

Cited as "1 ERA Para. 70,506"

Inter-City Minnesota Pipelines Ltd., Inc. (ERA Docket No. 80-01-NG), Great Lakes Gas Transmission Company (ERA Docket No. 80-02-NG), Montana Power Company (ERA Docket No. 80-03-NG), Michigan Wisconsin Pipe Line Company (ERA Docket No. 80-04-NG), Northwest Pipeline Corporation (ERA Docket No. 80-05-NG), Midwestern Gas Transmission Company (ERA Docket No. 80-06-NG), Pacific Gas Transmission Company (ERA Docket No. 80-07-NG), St. Lawrence Gas Company, Inc. (ERA Docket No. 80-09-NG) and Vermont Gas Systems, Inc. (ERA Docket No. 80-10-NG). July 23, 1980.

Order Granting Extension of Time

[Opinion and Order]

On July 9, 1980, the Economic Regulatory Administration of the Department of Energy issued a prehearing order in ERA Docket Nos. 80-01-NG, et al., setting forth the issues to be examined and the procedures to be used in developing the record in these dockets on whether the ERA's authorizations for the importation of Canadian natural gas should be conditioned to reduce unnecessary or uneconomic dependence on natural gas imports. The prehearing order set the course for the proceedings originally called for in ERA Opinion and Order No. 14B of May 15, 1980, which concluded that imported natural gas supplies should, as a general rule, be viewed as marginal supplies and priced competitively with alternate fuels, and which ordered further proceedings to determine whether ERA should impose conditions (especially on take-or-pay contract provisions governing the imports) to promote these objectives. The prehearing order also followed the outline for further proceedings discussed at the prehearing conference of June 10, 1980 in these dockets.

On July 18, 1980, Great Lakes Transmission Company, Midwestern Gas Transmission Company, Michigan Wisconsin Pipe Line Company, and Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company filed with ERA a joint motion for the extension of the filing dates in this proceeding. The movants acknowledge that the schedule in the prehearing order (which required initial submissions by July 30, 1980 and rebuttal submissions by August 20, 1980) is "generally in line with the dates discussed at the June 10, 1980 prehearing conference." Nonetheless, they contend that certain matters raised in the prehearing order are so novel and complex and are of such import that an extension of time is necessary to ensure a full and complete record. Thus the movants request a thirty-day extension that would establish August 29, 1980 as the date for filing of initial comments and September 19, 1980 as the date for filing of reply comments.

Upon consideration of these arguments, we conclude that in the interest of ensuring a full and complete record, an extension of time should be granted. We are, however, concerned that these proceedings be resolved without undue delay. Accordingly, we hereby grant an extension of three weeks.

Order

For the reasons set forth above, ERA hereby orders that:

Ordering paragraph A.4. of the prehearing order of July 9, 1980 in ERA Docket Nos. 80-01-NG, et al. is hereby amended to read as follows:

"4. Submissions shall be made in accordance with the following schedule:

"a. All initial submissions shall be served and filed no later than 4:30 p.m. e.d.t., August 22, 1980.

"b. All rebuttal submissions shall be served and filed no later than 4:30 p.m., e.d.t., September 12, 1980."

Issued in Washington, D.C., July 23, 1980.