

ment under section 720b of this title for an Alaska natural gas transportation project, the Commission shall issue a final order granting or denying any application for a certificate of public convenience and necessity for the project under section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act (15 U.S.C. 717f(c)) and this section.

**(d) Prohibition of certain pipeline route**

No license, permit, lease, right-of-way, authorization, or other approval required under Federal law for the construction of any pipeline to transport natural gas from land within the Prudhoe Bay oil and gas lease area may be granted for any pipeline that follows a route that—

(1) traverses land beneath navigable waters (as defined in section 1301 of title 43) beneath, or the adjacent shoreline of, the Beaufort Sea; and

(2) enters Canada at any point north of 68 degrees north latitude.

**(e) Open season**

**(1) In general**

Not later than 120 days after October 13, 2004, the Commission shall issue regulations governing the conduct of open seasons for Alaska natural gas transportation projects (including procedures for the allocation of capacity).

**(2) Regulations**

The regulations referred to in paragraph (1) shall—

(A) include the criteria for and timing of any open seasons;

(B) promote competition in the exploration, development, and production of Alaska natural gas; and

(C) for any open season for capacity exceeding the initial capacity, provide the opportunity for the transportation of natural gas other than from the Prudhoe Bay and Point Thomson units.

**(3) Applicability**

Except in a case in which an expansion is ordered in accordance with section 720c of this title, initial or expansion capacity on any Alaska natural gas transportation project shall be allocated in accordance with procedures to be established by the Commission in regulations issued under paragraph (1).

**(f) Projects in the contiguous United States**

**(1) In general**

An application for additional or expanded pipeline facilities that may be required to transport Alaska natural gas from Canada to markets in the contiguous United States may be made in accordance with the Natural Gas Act [15 U.S.C. 717 et seq.].

**(2) Expansion**

To the extent that a pipeline facility described in paragraph (1) includes the expansion of any facility constructed in accordance with the Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Act of 1976 (15 U.S.C. 719 et seq.), that Act shall continue to apply.

**(g) Study of in-State needs**

The holder of the certificate of public convenience and necessity issued, modified, or amended

by the Commission for an Alaska natural gas transportation project shall demonstrate that the holder has conducted a study of Alaska in-State needs, including tie-in points along the Alaska natural gas transportation project for in-State access.

**(h) Alaska royalty gas**

**(1) In general**

Except as provided in paragraph (2), the Commission, on a request by the State and after a hearing, may provide for reasonable access to the Alaska natural gas transportation project by the State (or State designee) for the transportation of royalty gas of the State for the purpose of meeting local consumption needs within the State.

**(2) Exception**

The rates of shippers of subscribed capacity on an Alaska natural gas transportation project described in paragraph (1), as in effect as of the date on which access under that paragraph is granted, shall not be increased as a result of such access.

**(i) Regulations**

The Commission may issue such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.

(Pub. L. 108-324, div. C, §103, Oct. 13, 2004, 118 Stat. 1256.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Act of 1976, referred to in subsecs. (a) and (f)(2), is Pub. L. 94-586, Oct. 22, 1976, 90 Stat. 2903, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 15C (§719 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 719 of this title and Tables.

The Natural Gas Act, referred to in subsec. (f)(1), is act June 21, 1938, ch. 556, 52 Stat. 821, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 15B (§717 et seq.) of this title. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see section 717w of this title and Tables.

**§ 720b. Environmental reviews**

**(a) Compliance with NEPA**

The issuance of a certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing the construction and operation of any Alaska natural gas transportation project under section 720a of this title shall be treated as a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)).

**(b) Designation of lead agency**

**(1) In general**

The Commission—

(A) shall be the lead agency for purposes of complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321 et seq.); and

(B) shall be responsible for preparing the environmental impact statement required by section 102(2)(c)<sup>1</sup> of that Act [42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)] with respect to an Alaska natural

<sup>1</sup> So in original. Probably should be section “102(2)(C)”.

gas transportation project under section 720a of this title.

