

MISSOURI COALITION FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

6267 Delmar Blvd. 2-E • St. Louis MO 63130 • 314-727-0600 Fax: 314-727-1665 • moenviron@moenviron.org • www.moenviron.org



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January 14, 2008

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

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RE: Docket No.: CPO7-208-000, REX East Pipeline

Dear Madame Secretary:

The Missouri Coalition for the Environment represents more than 1,000 Missourians concerned about protecting our natural resources and preserving habitat and water quality.

We submit these comments on to the REX East Project Draft Environmental Impact Statement. First, we respectfully request that the public comment period be extended at least 30 days to allow review of the numerous plans referenced in the DEIS that are not available at this time. The public and interested parties cannot adequately assess the DEIS without, for example, the mitigation plans, the disposal plans, and a host of other data that are critical to minimizing the project's environmental impacts. In short, the DEIS depends on a large number of "ifs" that amount to unknowns at this time. We have concerns that the mitigation measures on which FERC is depending to help balance the equation of destruction are not clearly identified, nor is there a sufficient legal mechanism for enforcement to ensure that the measures are fully implemented.

The REX East project raises a number of concerns for us at this time. Most notably, the Mississippi River crossing route, the destruction of forested wetlands, and the risk of flooding at the Blackburn Island site that REX proposes to exploit for the project. The DEIS evaluates a Blackburn Island crossing, and two other island crossings. The Blackburn Island crossing involves the Salt River AND the Mississippi River. In the alternatives considered, a non-island crossing should have been considered at a location that did not endanger two important rivers and otherwise undisturbed waterfowl habitat. In a time when human activities are encroaching more and more on wildlife habitat, we are concerned about the choice of an undisturbed island as a drilling site for this project.

Further, Blackburn Island is prone to flooding. Actually, it is more than prone to flooding. Like most of the Mississippi River islands, it floods. During the drilling or

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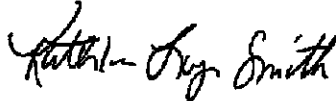
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operation or maintenance of the pipeline, a flood event could negatively impact water quality and pose additional risks to downstream drinking water sources and to aquatic life and avian habitat. The plans that REX is supposed to craft to address these risks cannot possibly be better than avoiding these risks entirely. Further, these plans are not available at this time, as noted in the second paragraph of this letter. Therefore, a route that avoids an island crossing should have been evaluated in the DEIS rather than just the options of three island crossings. A choice between three bad alternatives is not much of a choice — particularly when so much depends on plans that are not clear, public, and enforceable.

The uncertainty about whether the "recommendations" for mitigation measures presented in the DEIS will be adopted as binding requirements when FERC issues REX's Certificate should be clarified so that it is clear that all mitigation measures and plans are legally binding obligations. The project should not be allowed to proceed until mitigation measures are approved by affected agencies, on the public record, and there is sufficient evidence that they are in place.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this project.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Kathleen Logan Smith".

Kathleen Logan Smith
Executive Director

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