



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

Alaska State Office

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In Reply Refer To:
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August 3, 2009

Instruction Memorandum No. AK-2009-028

Expires: 9/30/2010

To: All State Office and Field Officials

From: State Director

Subject: Establish Roles, Responsibilities, Policy and Procedures for Natural Gas Pipelines in Alaska

Purpose: Outlines roles and responsibilities for managing BLM Alaska's efforts related to Natural Gas Pipeline Projects

Policy/Action: Policy of the Roles, Responsibilities, Policy and Procedures for Natural Gas Pipelines in Alaska.

Timeframe: Immediately

Budget Impact: \$0

Background:

The Alaska Natural Gas Pipeline Act (ANGPA) designated the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as the responsible agency for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the Denali and Trans-Canada proposals. BLM will be a Cooperating Agency in the EIS and will be responsible for processing the application for and granting the right-of-way (ROW) across Federal lands. Under ANGPA, the application process is subject to statutory timeframes and the involvement of other federal agencies, including the Office of the Federal Coordinator.

BLM-Alaska is working with three entities as each proponent works towards acquiring a federal ROW for their respective gas pipeline project. Denali - The Alaska Gas Pipeline, LLC, and TransCanada Alaska Company, LLC, each propose a 48-inch pipeline to transport natural gas from the North Slope through Canada. The Alaska Natural Gas Development Authority

(ANGDA) is refining an existing application for a 24-inch, in-state pipeline that would extend from the Beluga gas field to Delta Junction, with a smaller diameter extension running from Delta Junction to Fairbanks. Additionally another route proposal, an in-state line from the North Slope to South-Central Alaska, is currently being studied by the State of Alaska.

Any smaller diameter in-state project application that crosses a conservation system unit will be processed under the rules and procedures of Title XI of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Recognizing the importance of gas pipeline projects both to the State and the Nation, we have established a Natural Gas Pipeline Projects Group within the Division of Lands. The BLM Authorized Officer for these projects is the Project Manager.

The primary work efforts associated with the gas pipeline projects include the development and review of environmental and technical documents, issuance of Temporary Use Permits or other authorizations associated with issuance of the ROW, and the development of Terms and Conditions for the ROW.

As mandated by the Mineral Leasing Act, all costs incurred by the federal government in the BLM-Alaska processing of a ROW application are to be paid by the applicant. All work performed under cost recovery will be managed through task orders issued by the Project Manager. Procedures describing the management of the gas pipeline projects are attached. No personnel may perform work or charge to the cost recovery accounts unless authorized by the Project Manager or his designee.

Coordination: The primary role and responsibilities of the Project Manager and the BLM-Alaska offices for natural gas pipeline issues are as follows:

Project Manager, Natural Gas Pipeline Projects Group

- Serves as Authorized Officer for the BLM
- Manages all activities associated with BLM authorizations
- Supervises full time staff
- Directs the schedule for all activities for all gas pipelines to comport with the time frames required by ANGPA, FERC, and NEPA
- Ensures timeliness, quality, and compliance of outputs for all gas pipeline projects
- Serves as the internal and external point of contact on all authorizations and all communications between or among BLM Alaska, the pipeline companies and personnel in federal and state agencies in gas pipeline projects
- Negotiates with managers in BLM Alaska for staff time and outputs on a case by case basis as the Project Manager deems necessary
- Signs or approves correspondence as the Project Manager deems appropriate associated with processing any of the gas pipeline ROW applications
- Approves all official task orders and oversees correctness of federal government costs chargeable to the cost recovery accounts
- Develops, oversees and manages all aspects of cost recovery agreements
- Reports to the Deputy State Director for Alaska Lands
- Briefs the BLM Alaska State Director as necessary on any gas pipeline project matter
- Prepares Record Of Decision or ROW document for State Director signature

Deputy State Director, Alaska Lands

- Reports to the BLM Alaska State Director on significant gas pipeline projects matters that interface with the politics, appropriations budget, staffing and work of other BLM-Alaska managers and other federal and state agencies
- Signs Memoranda of Understanding with federal and state agencies on gas pipeline projects
- Reports to the Alaska Executive Team on gas pipeline projects
- Ensures staff support on land title records
- Provides support to the Natural Gas Pipeline Projects Manager in matters of staffing and appropriations budget
- Negotiates with managers in BLM-Alaska as necessary in support of the Project Manager and natural gas pipeline projects

Fairbanks and Anchorage District Offices

- Processes and issues temporary land use permits associated with the gas pipeline projects in the pertinent land jurisdiction of each office, including the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) corridor in Public Land Order 5150, as amended, but excluding the federal lands within the TAPS ROW
- Monitors permitted activities for compliance
- Reviews and provides comments on environmental documents
- Assists with Tribal Consultations
- Coordinates with the Office of Pipeline Monitoring on TAPS proximity issues
- Keeps the Project Manager abreast of communications and tasks

Office of Pipeline Monitoring

- The TAPS Authorized Officer serves as the primary contact for coordination with Alyeska Pipeline Service Company concerning proximity issues with the TAPS
- Coordinates with the Project Manager and District Managers on TAPS proximity issues
- Assists in the development of the long term monitoring plan as specified in ANGPA
- Reviews and approves or disapproves proposed activity within the TAPS ROW
- Reviews and provides comments on environmental documents
- Provides design review technical expertise as requested by the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
- Keeps the Project Manager abreast of communications and tasks

Division of Resources

- Provides professional staff support as requested by the Project Manager
- Reviews and comments on environmental documents

Other BLM-Alaska organizational units will contribute through their normal roles of providing administrative and logistical support services. The processing of these ROW applications is a State Director priority and it is incumbent upon every manager and supervisor involved to make the needed personnel available to ensure the projects are completed in a timely and efficient manner.

Contact: Ron Dunton, Natural Gas Pipelines Project Manager, (907) 271-3132.

Signed by:
Thomas Lonnie
State Director

Authenticated by:
Anita R. Jette
Records Specialist

Attachment:
[Sample Task Order](#)