

1 FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION
2 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT FOR THE
3 PROPOSED
4 SOUTHEAST MARKET PIPELINES PROJECT
5 OPEN COMMENT MEETING

6

7

8 Central Alabama Community College
9 Betty Carol Graham Technology Center -
10 Multi Purpose Room
11 1675 Cherokee Road
12 Alexander City, Alabama 35010

13

14 October 5, 2015

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19 Before:

20 Lisa Bailey

21 Certified Court Reporter

22 ACCR #289

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1 (Proceedings began, 6:00 p.m.)

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3 MR. RANA: Good evening, everyone. My
4 name is Tony Rana. I'm a member of the
5 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, or the
6 FERC staff, a team member for the Southeast
7 Market Pipelines project, or SMP project,
8 environmental review.

9 With me tonight are Bill Brawn, here to
10 my left, and Chad Anderson in the back of the
11 room, both with Merjent. They're a consulting
12 company assisting us with the environmental
13 review of the SMP project.

14 On behalf of FERC's five commissioners,
15 we would like to thank you for participating
16 in tonight's public comment meeting on the
17 draft of the Environmental Impact Statement,
18 or EIS, for the SMP project.

19 The purpose of tonight's meeting is for
20 us, the commission staff, to receive comments
21 from you the public on the draft of the
22 Environmental Impact Statement we've prepared
23 for the SMP project. The SMP project is
24 actually three separate definitive natural gas
25 transition pipeline projects that will involve

1 facilities in Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.
2 Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company, Sabal
3 Trail Transmission, and Florida Southeast
4 Connection propose to construct and operate
5 about 650 miles of natural gas pipeline,
6 associated facilities, and six new compression
7 stations to transport up to 1.1 billion cubic
8 feet of natural gas per day from Alabama to
9 Florida.

10 In Alabama, Transco proposes to
11 construct and operate 43.5 miles of pipeline
12 loop in Choctaw, Autauga, Chilton, Coosa and
13 Tallapoosa counties, and one new compression
14 station in Choctaw County, and modification to
15 three existing compression stations in Dallas,
16 Chilton, and Coosa counties. This portion of
17 the SMP project is referred to as the Hillabee
18 expansion project.

19 Sabal Trail also proposes to construct
20 and operate 86.5 miles of mainline natural gas
21 pipeline in Tallapoosa, Chambers, Lee, and
22 Russell counties and one new compression
23 station in Tallapoosa County, Alabama. This
24 portion of the SMP project is referred to as
25 the Sabal Trail Project.

1 Additional information about the SMP
2 project and its components, Hillabee
3 expansion, Sabal Trail, and FSC, can be found
4 on the FERC web site, which is right up there,
5 www.ferc.gov. The FERC web site contains a
6 link to our e-library system which is the
7 Commission's administrative records and
8 contains copies of the three applications and
9 all supplemental information provided by the
10 applicants. The library also contains copies
11 of our correspondence with other federal and
12 state agencies and comments and letters
13 submitted by affected landowners and concerned
14 citizens and our requests to the applicants
15 for additional environmental information.

16 The National Environmental Policy Act,
17 or NEPA, requires the Commission to conduct an
18 environmental review for all interstate
19 natural gas transmission pipeline projects.
20 The SMP draft Environmental Impact Statement,
21 or EIS, which was issued on September the 4th,
22 2015 and sent to over 6,000 individuals and
23 parties was prepared in response to
24 applications filed by the three companies in
25 the fall of 2014.

1 Commission staff worked for over ten
2 months to prepare this draft EIS. These ten
3 months are in addition to the years spent
4 working in our prefiling process. In total,
5 almost two years has been spent on this
6 environmental review. The draft EIS was also
7 prepared with cooperation with the U.S. Army
8 Corps of Engineers.