**(2) Consolidation of statements**

In carrying out paragraph (1), the Commission shall prepare a single environmental impact statement, which shall consolidate the environmental reviews of all Federal agencies considering any aspect of the Alaska natural gas transportation project covered by the environmental impact statement.

**(c) Other agencies**

**(1) In general**

Each Federal agency considering an aspect of the construction and operation of an Alaska natural gas transportation project under section 720a of this title shall—

(A) cooperate with the Commission; and

(B) comply with deadlines established by the Commission in the preparation of the environmental impact statement under this section.

**(2) Satisfaction of NEPA requirements**

The environmental impact statement prepared under this section shall be adopted by each Federal agency described in paragraph (1) in satisfaction of the responsibilities of the Federal agency under section 102(2)(C) of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)(C)) with respect to the Alaska natural gas transportation project covered by the environmental impact statement.

**(d) Expedited process**

The Commission shall—

(1) not later than 1 year after the Commission determines that the application under section 720a of this title with respect to an Alaska natural gas transportation project is complete, issue a draft environmental impact statement under this section; and

(2) not later than 180 days after the date of issuance of the draft environmental impact statement, issue a final environmental impact statement, unless the Commission for good cause determines that additional time is needed.

(Pub. L. 108-324, div. C, §104, Oct. 13, 2004, 118 Stat. 1257.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969, referred to in subsec. (b)(1)(A), is Pub. L. 91-190, Jan. 1, 1970, 83 Stat. 852, as amended, which is classified generally to chapter 55 (§4321 et seq.) of Title 42, The Public Health and Welfare. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 4321 of Title 42 and Tables.

**§ 720c. Pipeline expansion**

**(a) Authority**

With respect to any Alaska natural gas transportation project, on a request by 1 or more persons and after giving notice and an opportunity for a hearing, the Commission may order the expansion of the Alaska natural gas project if the Commission determines that such an expansion is required by the present and future public convenience and necessity.

**(b) Responsibilities of Commission**

Before ordering an expansion under subsection (a), the Commission shall—

(1) approve or establish rates for the expansion service that are designed to ensure the recovery, on an incremental or rolled-in basis, of the cost associated with the expansion (including a reasonable rate of return on investment);

(2) ensure that the rates do not require existing shippers on the Alaska natural gas transportation project to subsidize expansion shippers;

(3) find that a proposed shipper will comply with, and the proposed expansion and the expansion of service will be undertaken and implemented based on, terms and conditions consistent with the tariff of the Alaska natural gas transportation project in effect as of the date of the expansion;

(4) find that the proposed facilities will not adversely affect the financial or economic viability of the Alaska natural gas transportation project;

(5) find that the proposed facilities will not adversely affect the overall operations of the Alaska natural gas transportation project;

(6) find that the proposed facilities will not diminish the contract rights of existing shippers to previously subscribed certificated capacity;

(7) ensure that all necessary environmental reviews have been completed; and

(8) find that adequate downstream facilities exist or are expected to exist to deliver incremental Alaska natural gas to market.

**(c) Requirement for a firm transportation agreement**

Any order of the Commission issued in accordance with this section shall be void unless the person requesting the order executes a firm transportation agreement with the Alaska natural gas transportation project within such reasonable period of time as the order may specify.

**(d) Limitation**

Nothing in this section expands or otherwise affects any authority of the Commission with respect to any natural gas pipeline located outside the State.

**(e) Regulations**

The Commission may issue such regulations as are necessary to carry out this section.

(Pub. L. 108-324, div. C, §105, Oct. 13, 2004, 118 Stat. 1258.)

**§ 720d. Federal Coordinator**

**(a) Establishment**

There is established, as an independent office in the executive branch, the Office of the Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects.

**(b) Federal Coordinator**

**(1) Appointment**

The Office shall be headed by a Federal Coordinator for Alaska Natural Gas Transportation Projects, who shall be appointed by the President, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate, to serve a term to last until 1 year following the completion of the project referred to in section 720a of this title.