of landowner approval".

This change would be consistent with the requirement that is included in Recommendation No. 5 with respect to changes in alignments, work areas and the like.

3. Recommendation No. 47 - While the agricultural inspector certainly plays a key oversight role, the environmental inspector does as well. Therefore, under subparagraph (b), we are recommending adding "or environmental inspector" after agricultural inspector.

4. Recommendation No. 102 - The majority of the land owned by members of our group contain extensive subsurface drainage systems. These tile lines are typically three to four feet or deeper. Therefore, in order to maintain a one foot clearance over the pipeline, it is crucial that the pipeline be buried to a depth of at least five feet below the surface.

In addition to protection of tile systems, the five foot requirement would help retard floating of such a large diameter (42 inch) pipe. Also the soil drying affects resulting from heat generated by the pipeline would be lesser in the surface zone due to the greater coverage depth.

5. Additional recommendation - Depth of Topsoil Removal - In the areas of central Illinois where the pipeline is proposed, topsoils are rich and frequently have depths well in excess of the sixteen inch maximum contained in Rocky Express's mitigation plan. In order to better protect the existing integrity of these topsoils, we recommend that the following be added as an additional construction standard:

"In areas where topsoil is to be stripped it shall be stripped at least 30 inches deep; provided, however, if the topsoil is less than 30 inches, the removal shall be limited to the depth of the topsoil".

We appreciate the opportunity provided by the Commission to comment on the draft EIS. If you or your staff would like a listing of owners we represent and the locations of their respective interests, we would be more than happy to provide it. Please contact us with any questions or comments or if you would like any additional materials.

Sincerely,

Mark s. Cochran  
Michael G. Barton

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