

licensees to maintain an individual trust or remediation fund that is similar to what is done in the nuclear industry. The Commission could also require funds to be placed in escrow. The Commission seeks comment on this option and the following questions:

- i. Should the Commission establish an industry-wide trust or fund as a financial assurance mechanism?
- ii. If so, how should the Commission generate funds for the trust? Should the Commission consider using its annual charge authority to fund an industry-wide trust?
- iii. How should the Commission determine the appropriate level of funds for an industry-wide trust?
- iv. How should the Commission determine how funds are distributed?
- v. Should the Commission require licensees to maintain an individual trust or escrow fund as a financial assurance mechanism?
- vi. For individual trusts, how should the Commission determine the appropriate level of the trust and what factors should the Commission consider in determining amounts?
- vii. For individual escrows, should the Commission require licensees to retain a certain percentage of generation receipts in an escrow account?
- viii. What other challenges would an industry-wide or individual trust pose on individual licensees, small hydroelectric project licensees, municipal licensees, the public, or the Commission?

C. Insurance

15. The Commission could require licensees to obtain insurance policies to cover costs in the event of a safety hazard or dam failure. The Commission seeks comment on this option and the following questions:

- i. Should the Commission require licensees to obtain insurance policies as a financial assurance mechanism for project maintenance?
- ii. How should the Commission determine the amount of required coverage of an insurance policy or what factors should the Commission consider when determining the amount of coverage?
- iii. What other challenges would a requirement to obtain an insurance policy pose on individual licensees, small hydroelectric project licensees, municipal licensees, the public, or the Commission?

III. Comment Procedures

16. The Commission invites interested persons to submit comments and other information on the matters, issues, and specific questions identified in this

notice, and any alternative proposals that commenters may wish to discuss. Comments are due March 29, 2021. Comments must refer to Docket No. RM21–9–000, and must include the commenter's name, the organization they represent, if applicable, and their address.

17. The Commission encourages comments to be filed electronically via the eFiling link on the Commission's website at <http://www.ferc.gov>. The Commission accepts most standard word processing formats. Documents created electronically using word processing software should be filed in native applications or print-to-PDF format and not in a scanned format. Commenters filing electronically do not need to make a paper filing.

18. In lieu of electronic filing, you may submit a paper copy. Submissions sent via the U.S. Postal Service must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Submissions sent via any other carrier must be addressed to: Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852. The first page of any filing should include docket number RM21–9–000.

19. All comments will be placed in the Commission's public files and may be viewed, printed, or downloaded remotely as described in the Document Availability section below. Commenters on this proposal are not required to serve copies of their comments on other commenters.

IV. Document Availability

20. In addition to publishing the full text of this document in the **Federal Register**, the Commission provides all interested persons an opportunity to view and/or print the contents of this document via the internet through the Commission's Home Page (<http://www.ferc.gov>). At this time, the Commission has suspended access to the Commission's Public Reference Room due to the President's March 13, 2020 proclamation declaring a National Emergency concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID–19).

21. From the Commission's Home Page on the internet, this information is available on eLibrary. The full text of this document is available on eLibrary in PDF and Microsoft Word format for viewing, printing, and/or downloading. To access this document in eLibrary, type the docket number excluding the last three digits of this document in the docket number field.

22. User assistance is available for eLibrary and the Commission's website during normal business hours from the Commission's Online Support at (202) 502–6652 (toll free at 1–866–208–3676) or email at ferconlinesupport@ferc.gov, or the Public Reference Room at (202) 502–8371, TTY (202) 502–8659. Email the Public Reference Room at public.reference@ferc.gov.

By direction of the Commission.

