

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
OFFICE OF FOSSIL ENERGY

MONTANA-DAKOTA UTILITIES CO.,
a Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc.
FE DOCKET NO. 98-63-NG

ORDER GRANTING BLANKET AUTHORIZATION
TO IMPORT NATURAL GAS FROM CANADA

DOE/FE ORDER NO. 1412

SEPTEMBER 15, 1998

I. DESCRIPTION OF REQUEST

On August 31, 1998, Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., a Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc. (Montana-Dakota), filed an application with the Office of Fossil Energy of the Department of Energy (DOE), under section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (NGA)⁽¹⁾, and DOE Delegation Order Nos. 0204-111 and 0204-127, requesting blanket authorization to import up to a maximum of 10 million Mcf (10 billion cubic feet) of natural gas from Canada for two years beginning on December 1, 1998, through November 30, 2000. Montana-Dakota, a public utility, is duly authorized to do business in the states of Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wyoming. It is a division of MDU Resources Group, Inc. which is organized in the State of Delaware with its principal place of business in Bismark, North Dakota. The requested authorization does not involve the construction of new pipeline facilities.

II. FINDING

The application filed by Montana-Dakota has been evaluated to determine if the proposed import arrangement meets the public interest requirement of section 3 of the NGA, as amended by section 201 of the Energy Policy Act of 1992 (Pub. L. 102-486). Under section 3(c), the importation of natural gas from a nation with which there is in effect a free trade agreement requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas is deemed to be consistent with the public interest and must be granted without modification or delay. The authorization sought by Montana-Dakota to import natural gas from Canada, a nation with which a free trade agreement is in effect, meets the section 3(c) criterion and, therefore, is consistent with the public interest. This blanket order authorizes transactions under contracts with terms of no longer than two years.

ORDER

Pursuant to section 3 of the Natural Gas Act, it is ordered that:

- A. Montana-Dakota Utilities Co., a Division of MDU Resources Group, Inc. (Montana-Dakota) is authorized to import from Canada up to a maximum of 10 Bcf of natural gas over a two-year term beginning on December 1, 1998 and ending on November 30, 2000. The gas may be imported at any U.S./Canada border point.
- B. With respect to the natural gas imports authorized by this Order, Montana-Dakota shall file with the Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum Import and Export Activities, within 30 days following each calendar quarter, quarterly reports indicating whether imports of natural gas have been made. Quarterly reports must be filed whether or not initial deliveries have begun. If no imports have been made, a report of "no activity" for that calendar quarter must be filed. If imports have occurred, Montana-Dakota must report total monthly volumes in Mcf and the average purchase price per MMBtu at the international border. The reports shall also provide the details of each import transaction, including: (1) the name of the seller(s); (2) the estimated or actual duration of the agreement(s); (3) the name of the U.S. transporter(s); (4) the point(s) of entry; (5) the geographic market(s) served (by State); (6) whether sales are being made on an interruptible or firm basis; and, if applicable, (7) the per unit (MMBtu) demand/commodity/reservation charge breakdown of the contract price.
- C. The first quarterly report required by Ordering Paragraph B of this Order is due not later than January 30, 1999, and should cover the period from December 1, 1998, until the end of the fourth calendar quarter, December 31, 1998.
- D. The quarterly reports required by Ordering Paragraph B of this Order shall be filed with the Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum Import and Export Activities, Fossil Energy, Room 3E-042, FE-34, Forrestal Building, 1000 Independence Avenue, S.W., Washington, D.C., 20585.

Issued in Washington, D.C., on September 15, 1998.

John W. Glynn

Manager, Natural Gas Regulation

Office of Natural Gas & Petroleum

Import and Export Activities

Office of Fossil Energy

1. 1/ 15 U.S.C. § 717b.