9 An Environmental Impact Statement is an
10 informed informational document. It is not a
11 decisional document. The decision about this
12 pipeline has not been made. The purpose of
13 the EIS is to inform the Commission about the
14 potential impacts on unique and natural
15 environments that could result from the
16 construction and operation of the project.
17 The Environmental Impact Statement describes
18 the environment as it exists today, the
19 potential impacts on the environment,
20 assistance and prepares alternatives and
21 includes staff's recommendations to avoid,
22 minimize, and mitigate potential impacts with
23 the construction and operation of the project.
24 Specifically, the draft EIS includes an
25 executive summary and instruction which

1 describes the purpose and need of the project
2 as well as the purpose and scope of the
3 environmental review, descriptions of the
4 proposed actions including proposed
5 facilities, land requirements, construction
6 procedures, and environmental compliance
7 monitoring. Environmental analysis including
8 geology and geologic hazards, soils,
9 groundwork, surface water and wetlands,
10 vegetation and migratory birds, fisheries and
11 water resources, threatening endangered
12 species and lands and visual resources,
13 socioeconomics and culture resources and
14 quality of noise and reliability and safety
15 and all the impacts and alternatives.

16 The draft EIS also includes 14
17 appendices containing maps, drawings,
18 construction plans, and references. The
19 draft -- this draft -- this draft EIS
20 summarizes all the comprehensive environmental
21 review of the project. And it includes our
22 conclusions and recommendations concerning the
23 potential impacts on the environment resulting
24 from the construction and operation of the
25 proposed SMP project.

1 As I said before, the Commission issued
2 the draft EIS on September 4, 2015. This
3 began a 45-day comment period which closes on
4 October 26th. In addition to the comments we
5 will receive later this evening, I expect the
6 Commission will receive numerous written and
7 electronic comments. Comments received,
8 whether they be verbal or written or
9 electronic, are all treated the same. There's
10 no preference given to one type of comment
11 over another. All comments we receive will be
12 addressed in the final Environmental Impact
13 Statement. Comments may result in additional
14 analysis and revisions to the EIS.

15 As a reminder, comments can be provided
16 verbally tonight, in written form and
17 submitted to the U.S. to the Secretary of
18 Commission or electronically via the FERC web
19 site, www.ferc.gov. For your convenience,
20 we've also -- we also have comment forms in
21 the back of the room that you may fill out and
22 leave with us tonight.

23 After receiving comments on the draft
24 Environmental Impact Statement we'll provide a
25 final Environmental Impact Statement.

1 Ultimately, the FERC Commissioners will
2 determine whether or not to approve the SMP
3 project. This decision will be made after
4 careful review of the applications, the final
5 Environmental Impact Statement and all public
6 comments submitted on the project.

7 For tonight your comments are being
8 recorded and will be entered into the
9 Commission's administrative record. If you
10 would like a written copy of tonight's
11 meeting, you can speak to our court reporter
12 after the meeting or you can download a copy
13 once it's been placed into the Commission's
14 administrative record.

15 Just some guidelines before we start
16 hearing from the speakers. Everyone please
17 silence any cell phones. When you come up to
18 speak, please remember to spell your first and
19 last name for the record. And we also ask
20 that you refrain from interruptions, and
21 please respect the speaker. Thank you.

22 We'll call our first speaker, Carl
23 McGraw, please.

24 MR. MCGRAW: Good afternoon. My name is
25 Carl McGraw, C-A-R-L, M-C-G-R-A-W. And I'm

1 with the Training Corps of Engineer for the
2 Teamsters National Pipeline Training Forum
3 (phonetic).

4 First, I would like to confirm support
5 for the construction of this pipeline
6 project. This is an incredible opportunity
7 for the state and workers who live near where
8 the projects will be built. Major offices
9 will be crafted and pay high wages and provide
10 a health insurance and pension benefits.
11 These workers will spend a great portion of
12 those wages in the local businesses such as
13 restaurants, stores, and gas stations. This
14 means the local community will directly
15 benefit from the economy opportunity created
16 by this project.

17 In addition, we are committed to build
18 this pipeline project with well-trained
19 laborers and ensure safe and qualified
20 teamster of workers. Pipelines bring
21 expansive natural gas in this efficient
22 environmental friendly manner leading to the
23 cheaper utility bills for households and local
24 businesses. According to the Local Nevada
25 (phonetic) Daily Free Press dated January 25,

1 2011 -- 2012 titled "Room Taxes up 16.3
2 percent" state in part taxes climbed last year
3 when the Ruby pipeline was under
4 construction. Yahoo News on September 15,
5 2015 cited state selection magazine that rank
6 community resources in the top ten utility
7 lists for the company economy -- economic
8 development, bringing in more than \$2.3
9 billion in investments and credit with
10 supporting more than 3,000 new jobs in 2014.
11 The Atlantic Coast Pipeline project was
12 mentioned as one of the listed projects in the
13 article. A Jacksonville University study
14 released February 9, 2015 said the PennEast
15 pipeline, a pipeline project smaller in size
16 than this pipeline, the project will result in
17 more than \$17.5 million in additional personal
18 income taxes just during construction.
19 Besides the construction workers spend money
20 in the local areas, as I previously stated.
21 However, local businesses will gain by selling
22 supplies and material needed for the projects
23 and serving the contractors and servicing the
24 contractors' equipment.