Issued: January 19, 2021.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2021–01613 Filed 1–25–21; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. CP21–21–000]

Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC; Notice of Request Under Blanket Authorization and Establishing Intervention and Protest Deadline

Take notice that on January 6, 2021, Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC (Columbia), 700 Louisiana Street, Suite 700, Houston, Texas 77002–2700, filed in the above referenced docket a prior notice pursuant to Section 157.205 and 157.216(b) of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's regulations under the Natural Gas Act and the blanket certificate issued to Columbia by the Commission in Docket No. CP83–76–000,¹ seeking authorization to abandon ten injection/withdrawal wells and associated pipelines and appurtenances, located in its Benton, Crawford1, Laurel and McArthur Storage Fields in Hocking, and Vinton Counties, Ohio (2021 Southcentral Ohio Well Abandonments Project). Columbia states that there will be no change to the existing boundary, total inventory, reservoir pressure, reservoir and buffer boundaries, or the certificated capacity of the Benton, Crawford, Laurel and McArthur Storage Fields as a result of these abandonments. Further, Columbia avers that the proposed abandonments will not affect any other Columbia storage fields, operations, or service, all as more fully set forth in the request which is on file with the Commission and open to public inspection.

In addition to publishing the full text of this document in the **Federal Register**, the Commission provides all interested persons an opportunity to

¹ Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation (predecessor to Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC), 22 FERC ¶ 62,029 (1983).

view and/or print the contents of this document via the internet through the Commission's Home Page (<http://ferc.gov>) using the "eLibrary" link. Enter the docket number excluding the last three digits in the docket number field to access the document. At this time, the Commission has suspended access to the Commission's Public Reference Room, due to the proclamation declaring a National Emergency concerning the Novel Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19), issued by the President on March 13, 2020. For assistance, contact the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission at FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov or call toll-free, (886) 208-3676 or TTY, (202) 502-8659.

Any questions concerning this application should be directed to Dave Hammel, Director, Commercial & Regulatory Law, Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC, 700 Louisiana Street, Suite 700, Houston, Texas 77002-2700, by telephone (832) 320-5861, or by email at dave_hammel@tcenergy.com.

Public Participation

There are three ways to become involved in the Commission's review of this project: You can file a protest to the project, you can file a motion to intervene in the proceeding, and you can file comments on the project. There is no fee or cost for filing protests, motions to intervene, or comments. The deadline for filing protests, motions to intervene, and comments is 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on March 15, 2021. How to file protests, motions to intervene, and comments is explained below.

Protests

Pursuant to section 157.205 of the Commission's regulations under the NGA,² any person³ or the Commission's staff may file a protest to the request. If no protest is filed within the time allowed or if a protest is filed and then withdrawn within 30 days after the allowed time for filing a protest, the proposed activity shall be deemed to be authorized effective the day after the time allowed for protest. If a protest is filed and not withdrawn within 30 days after the time allowed for filing a protest, the instant request for authorization will be considered by the Commission.

Protests must comply with the requirements specified in section 157.205(e) of the Commission's

regulations,⁴ and must be submitted by the protest deadline, which is March 15, 2021. A protest may also serve as a motion to intervene so long as the protestor states it also seeks to be an intervenor.

Interventions

Any person has the option to file a motion to intervene in this proceeding. Only intervenors have the right to request rehearing of Commission orders issued in this proceeding and to subsequently challenge the Commission's orders in the U.S. Circuit Courts of Appeal.

To intervene, you must submit a motion to intervene to the Commission in accordance with Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedure⁵ and the regulations under the NGA⁶ by the intervention deadline for the project, which is March 15, 2021. As described further in Rule 214, your motion to intervene must state, to the extent known, your position regarding the proceeding, as well as your interest in the proceeding. For an individual, this could include your status as a landowner, ratepayer, resident of an impacted community, or recreationist. You do not need to have property directly impacted by the project in order to intervene. For more information about motions to intervene, refer to the FERC website at <https://www.ferc.gov/resources/guides/how-to/intervene.asp>.

All timely, unopposed motions to intervene are automatically granted by operation of Rule 214(c)(1). Motions to intervene that are filed after the intervention deadline are untimely and may be denied. Any late-filed motion to intervene must show good cause for being late and must explain why the time limitation should be waived and provide justification by reference to factors set forth in Rule 214(d) of the Commission's Rules and Regulations. A person obtaining party status will be placed on the service list maintained by the Secretary of the Commission and will receive copies (paper or electronic) of all documents filed by the applicant and by all other parties.

