

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH REVIEW OF THE CROSS CASCADE PIPELINE PROPOSAL

October 1997

Lead State Agency

Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council

Lead Federal Agency

U.S. Forest Service

Cooperating Federal Agencies

Bureau of Land Management

Bureau of Reclamation

Department of the Army

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

The Project As Proposed in 1996

In February 1996, the Washington State Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council or EFSEC received an application from the Olympic Pipe Line Company to construct a 227-mile petroleum products pipeline from Thrasher's Corner in Snohomish County to Pasco. Under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA), EFSEC is preparing an environmental impact statement or EIS which will study the impacts of the project on the environment and alternative means to meet the project's purpose and need. Because the proposed route crosses federal lands and requires federal permits, the EIS will be prepared jointly with a lead federal agency, the U.S. Forest Service, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

In March 1996, EFSEC and the U.S. Forest Service held six public meetings along the proposed route to hear from the public what issues and alternatives should be studied in the EIS. Citizens commented on many issues, including the project's impacts on stream crossings, wetlands, habitat, vegetation, fish, and wildlife. These issues remain, as well as concerns about the purpose and need for the project and the alternatives which may meet that need.

Changes to the Project

Since the application was originally submitted in February 1996, there have been several minor changes to the project centerline (i.e., relocating

The purpose of this newsletter is to inform you that the EIS for the Cross Cascade Pipeline is being prepared. It will be ready for public review in early 1998. In addition, this newsletter briefly describes the application review process, project changes, and the purpose and need for the project.

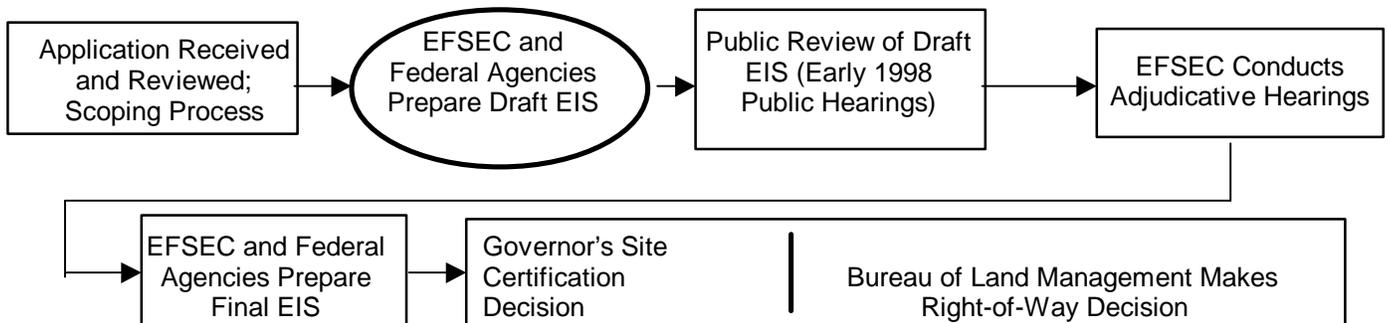
centerline to avoid wetlands or due to negotiations with property owners). Another minor change was relocating the North Bend pump station from the north side of Cedar Falls Trail to the south side. More substantial changes include avoiding a slide area in eastern Washington, and adding 5 miles of new corridor alternatives and multiple river crossings for consideration near the Army's Yakima Training Center and I-90 at the Columbia River.

Technical Activities Since Summer 1996

Jones & Stokes Associates, environmental consultant to EFSEC, reviewed the application and submitted a report to EFSEC and Olympic Pipe Line Company in April 1996. The applicant responded to the application review, and a second application review report was submitted by Jones & Stokes Associates in July 1997.

During this period, the technical team visited the proposed route to examine issues associated with the review and centerline changes made since the application was submitted.

WHERE ARE WE IN THE APPLICATION REVIEW AND EIS PROCESS?



What's Happening Now?

The EIS is now in process, and the technical team is completing its analyses. This process includes continuing contacts with those who may have data to offer about the project, such as refineries and other pipeline companies, and federal, state, and local agency staff along the proposed route. Tidewater Barge was contacted earlier in the year and again more recently.

EFSEC held a public meeting in early September, 1997, to receive limited public comment about concerns that had arisen since the original scoping meetings, due to changes in the proposed project or newly available technical information.

Purpose and Need

The NEPA process requires a statement of purpose and need for the project. The SEPA/NEPA EIS will use the following statement: "The purpose of the proposed action is to provide a cost-effective, efficient, and environmentally sound means to transport refined petroleum products from western Washington refineries to central and eastern Washington to meet the long-range needs for product transportation."

This need statement recognizes Olympic Pipe Line's need to carry product from the Northwest refineries and its need to meet the demands of its shippers who have ordered more product than Olympic Pipe Line can deliver.

Next Newsletter: The next newsletter is anticipated for early 1998, during the public review period for the draft EIS. It will summarize EIS findings and set the date of one or more public hearings.

Schedule

As of October 1997, nearly all of the application review process is complete and the draft EIS is in preparation. The federal agencies and state anticipate that the draft EIS will be complete and available for public review in early 1998. Public hearings will be held during the review period to receive public comments on the project.

For More Information

If you would like more information about the process, please contact Allen Fiksdal, EFSEC, (360)956-2152 or Steve Johnson, U.S. Forest Service, (425)888-1421.

The original application is located at the following locations: Washington State Energy Office Library, Washington State Library, Bellevue Branch Library, Duvall Branch Library, North Bend Branch Library, Snoqualmie Branch Library, Ellensburg Public Library, Kittitas Public Library, Royal City Branch Library, Othello Community Library, and Pasco Branch Library. The original application, full scoping summary, and other project information are also available on the Internet at <http://www.energy.wsu.edu/org/efsec/pipeline.htm>.