25 Utilizing all the local workers, the

1 majority of the pipeline workers for this
2 project will be from the local community. Our
3 contract with the pipeline contractors mandate
4 that at least half of pipeline workers have to
5 be local people. Most times we get and hire a
6 percent of the local -- most of the time we
7 get a higher percent of work locally. To help
8 ensure at least half of the workers are local,
9 we will provide free trainings to all of the
10 local members. This will include the latest
11 Department of Transportation CSA regulations,
12 that stands for Compliance Safety and
13 Accountability. A classroom safety course
14 reviewed the CSA regulation and efficient
15 driving will be scheduled prior to the start
16 of this project. Prior to the start of this
17 project, we will bring and instill trainers to
18 provide hands-on training to our local members
19 on the equipment which they will be operating
20 and driving.

21 This means the work on the pipeline
22 project will be conducted in a safe and
23 efficient, high skilled manner. This project
24 is good for the state and local community and
25 our members. And we urge the support

1 proceeding on schedule. Thank you.

2 MR. RANA: Next speaker. Darrell
3 Turner.

4 MR. TURNER: My name is Darrell Turner,
5 D-A-R-R-E-L-L T-U-R-N-E-R. I live in Heflin,
6 Alabama. I am a pipeliner. And before I say
7 anything else, gentlemen, thank you, FERC, for
8 having these meetings and allowing people like
9 myself to speak. I thank you.

10 I would like to begin by saying that I
11 support the pipeline. And the union, the
12 United Association of Welders, Sprinkler
13 Fitters, and Pipefitters also supports the
14 pipeline. This is what we do. This is how we
15 make our living, temporary work, if you will,
16 but very rewarding. I want everyone in this
17 room to know that we are the most skilled, the
18 most trained welders in the world. We hope we
19 get the opportunity to build this pipeline.
20 We already have a rapport with Williams, with
21 Florida Power and Light. We travel the United
22 States, and we build the pipelines, the
23 stations, and the purchasing facilities. But
24 saying that to say this, as an Alabama boy
25 with people that live here, we need those

1 jobs. We hope to get those jobs.

2 And in closing, the financial benefit to
3 the State of Alabama will be tremendous. And
4 for the counties that this pipeline will
5 touch, the taxes are enormous. As the
6 previous gentleman spoke, the local impact is
7 awesome. But we will have energy down the
8 road. I think that's the most important facet
9 of the pipeline project, energy down the
10 road.

11 Thank you very much.

12 MR. RANA: Thanks.

13 Next speaker, Joe Garrett.

14 Okay. Christopher Boykin.

15 MR. BOYKIN: Christopher Boykin,

16 C-H-R-I-S-T-O-P-H-E-R, B-O-Y-K-I-N.

17 Good afternoon, everybody. I am here on
18 behalf of the members of the Laborers
19 International Union of North America. You've
20 already heard previously from some of our
21 union brothers and teamsters and pipefitters.
22 We all jointly work on natural gas lines in
23 the State of Alabama and around the United
24 States and also Canada. We have -- we're here
25 to support Sabal Trails on behalf of the

1 Laborers International Union of North
2 America. We invest about \$100 million in
3 construction, skills, training, to our
4 training centers and a hundred -- and with
5 those 164 man hours in construction areas in
6 the pipeline. We also -- we are also a
7 skilled trained union also. And our
8 contractors are very skilled and qualified.
9 I'm a product of the natural gas line myself.
10 My first project was an all natural gas line,
11 and actually on the projects Sabal is getting
12 ready to do now on directional drilling. We
13 specify -- our contractors specifies in
14 natural and in directional drillings. We have
15 done Mobile Bay. Throughout the previous
16 years we had a 500 mile gas line down through
17 Florida with the wetlands and stuff. It's
18 more important to us in the State of Alabama,
19 Mississippi, Florida and also Texas and
20 Louisiana. We have one of the largest
21 pipeline laborers union located in Louisiana.
22 And our guys travel throughout the states
23 doing natural gas lines. And we see the
24 impact it does in the communities, feeds the
25 families. We also bring the economy up in