Comments

Any person wishing to comment on the project may do so. The Commission considers all comments received about the project in determining the appropriate action to be taken. To ensure that your comments are timely and properly recorded, please submit your comments on or before March 15,

2021. The filing of a comment alone will not serve to make the filer a party to the proceeding. To become a party, you must intervene in the proceeding.

How To File Protests, Interventions, and Comments

There are two ways to submit protests, motions to intervene, and comments. In both instances, please reference the Project docket number CP21-21-000 in your submission.

(1) You may file your protest, motion to intervene, and comments by using the Commission's eFiling feature, which is located on the Commission's website (www.ferc.gov) under the link to Documents and Filings. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on "eRegister." You will be asked to select the type of filing you are making; first select "General" and then select "Protest", "Intervention", or "Comment on a Filing"; or⁷

(2) You can file a paper copy of your submission by mailing it to the address below.⁸ Your submission must reference the Project docket number CP21-21-000.

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426

The Commission encourages electronic filing of submissions (option 1 above) and has eFiling staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov.

Protests and motions to intervene must be served on the applicant either by mail or email (with a link to the document) at: dave_hammel@tcenergy.com or 700 Louisiana Street, Suite 700, Houston, Texas 77002-2700. Any subsequent submissions by an intervenor must be served on the applicant and all other parties to the proceeding. Contact information for parties can be downloaded from the service list at the eService link on FERC Online.

Tracking the Proceeding

Throughout the proceeding, additional information about the project will be available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at (866) 208-FERC, or on the FERC website at

⁷ Additionally, you may file your comments electronically by using the eComment feature, which is located on the Commission's website at www.ferc.gov under the link to Documents and Filings. Using eComment is an easy method for interested persons to submit brief, text-only comments on a project.

⁸ Hand-delivered submissions in docketed proceedings should be delivered to Health and Human Services, 12225 Wilkins Avenue, Rockville, Maryland 20852.

² 18 CFR 157.205.

³ Persons include individuals, organizations, businesses, municipalities, and other entities. 18 CFR 385.102(d).

⁴ 18 CFR 157.205(e).

⁵ 18 CFR 385.214.

⁶ 18 CFR 157.10.

www.ferc.gov using the “eLibrary” link as described above. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of all formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription which allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. For more information and to register, go to www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp.

Dated: January 12, 2021.

Kimberly D. Bose,
Secretary.

[FR Doc. 2021-01556 Filed 1-25-21; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 6717-01-P

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

[Docket No. RM21-11-000]

Accounting and Reporting Treatment of Certain Renewable Energy Assets

AGENCY: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, DOE.

ACTION: Notice of inquiry.

SUMMARY: In this Notice of Inquiry, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) seeks comments on the accounting and reporting treatment of certain renewable energy generating assets and renewable energy credits. In addition, the Commission seeks comments on the ratemaking implications of these accounting and reporting changes.

DATES: Initial Comments are due March 29, 2021, and Reply Comments are due April 26, 2021.

ADDRESSES: Comments, identified by docket number, may be filed in the following ways:

- **Electronic Filing through <http://www.ferc.gov>.** Documents created electronically using word processing software should be filed in native applications or print-to-PDF format and not in a scanned format.

- **Mail/Hand Delivery:** Those unable to file electronically may mail or hand-deliver comments to: Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, Secretary of the Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426.

- **Instructions:** For detailed instructions on submitting comments,

see the Comment Procedures Section of this document.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

Daniel Birkam (Technical Information),
Office of Enforcement, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, (202) 502-8035, Daniel.Birkam@ferc.gov

Sarah Greenberg (Legal Information),
Office of the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Washington, DC 20426, (202) 502-6230, Sarah.Greenberg@ferc.gov

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

1. In this Notice of Inquiry (NOI), the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Commission) seeks comments on the appropriate accounting treatment for certain renewable energy assets. First, the Commission seeks comments on whether to create new accounts within the Uniform System of Accounts (USoFA) for non-hydro renewable energy generating assets,¹ and, if so, how such accounts should be organized. Second, the Commission seeks comments on how to modify FERC Form No. 1 to reflect any new accounts. Third, the Commission seeks comments on whether to codify the proper accounting treatment of the purchase, generation, and use of renewable energy credits (RECs). Finally, the Commission seeks comments on the rate setting implications of these potential accounting and reporting changes.

