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TAPS Renewal 02-07-01

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July 5, 2002

Commissioner's Proposed Determination: Rhea DoBosh (907) 257-1338

Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Right-of-Way Renewal

BLM, DNR Invite Public to Review, Comment on Draft Environmental Impact Statement, DNR Commissioner's Statement of Reasons and Proposed Written Determination

ANCHORAGE, Alaska – The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR) of the federal/state Joint Pipeline Office (JPO) announce the availability of the following two documents regarding the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System (TAPS) Right-of-Way Renewal. The BLM is releasing its Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) and the ADNR is releasing its Commissioner's Statement of Reasons and Proposed Written Determination (Proposed Determination) for public review beginning July 5, 2002. The public will have 45 days or until 5 p.m. (ADT) August 20, 2002 to review and comment on both.

The DEIS – a four volume, 1,700 page document – addresses the physical, environmental, economic and social impacts of renewing TAPS. The document is available in electronic and print formats at various locations. For an electronic copy, visit the TAPS Renewal EIS website at: <http://tapseis.anl.gov>. The electronic copies are available as either downloadable and searchable pdf files or as a Compact Disc that can be ordered via the web (tapseis.anl.gov).

The Proposed Determination is available online at <http://www.tapsrenewal.jpo.doi.gov>.

Both documents are also available for reading at the following locations:

Anchorage:

- Alaska Resources Library; 3150 C Street, Suite 100
- Z.J. Loussac Library, 3600 Denali
- Bureau of Land Management Public Room; 222 West 7th Avenue, #13
- DNR Public Information Center; 550 W. 7th Ave., Suite 1260

Barrow: Tuzzy Consortium Library; 5421 North Star Street

Cordova Public Library; 622 1st St.

Fairbanks:

- Fairbanks North Star Borough Public Library; 1215 Cowles Street
 - Bureau of Land Management Public Room; 1150 University Avenue
 - DNR Public Information Center; 3700 Airport Way
- Glennallen: BLM Glennallen Field Office; Milepost 186.5 Glenn Highway
Juneau: Alaska State Library; 333 Willoughby, 8th Floor
Valdez Public Library; 212 Fairbanks St.
Washington, D.C.: Department of the Interior Library; 1849 C Street, NW

DEIS Alternatives

The DEIS addressed three alternatives

- **Preferred Alternative:** Renew the Federal Agreement and Grant (Grant) of Right of Way for 30 years. This alternative discusses the impacts of the maximum renewal period and analyzes future operating conditions. Renewal is required under the current grant if the pipeline is operational and in compliance.
- **Time-Dependent Alternative:** Renew for less than 30 years. This alternative reflects public comments received during scoping in Fall 2001 and it analyzes impacts/issues that might be affected differently if TAPS were renewed for less than 30 years.
- **No-Action Alternative:** Do not renew the Grant of Right of Way. This alternative, required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), not only examines how termination activities will impact the physical and biological environment but also examines the impacts to Alaska's economy.

Joint Public Hearings

For public convenience, the BLM and Alaska Department of Natural Resources will offer joint public hearings for BLM's TAPS Renewal Draft EIS, the State Proposed Determination, and the ANILCA 810 Subsistence evaluation contained in the DEIS. Comments can be made at each of the following locations on the dates specified (these dates and locations will be announced again in mid-July):

- Friday, **July 26**, 7 p.m.: Cordova; Moose Lodge, 514 2nd St.
- Tuesday, **July 30**, 7 p.m.: Valdez; Valdez Convention and Civic Center, Ballroom 1, 110 Clifton Drive
- Wednesday, **July 31**, 7 p.m.: Glennallen; Copper River High School Auditorium, Mile 186, Glenn Hwy.
- Monday, **August 5**, 7 p.m.: Anchorage; Anchorage Hilton Hotel, Denali Room, 500 West Third Avenue
- Tuesday, **August 6**, 7 p.m.: Fairbanks; Chena River Convention Center, Conference Room/Main Hall A, 109 Clay Street
- Wednesday, **August 7**, 2 p.m.: Minto, Minto Lodge
- Friday, **August 9**, 7 p.m.: Barrow; Inupiat Heritage Center, multi-purpose room; 5421 Northstar Street (there will be an Inupiat translator at the meeting).

Additional Ways to Comment on the DEIS

The public has five other options to comment on the DEIS. The most rapid and efficient way is through the *Public Comment Form* on the TAPS Renewal EIS Web Site (<http://tapseis.anl.gov/involve/pubform.cfm>). Commenting

via the Web is quick and easy and it also accepts file attachments in all major word processing formats and Adobe Acrobat PDF format.

Written comments can also be submitted by:

- mail: BLM TAPS Renewal EIS

Argonne National Laboratory EAD/900

9700 S. Cass Avenue

Argonne, IL 60439

(all mailed comments must be postmarked no later than August 20, 2002)

- toll free fax: 1-866-542-5904

• hand-delivery to BLM TAPS Renewal Team in Anchorage at the Joint Pipeline Office; 411 W. 4th Avenue, Suite 2 until 5 p.m. (ADT) on August 20, 2002. *Do not mail comments to this address.*

Toll free voice messaging can be left at 1-866-542-5903.

A complete description of the EIS scoping process and additional information may be found at tapseis.anl.gov.

Copies of the right-of-way renewal application are available at the JPO TAPS Renewal web site <http://www.tapsrenewal.jpo.doi.gov>.

Additional Ways to Comment on the Commissioner's Proposed Determination

Besides the joint public hearings listed above, the public can comment on the Proposed Determination by sending written comments via mail, e-mail or fax. All comments must be received no later than 5 p.m. (ADT) on August 20, 2002 or postmarked by August 20, 2002. Those addresses or numbers are:

- Mail: State of Alaska, DNR/JPO

Attn: TAPS Renewal Team

411 West 4th Ave., Suite 2C

Anchorage, AK 99501

- Fax: 907-646-5012 (Attn: TAPS Renewal Team)

- E-mail: ADNR_Administrative_Record@jpo.doi.gov

Why the EIS was Prepared

On May 2, 2001, the six owners of TAPS filed to renew the Federal Grant and State Lease of right of way for TAPS for another 30 years. The TAPS right of way on federal lands is authorized by a Federal Grant that expires on January 22, 2004. For the pipeline to remain in place and in operation, a new federal right-of-way authorization must be issued. The TAPS Renewal EIS is needed to comply with the NEPA and provide full public disclosure of the affects of TAPS renewal.

State Lease Renewal

Likewise, the State of Alaska entered into a formal renewal process on its Right-of-Way Lease that expires May 2, 2004. The State Pipeline Coordinator (SPC) prepared a report to the Commissioner addressing the leaseholders' compliance with the right-of-way lease and applicable state laws and regulations. The Commissioner used the SPC report to evaluate lease renewal.

— end —

The Joint Pipeline Office, a consortium of state and federal agencies, regulates the Trans-Alaska Pipeline System and other Alaska oil and gas pipelines in the best interests of the people of the nation and the State of Alaska. Safety, environmental protection, pipeline integrity, and regulatory compliance is achieved through a balance of regulating and working cooperatively with industry. For more information about the Joint Pipeline Office, please visit <http://www.corecom.com/JPO>

The following website offer additional in-depth information

Trans-Alaska Pipeline System Right-of-Way Renewal: www.tapsrow.com

TAPS EIS process and DEIS: <http://tapseis.anl.gov>

JPO Right-of-Way Renewal: <http://tapsrenewal.jpo.doi.gov>