

152 FERC ¶ 61,146
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, DC 20426

August 24, 2015

In Reply Refer To:
Equitrans, L.P.
Docket No. RP15-1129-000

Equitrans, L.P.
625 Liberty Avenue
Suite 1700
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

Attention: Matthew Eggerding

Dear Mr. Eggerding:

1. On July 23, 2015, Equitrans, L.P. (Equitrans) filed a request for partial waiver of section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS of its FERC Gas Tariff. According to Equitrans, section 5.13[6.5] requires Equitrans to begin making annual submissions on July 31, 2015 to update its storage ratchets and minimum storage gas balances for its Allegheny Valley Connector (AVC) storage facilities. In the instant filing, Equitrans requests a waiver of the requirement to make the referenced filing until September 18, 2015. Equitrans states that it is requesting the waiver because it needs additional time to evaluate the operational data collected during the storage cycle that ended on March 31, 2015. As discussed below and for good cause shown, the Commission grants the waiver request and permits Equitrans to delay its submission until September 18, 2015.

2. Equitrans states it acquired the AVC storage facilities, which include the Rager Mountain Storage Facility and three other storage facilities, in December 2013 from Peoples Natural Gas Company, LLC (Peoples). According to Equitrans, Peoples is its only storage customer under Rate Schedule GSS. Equitrans further states that section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS defines a storage customer's storage injection and withdrawal rights, which are based on the operational parameters of the storage fields. Equitrans also states that these rights are adjusted over the course of injection and withdrawal cycles based on ratchet percentages set forth in Rate Schedule GSS. According to Equitrans, a storage customer's maximum daily withdrawal and maximum daily injection quantities are adjusted once that customer's balance reaches a pre-determined level.

3. Equitrans further states that section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS¹ requires it to submit updated storage ratchets and minimum gas storage balances, which are meant to reflect Equitrans' actual operating experience, data collected, and storage injection and withdrawal curves based on its operation of the AVC storage facilities, within four months after completing the first full storage cycle for those facilities. Equitrans states that the instant cycle ended on March 31, 2015, and, thus, pursuant to section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS, the deadline for the first filing to update the storage ratchets and minimum storage gas balances was July 31, 2015.

4. Equitrans states that it is requesting the instant waiver because it is continuing to evaluate the operational data collected regarding the AVC storage facilities over the last year, including review of an independent third-party expert report that is being finalized. Equitrans notes that it has not yet completed its analysis, and asserts that it needs additional time to complete its evaluation, discuss that evaluation with Peoples, and determine the storage ratchets and minimum storage gas balances appropriate for the operation of the storage field for the next storage cycle. Accordingly, Equitrans requests that the Commission waive this provision of section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS, and grant it an extension of time to make its submission until September 18, 2015.

5. Equitrans states it is authorized to represent that Peoples does not object to the instant request for waiver and that granting the waiver will not affect Equitrans' ability to inject natural gas into the AVC storage facilities during the current injection season. In addition, Equitrans states the Rager Mountain Storage Facility will not be adversely affected by the waiver because Rager Mountain Storage is not subject to the Rate Schedule GSS ratchets.

6. Public notice of the filing was issued on July 27, 2015. Interventions and protests were due as provided in section 154.210 of the Commission's regulations (18 C.F.R. § 154.210 (2015)). Pursuant to Rule 214 (18 C.F.R. § 385.214 (2015)), all timely filed motions to intervene and any unopposed motion to intervene out-of-time filed before the issuance date of this order are granted. Granting late intervention at this stage of the proceeding will not disrupt the proceeding or place additional burdens on existing parties. No protests or adverse comments were filed.

¹ Section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS states, in part, "[f]or a period of three years beginning after the completion of the first full storage cycle ending March 31, Equitrans shall file annually to update the above storage ratchets and the minimum storage gas balances in Section 5.13[6.6] to reflect its actual operating experience, data collected and storage injection and withdrawal curves established from its operation of the Allegheny Valley Connector storage facilities. Such annual filings will be made within 4 months of the withdrawal period ending March 31 of each year."

7. For good cause shown, the Commission grants Equitrans' requested waiver. As Equitrans notes, Peoples, Equitrans' only storage customer under Rate Schedule GSS, does not object to the requested extension of time. Further, Equitrans represents that granting the waiver will not affect its ability to inject natural gas into the subject AVC facilities, nor will it affect its Rager Mountain storage operations or customers. Accordingly, the Commission grants Equitrans a partial waiver of section 5.13[6.5] of Rate Schedule GSS as requested, and a corresponding extension of time until September 18, 2015 to submit its updated storage ratchet and minimum storage balance amounts.

By direction of the Commission.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.