I. Background

2. The USoFA contains discrete accounts for steam production, nuclear production, hydraulic production, and other production.² However, the USoFA does not contain any accounts designed specifically for solar, wind, or other non-hydro renewable generating assets. Therefore, electric utilities currently record non-hydro renewable assets in the Other Production accounts of the USoFA. Commenters have indicated that companies exercise “reasonable

¹ Non-hydro renewable assets, as referred to in this notice, are production assets other than hydroelectric generators such as solar, wind energy, geothermal, biomass, etc., that rely on the heat or motion of the earth or sun’s radiation to produce energy. Specifically, these are denoted as renewable because the power production is based on a fuel source that is not consumed or destroyed by the generation process, such as buried hydrocarbons (coal, oil, natural gas), or the decay of rare irradiated heavy metals (nuclear). Biomass (trees, nut shells, grain husks and stalks, etc.) is considered renewable, despite its hydrocarbon source being consumed, due to its carbon release being offset by regrowth of carbon capturing equivalent biomass.

² 18 CFR part 101; *Accounting and Financial Reporting for Public Utilities Including RTOs*, Order No. 668, 113 FERC ¶ 61,276 at 59 (2005).

judgment” when determining in which Other Production account to book these assets.³

3. Recently, parties have expressed disagreement regarding which Other Production accounts should be used to book non-hydro renewable assets. In Docket No. AC20-103, the Commission received a request for confirmation that the costs of certain wind and solar generating equipment are properly booked to the Other Production Accounts 343 (Prime Movers), 344 (Generators), and 345 (Accessory Electric Equipment). In that proceeding, commenters argued that the proposal booked an inappropriate amount of costs to Account 345, which are included in reactive power rates pursuant to the AEP Methodology.⁴ Commenters, including the Edison Electric Institute, suggested that the Commission consider creating new accounts for wind, solar, and other non-hydro renewables to resolve this issue.⁵ Concurrently with the issuance of this Notice of Inquiry, the Commission is issuing an order in Docket No. AC20-103, denying the request and explaining that this Notice of Inquiry will begin a proceeding in which the Commission will evaluate the need for further guidance regarding the proper accounting treatment of non-hydro renewable generating assets.

4. In addition, the existing USoFA accounts do not explicitly address the accounting treatment of the purchase, generation, or use of RECs. However, the Commission has stated that RECs are analogous to the sulfur dioxide emission allowances created by Title IV of the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990, which the Commission addressed in Order No. 552.⁶ Order No. 552 classified emission allowances as inventoriable items and established new inventory and expense accounts to record the allowances.⁷ In keeping with Order No. 552, the Commission has found that

³ Comments of the Edison Electric Institute, Docket No. AC20-103-000, at 3 (filed May 28, 2020).

⁴ Comments of Ameren Services Company, Docket No. AC20-103-000, at 8-9 (filed May 28, 2020).

⁵ *Id.* at 6-7; Comments of Edison Electric Institute at 4.

⁶ *Ameren Illinois Co.*, 170 FERC ¶ 61,267, at P 52 (2020) (citing *Revisions to Uniform Systems of Accounts to Account for Allowances under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and Regulatory-Created Assets and Liabilities and to Form Nos. 1, 1-F, 2 and 2-A*, Order No. 552, FERC Stats. and Regs. ¶ 30,967 (1993) (cross-referenced at 62 FERC ¶ 61,299)).

⁷ *Revisions to Uniform Systems of Accounts to Account for Allowances under the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and Regulatory-Created Assets and Liabilities and to Form Nos. 1, 1-F, 2 and 2-A*, Order No. 552, FERC Stats. and Regs. ¶ 30,967 (cross-referenced at 62 FERC ¶ 61,299).