

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

OFFICE OF FOSSIL ENERGY

_____)
BC GAS INC.)
_____)

FE DOCKET NO. 91-14-NG

INTERIM ORDER AMENDING AUTHORIZATION
TO ADD AN ALTERNATIVE IMPORT POINT
IN ADVANCE OF PUBLIC NOTICE

DOE/FE OPINION AND ORDER NO. 285-C

JULY 30, 1992

I. BACKGROUND

On July 17, 1992, BC Gas Inc. (BC Gas) filed an application with the Office of Fossil Energy (FE) of the Department of Energy (DOE), under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (NGA) and DOE Delegation Order Nos. 0204-111 and 0204-127, requesting that the import/export authorization previously granted in DOE/FE Opinion and Order No. 285-A,1/ as amended in DOE/FE Opinion and Order No. 285-B,2/ be amended to authorize an alternative import point. BC Gas is authorized to import, through the pipeline facilities of Northwest Pipeline Corporation (NWP) at Sumas, Washington, up to 3,180,243 Mcf of Canadian gas annually for storage at the Jackson Prairie Storage Field (Jackson Prairie) in Lewis County, Washington, and to export equivalent volumes back into Canada. NWP has scheduled maintenance projects on its line, thereby reducing its "take away capacity" at Sumas, Washington, and has advised shippers, including BC Gas, to use an alternative receipt point until those maintenance procedures are completed. For this reason, BC Gas requests authority, for the period up to November 1, 1992, to import gas through existing Pacific Gas Transmission (PGT) facilities at Eastport, Idaho.

In support of its import request, BC Gas states that the temporary shift in receipt point from Sumas, Washington, to Eastport, Idaho will not affect its import/export arrangement because the volumes imported, stored and exported will remain the

1/ 1 FE 70,206 (March 31, 1989).

2/ 1 FE 70,467 (July 26, 1991).

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same. Therefore, BC Gas asserts that its request is not inconsistent with the public interest.

II. DECISION

The DOE has considered BC Gas' request for interim authority in light of our responsibility under section 3 of the NGA, and the immediate circumstances confronted by BC Gas. It is apparent that DOE is faced with a request that can be honored only by an immediate action. We believe BC Gas' application states reasons sufficient to justify the use of the Eastport, Idaho import point until maintenance procedures are completed at Sumas, Washington. The requested action will allow BC Gas to resume necessary gas shipments to Jackson Prairie, and will ensure adequate gas volumes for BC Gas' system during the upcoming heating season. We are issuing contemporaneously a notice of the application and of this interim order which will give the public an opportunity to participate in this proceeding. We will take whatever further action, if any, is necessary and is in the public interest based on the results of these proceedings.

In view of the above considerations and the facts asserted by the applicant, the limited term authorization of the alternative receipt point for imports of gas already authorized by Order Nos. 285-A and 285-B will not be inconsistent with the public interest.^{3/}

^{3/} Because the import/export of gas will use existing facilities, DOE has determined that granting this authorization is not a major federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4321, et seq.); therefore, an

environmental impact statement or environmental assessment is not required. See 40 C.F.R. 1508.4 and 57 F.R. 15122 (April 4, 1992).

ORDER

For the reasons set forth above, pursuant to section 3 of the Natural Gas Act, it is ordered that:

A. The import and export authorization previously granted to BC Gas Inc. (BC Gas) by DOE/FE Opinion and Order No. 285-B, as amended by DOE/FE Opinion and Order No. 285-B, is hereby amended to authorize BC Gas, for the period up to November 1, 1992, to import natural gas through existing facilities at Eastport, Idaho.

B. BC Gas shall notify the DOE within seven (7) days of the effective date that it begins importing its authorized gas volumes through the Eastport, Idaho facilities.

Issued in Washington, D.C., on July 30, 1992.

Charles F. Vacek
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Fuels Programs
Office of Fossil Energy