1 areas when we come through along with food
2 chains. We buy our foods there and buy our
3 groceries. Also, we will buy clothing there.
4 We rent hotels through the pipelines. Our
5 guys normally stay in those areas between two
6 or three months while we are out there. Also,
7 they go and get flu shots at the hospitals.
8 We have all our own health insurance. So, you
9 know, we don't have to be a burden on the
10 areas we are in. And we also help out the
11 communities also. We also pick up a couple
12 guys here and there, and we train them also on
13 the pipelines. So we're a vast -- we all
14 support the areas we're in, and we're here to
15 support Sabal pipeline. Thank you for your
16 time.

17 MR. RANA: Thanks. Next speaker is
18 Ladis Hurst.

19 MR. HURST: My name is Ladis Hurst. I'm
20 an owner of property this pipeline is going
21 through. And I know we don't have a lot of
22 people on -- oh, I forgot. My name is
23 L-A-D-I-S, Hurst, H-U-R-S-T. I own a piece of
24 real estate in Chambers County on the
25 Tallapoosa, Chambers County line. This

1 pipeline is going to cross 80 acres of my
2 property. And it's going to devalue my
3 property when it goes across it. I've tried
4 to work with Sabal on this trail because they
5 want 50 yard from the power company
6 right-of-way before they start their
7 easement. There's going to be 50 feet of
8 right-of-way that's not going to be good to
9 anybody. I've been trying to work with Sabal
10 to get them to move their right-of-way
11 adjacent to the power company because that
12 will be a void that's no good. They want a
13 50-foot right-of-way, but they want to use 100
14 foot plus 200 foot clearing area. They want
15 to hold my property hostage for 24 months
16 after it's in service. And that doesn't mean
17 when it's going to be in service. Can anybody
18 tell me when it's going to be in service? How
19 long is it going to take it to run? I mean,
20 I'm not asking -- I mean, we ain't even got to
21 the money part. I wish they'd take it to
22 Auburn. I wish -- they could run it down the
23 power line. I could care less. The money is
24 not the factor. The factor is they're going
25 to tell me what they can do before they even

1 get a right-of-way. They can come through my
2 front yard according to this piece of paper
3 right here, and they can do anything they want
4 to. And that don't include going in and out
5 of the right-of-way. That's not going to
6 happen. If anybody signs this piece of
7 paper -- and there are not enough people here
8 that's a landowner showing up -- I know these
9 people like the union, steelers and welders,
10 they've all got to make money. I realize
11 that. They're making money. They're crossing
12 my property. You know, I'm just trying to
13 say, okay, I don't care if you make money, but
14 it's going to cost me money any way it goes.
15 But I was wanting to get them to butt the
16 right-of-way up. They're going to get a
17 right-of-way, I feel sure. There's probably
18 nothing I can do about it. But if I had my
19 way, they wouldn't go through my property. I
20 could care less what it costs. If you can buy
21 -- you can buy any property adjacent to my
22 property for the amount of property they're
23 going to ruin on mine. I'll buy every acre
24 you get. Because they're going to value my
25 property as farm property. And it's not going

1 to be worth a whole lot. This is inherited
2 property. And we -- they -- the power company
3 took advantage of my daddy-in-law and put a
4 right-of-way in. They put a right-of-way in,
5 and they told him it was a 99-year lease. He
6 died thinking he had a 99-year lease with the
7 power company, and it's forever. And if you
8 think for one minute that if you don't get it
9 wrote down in paper by a lawyer, you're not
10 going to get anything. The people on this --
11 this real estate -- this right here is set up
12 with a bunch of lawyers. And they've got more
13 money than I've got. But I'll assure you one
14 thing, if I had anything to do about it, I
15 would at least get them to say, okay, they
16 don't need to waste 50 feet of my
17 right-of-way. When they want a right-of-way
18 here, they're going to have a void of 50 feet
19 from the power company that I can't do
20 anything with. Not only that, they don't even
21 want me to cross my -- I've got 80 acres on
22 the other side of that right-of-way. And they
23 don't want me to cross it. I've got a creek
24 that crosses it. You've got to be on both
25 sides to get the right-of-way because if I had

1 a forest fire and I had to get a dozer on that
2 other side of that right-of-way, then I want
3 to make provisions. And I can't get anybody
4 with Sabal to work with me.

