

Fueling Southeast Florida's Energy Needs

The need for natural gas to generate power in Florida is growing as the clean, domestic fuel helps keep down costs for Florida's electric utility customers.

To help meet the state's growing energy needs, Florida Power & Light Company issued a request for proposals for a third, major natural gas pipeline system to provide additional reliable access to natural gas in the United States.

Florida, in particular, will need additional natural gas pipeline infrastructure to reliably meet increased demand from electric generation.

After a thorough evaluation of bids from several companies, FPL selected Sabal Trail Transmission to build a pipeline from Alabama to central Florida and Florida Southeast Connection, LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of NextEra Energy, Inc., to build a second pipeline from central Florida to FPL's system in Martin County. Both projects will be Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC)-regulated, underground, interstate pipelines.

Project overview

The Florida Southeast Connection encompasses a 126-mile pipeline that is projected to run through five counties (Osceola, Polk, Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Martin). Florida Southeast Connection, LLC, will develop the project while seeking to minimize impacts to landowners, local communities and the environment. This calls for locating the pipeline in areas where similar infrastructure or utilities exist to the extent that option is practical. The Florida Southeast Connection pipeline will connect with a proposed Central Florida Hub, to be located in Osceola County and terminate at FPL's Martin Clean Energy Center in Indiantown, Fla.

The Florida Southeast Connection will feature sections of pipeline measuring 30 inches and 36 inches in diameter and will be initially capable of transporting at least 400,000 MMBtu of natural gas per day with the potential to expand to more than 1 billion cubic feet per day. The pipeline is expected to begin service in May of 2017.





The Permitting and Approval Process

The Florida Southeast Connection pipeline will be an interstate natural gas pipeline regulated by FERC. FERC will oversee the federal permitting and construction of the Florida Southeast Connection pipeline project as well as conduct the necessary environmental reviews, in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act.

FERC is an independent federal agency that regulates the interstate transmission of natural gas. A number of other federal, state and local agencies are integral to the process as well, including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and appropriate state and local agencies in Florida. Permits will also be required from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Authorizations from local agencies will be sought as appropriate. The FERC process and the permitting processes of other federal, state and local agencies will allow interested stakeholders multiple opportunities to comment on the proposed pipeline project.

Public Input

Public participation is an integral component of the FERC approval process and takes place before a formal application is filed – so interested parties may engage more fully in the route selection process.

Florida Southeast Connection will communicate with residents and businesses about the project and encourages feedback throughout the project's progress. Community involvement will help identify and address topics related to project design and location. A series of open house events were held in communities along the pipeline corridor for local residents to learn more about the project. These open houses provided a forum to obtain public input that is shared with other agencies that are integral to the pipeline approval process.

Our open houses were held in Osceola, Polk, Okeechobee, St. Lucie and Martin counties in late 2013.

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