



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Big Piney
Ranger District

315 South Front Street
P.O. Box 218
Big Piney WY 83113
(307) 276-3375

File Code: 1950
Date: **JAN 04 2008**

Dear Interested Party:

The Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD) for the Lower Valley Energy Natural Gas Pipeline Project are now available to the public. The documents are available on the Bridger-Teton National Forest website at: www.fs.fed.us/r4/btnf/projects/ and at the public libraries in Jackson, Big Piney, and Pinedale. A copy of the FEIS and ROD are enclosed with this letter for your use.

The FEIS was prepared in response to a request for a special use authorization submitted by Lower Valley Energy (LVE), a utility serving western Wyoming, for construction and operation of a pressurized natural gas pipeline that would bring natural gas service (natural gas that has been processed and odorized) to the Jackson area from a location near Merna. Currently, liquid natural gas (LNG) is transported to Jackson by tanker trucks. The FEIS evaluates and discloses the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects of implementing each alternative considered:

The 49.7-mile pipeline would cross National Forest System (NFS) lands, State of Wyoming lands, and private lands in Sublette and Teton Counties. It would be designed, constructed, and operated in accordance with pipeline safety regulations that assure safety in design, construction, inspection, testing, operation, and maintenance of natural gas pipeline facilities. The 6-inch steel pipeline would be buried at all locations, except at five mainline block valves and for a distance of about 1,500 feet through the Camp Creek Saddle landslide area, where the pipeline would be installed on the ground surface, as recommended by a geotechnical investigation. The pipeline would parallel existing roadways managed by the Wyoming Department of Transportation (WYDOT) and utility corridors for most of its proposed route.

Public comments received during the review period of the DEIS were analyzed by the Forest Service and responded to in the FEIS, and resulted in modifications to the FEIS where appropriate. Reviewers had an obligation to structure their participation in the *National Environmental Policy Act* process so that it is meaningful and alerts the agency to the reviewer's position and contentions, (*Vermont Yankee Nuclear Power Corp. v. NRDC*, 435 U.S. 519, 553 [1978]). Environmental objections that could have been raised at the DEIS stage may be waived if not raised until after completion of the FEIS (*City of Angoon v. Hodel* [9th Circuit, 1986] and *Wisconsin Heritages, Inc., v. Harris*, 490 F. Supp. 1334, 1338 [E.D. Wis. 1980]).



The Proposed Action is approved in the accompanying ROD as the selected alternative. The Responsible Officials considered all public comments before making a decision.

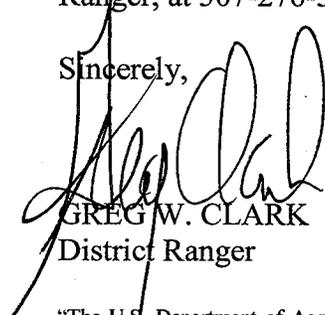
The ROD is subject to appeal pursuant to 36 CFR 215.11. Individuals or organizations who submitted substantive comments during the comment period specified at 215.6 may appeal the decision in the ROD. A Notice of Appeal, including attachments, must be submitted within 45 days after publication of the notice of decision in the Casper Star Tribune, the newspaper of record. Appeals or attachments received after the 45 day appeal period will not be considered. The publication date in the Casper Star Tribune is the exclusive means for calculating the time to file an appeal. Those wishing to appeal the decision should not rely upon dates or timeframe information provided by any other source. Appeals must meet the appeal content requirements of 36 CFR 215.14. Appeals may be filed by regular mail, facsimile, e-mail with Microsoft Word (.doc) or rich text format (.rtf) attachments, hand delivery, express delivery, or messenger service. In cases where no identifiable name is attached to an e-mail, a verification of identity will be required. A scanned signature is one way to provide verification.

Appeals must be submitted to:

USDA-Forest Service, Bridger-Teton National Forest
Attn: Carole "Kniffy" Hamilton, Forest Supervisor, Appeals Deciding Officer
340 N. Cache (P.O. Box 1888), Jackson, Wyoming 83001
Facsimile: (307) 739-5010
E-mail: appeals-intermtn-bridger-teton@fs.fed.us
Office Hours: Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. through 4:30 pm.

Please direct any questions or requests for further information to Greg Clark, Big Piney District Ranger, at 307-276-3375.

Sincerely,



GREG W. CLARK
District Ranger

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