5 We'll work with them and give them a
6 right-of-way. I understand these people need
7 work, but they don't need to take advantage of
8 me. That's like somebody coming in your house
9 and saying I'm going to do whatever I want
10 to. That's not the right way to go about it.
11 If you read this book, you're -- you'll sell
12 the farm for a 50-foot right-of-way. And all
13 I'm asking for is a little bit -- you know, I
14 don't have -- I'm not the federal government.
15 I'm not the state, and I'm not the county.
16 And if I get paid for it, it's not going to be
17 near what it's worth to me. But I'm going to
18 have to pay this county and the federal
19 government -- it's like cutting trees. People
20 would say, well, when I was a kid in school
21 you had 20 acres. You grow trees on it. And
22 when the trees got long enough you could --
23 you could be rich. That's a lie. I cut 186
24 acres. You know who made money? The federal
25 government did because if you figure what I

1 paid taxes on it, I lost money.

2 I'm just saying if Sabal wants to do
3 what's right, they need to move that -- their
4 right-of-way adjacent to the power company
5 because it belongs to the power company
6 anyway. And if they sell it to anybody else,
7 they've got to come back to me and go under my
8 same conditions. That's all I'm asking. Then
9 we'll worry about the money. The money ain't
10 the object. It's doing what's right. Thank
11 you.

12 MR. RANA: Thank you. Eric Wright?

13 MR. WRIGHT: Hello. My name is Eric
14 Wright. I'm a special pipeline representative
15 for the International Union for Operating
16 Engineers. I'd like to say thank you to the
17 Commission for letting us get a chance to
18 speak on our behalf. Thank you.

19 We as pipeline skill trades are very
20 well trained in the pipeline industry, and
21 we'll make great effort during construction of
22 this project to make sure its built under
23 local, state, and federal regulations. If
24 there needs to be four foot of soil on the
25 pipe, we will make sure it's there and make an

1 inspector's job easier. We want to go above
2 and beyond to make sure the right-of-way will
3 be restored better than the way it was before
4 construction began. We feel like the owners
5 of these pipelines will do things with
6 significant transparency and willingness to
7 work with the public and landowners to make
8 them feel safe, to make sure everything is put
9 back and maintained properly in the future.

10 Pipelines are clearly the safest way to
11 move product from point A to point B. These
12 pipelines will create thousands of good
13 quality construction jobs, to provide
14 retirement security, healthcare, and great
15 wages to the skilled local workers who build
16 it.

17 The development of energy resources has
18 been one of the brightest spots in our
19 economic recovery. So we need to keep it
20 going by building this necessary
21 infrastructure. We need these projects for
22 our communities and the construction
23 industry. Operating engineers and other
24 construction workers will spend their wages on
25 their mortgages, car payments, groceries and

1 everything else creating more jobs, more tax
2 revenue, and more benefits for our
3 communities. These projects will bring low
4 cost natural gas to the southeastern region to
5 ensure the public that power plants will have
6 fuel to produce electricity for many years to
7 come.

8 Once again, thanks.

9 MR. RANA: That's the end of our list.
10 We have plenty of time obviously. If there's
11 anybody else that would like to speak or
12 comment on the record --

13 MR. PETERSON: I would like to speak.

14 Good afternoon. My name is Jerome
15 Peterson, J-E-R-O-M-E, P-E-T-E-R-S-O-N. To
16 make our landowners a little bit more
17 comfortable, we're experts in pipeline
18 industry. And we have a safe skilled
19 workforce trained to restore land to its good
20 or better condition as we found it. So to
21 make the landowners a little more comfortable,
22 we assure and guarantee that their properties
23 would be in good hands with organized
24 laborers, Laborers International Union, and
25 other crafts that would be a part of the Sabal

1 pipeline. Thank you very much.

2 MR. RANA: Is there another speaker?

3 Anyone else? Anybody care to speak?

4 Ladies and gentlemen, we have plenty of
5 time so if there's anybody else that wants to
6 speak or say something on the record, now is
7 the time to do it. Otherwise, I'll close the
8 meeting.

9 Thank you all for coming. We'll be
10 around if you have any questions or want to
11 discuss anything. Thank you for coming.

12 (End of Proceedings, 6:29 p.m.)

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