Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline Project (PCGP)
September 2012

Background

In June, 2012, Pacific Connector Gas Pipeline LP filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to construct a 36 inch natural gas pipeline from an existing interstate natural gas distribution pipeline in Malin, Oregon to the proposed Jordan Cove natural gas liquefaction plant and liquefied natural gas (LNG) export terminal in Coos Bay.

In 2009, FERC published an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and authorized the PCGP to transport imported natural gas from the proposed Jordan Cove LNG facility. That authorization was withdrawn in April 2012 when Jordan Cove changed to an LNG export facility. As a result of FERC’s withdrawal of the previous authorization, new applications have been filed with FERC by both Jordan Cove and Pacific Connector, subsequently reinitiating the environmental review process.

The FERC is the lead federal agency for the National Environmental Policy Act review of the Jordan Cove and PCGP projects. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and Forest Service have worked as cooperating agencies on the PCGP with FERC since 2006 in accordance with Section 313 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005.

Approximately 41 miles of the PCGP cross BLM lands in southwest Oregon and 30 miles of the PCGP cross National Forest System lands. The Bureau of Reclamation facilities near Klamath Falls are also crossed by the PCGP. The BLM and Forest Service have no involvement with the Jordan Cove liquefaction plant and LNG terminal.

The FERC will decide whether or not to authorize the PCGP project under Section 7 of the Natural Gas Act and would administer its construction if authorized. The BLM, under the authority of the Mineral Leasing Act, would also need to issue PCGP a right-of-way grant with concurrence by the Forest Service and Bureau of Reclamation.

The BLM and Forest Service have worked closely with Pacific Connector and the FERC to identify and resolve potential impacts of the project on public lands and resources since the original application for the PCGP in 2006. The PCGP has worked with the BLM and Forest Service on changes to offset and minimize impacts on riparian zones, late successional forest habitats, scenic values, and other natural resources.

Where unavoidable impacts remain, extensive mitigation plans have been developed by the agencies in cooperation with the PCGP. The Forest Service has finalized the mitigation plan on its lands. The BLM is currently working with PCGP to finalize the mitigation plan on BLM lands.

Amendment of BLM and Forest Service Land Management Plans

Similar to a zoning ordinance, all activities on BLM or Forest Service lands must be consistent with the land management plan of the unit where the activity occurs. The PCGP would not be consistent with BLM land management plans on the Coos Bay, Roseburg and Medford Districts and Klamath Falls Resource Area of the Lakeview District.

Similarly, the PCGP would not be consistent with the Forest Service land management plans on the Rogue River, Umpqua, and Winema National Forests.
These BLM and Forest Service land management plans need to be amended to make provision for the PCGP in order for the project to move forward.

The FERC EIS for the project will be used by both agencies to support decisions. The FERC, BLM, and Forest Service have initiated a public scoping process that will end on October 29, 2012.