



## Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

### SOUTHEAST MARKET PIPELINES PROJECT PROJECT UPDATE

February 2015

The purpose of this mailing is to provide an update on the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's (FERC) environmental review of the planned Southeast Market Pipelines (SMP) Project.

The SMP Project is comprised of three separate, but connected, interstate natural gas transmission pipeline projects: Sabal Trail Transmission, LLC's (Sabal Trail) Sabal Trail Project; Florida Southeast Connection, LLC's (FSC) Florida Southeast Connection Project (FSC Project); and Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC's (Transco) Hillabee Expansion Project. Collectively, these companies plan to construct and operate over 650 miles of natural gas transmission pipeline and associated facilities in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.



#### **THE FERC ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS**

The FERC is the lead federal agency responsible for conducting the environmental review of the planned SMP Project. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act and other laws and regulations, and in cooperation with other federal, state, and local regulatory agencies, FERC staff is planning to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS). This EIS will identify and describe potentially affected lands and resources, disclose the potential impacts on these resources and describe, as appropriate, any avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures necessary to reduce the potential impacts of the SMP Project.

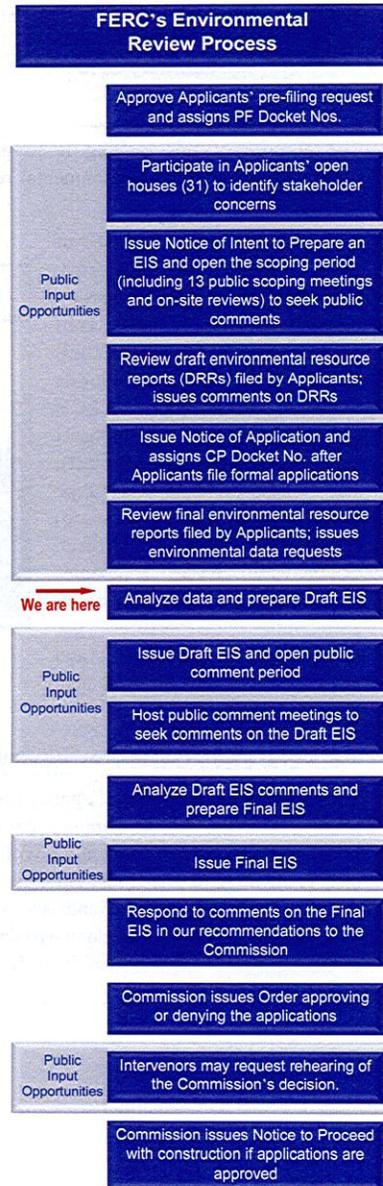
## PROJECT UPDATES

Activities that have occurred since our last Project Update in August 2014 are discussed below.

On October 15, 2014, we issued a Supplemental Notice of Intent (NOI) to obtain comments on four route alternatives that are being considered for the Sabal Trail Project in Georgia and Florida, and two alternative compressor station locations in Georgia. The Supplemental NOI included a 30-day comment period that closed on November 14, 2014. In addition, FERC staff attended open houses that were sponsored by Sabal Trail in the vicinity of the alternatives.

FSC filed its application with the FERC in September 2014, and Sabal Trail and Transco filed their applications with the FERC in November 2014. Each project proponent is assigned a new Certificate Proceeding (CP) docket number once a formal application is filed. The FERC assigned Docket Nos. CP14-554-000, CP15-17-000, and CP15-16-000 to the FSC, Sabal Trail, and Hillabee Expansion Projects, respectively. Each application included final environmental resource reports. These resource reports inform the FERC, other agencies, affected landowners, and stakeholders about the proposed facilities and construction methods; the existing environment in the SMP Project area; environmental impacts of the SMP Project; measures to avoid or reduce impacts; safety and operational procedures; and alternatives considered. In December 2014, Sabal Trail filed supplemental information regarding incorporation of two route alternatives into its proposed route, including an alternative to avoid a crossing of the Withlacoochee River in Hamilton and Suwannee Counties, Florida and an alternative to minimize impacts on the Halpata-Tastanaki Preserve in Marion County, Florida.

FERC Staff is reviewing these final resource reports, which are composed of several volumes and thousands of pages of information, and will issue extensive data requests seeking additional information from the companies. Staff provided FSC with its information request on February 6, 2015. These comments are available for review in the Commission's publicly-accessible administrative record.



## ISSUES IDENTIFIED TO DATE

The Commission continues to receive comment letters about the SMP Project. These letters have come from potentially affected landowners, concerned citizens, federal and state regulatory agencies, municipal governments, elected officials, non-governmental organizations, and other interested parties. FERC Staff has reviewed each comment letter and the transcripts of each the public meeting to identify the environmental concerns that should be addressed through the environmental review process. The primary issues that continue to be raised include:

- Purpose and need
- Impacts on groundwater, surface waters, and springs
- Pipeline integrity, including in karst areas
- Impacts on Environmental Justice communities
- Project and route alternatives

## STAYING INFORMED

The FERC staff anticipates issuance of the draft EIS for the SMP Project in the late spring/summer of 2015, and will announce and conduct public meetings to hear comments on the draft EIS after its issuance. The Commission's administrative record is accessible online using the eLibrary at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov). For assistance with eLibrary, please contact FERC Online Support via email at [FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov), or by phone, toll free at 1-866-208-3676.

Additional information is available from each applicant as summarized below.

### Sabal Trail Project (FERC Docket No. CP15-17-000)

Online: [www.sabaltrailtransmission.com](http://www.sabaltrailtransmission.com)

Phone: (888) 596-7732

### Florida Southeast Connection Project (FERC Docket No. CP14-554-000)

Online: [www.floridasoutheastconnection.com](http://www.floridasoutheastconnection.com)

Phone: (855) 327-2660

### Hillabee Expansion Project (FERC Docket No. CP15-16-000)

Online: [www.williams.com/hillabee](http://www.williams.com/hillabee)

Phone: (866) 455-9103

## FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION

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