



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT
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June 1, 2015

**PUBLIC NOTICE AND
ANNOUNCEMENT OF PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING**

Applicant: NiSource / Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC

Application Number: 12-NT-0433 / 201261660

Comment Period: June 1, 2015 to July 8, 2015

Public Informational Hearing Details:

Date: Monday, June 15, 2015
Time: 6:30 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. Poster Session
7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Public Informational Hearing

Location: Stevenson University, Owings Mills Campus
Rockland Center, Banquet Room
100 Campus Circle
Owings Mills, MD 21117

BACKGROUND: On April 21, 2014, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) issued Nontidal Wetlands and Waterways Permit Number 12-NT-0433/201261660 to NiSource/Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC (Columbia) authorizing Columbia to impact nontidal wetlands, the 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, streams, and the 100-year floodplain in connection with the Line MB Extension Project (the Permit). Several petitioners filed judicial review actions in circuit court challenging the Department's decision to issue the Permit. On April 30, 2015, the Circuit Court for Baltimore County issued a Memorandum Opinion and Order remanding the Permit to MDE to take action on three issues: conducting a more extensive public notice process; providing additional documentation that the project would not affect historic properties; and clarifying MDE's rationale on water quality issues. In accordance with the public notice component of the Order, MDE is issuing this public notice to inform the public of the proposed regulated impacts associated with the Line MB Extension Project, to solicit comments from the public about the work described below, and to announce a public informational hearing. At this time, MDE has not decided whether to reissue the Permit. MDE is evaluating the proposed regulated activities under Title 5, Subtitle 5 (Waterway Construction) and Title 5, Subtitle 9 (Nontidal Wetlands) of the Environment Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.



PUBLIC INFORMATIONAL HEARING: A public informational hearing will be held on **Monday, June 15, 2015** at Stevenson University's Owings Mills Campus, Rockland Center, Banquet Room, 100 Campus Circle, Owings Mills, MD 21117. The project plans will be on display beginning at 6:30 p.m. and representatives of Columbia and MDE will be available from 6:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. to answer questions. The hearing will begin at 7:00 p.m. and end by 9:00 p.m. The public informational hearing allows all interested parties the opportunity to present facts and make statements related to the wetlands, waterways, and floodplain issues under consideration by MDE. Depending on the number of speakers, a time limit of three minutes per speaker may be set to ensure that all interested parties have an opportunity to present their views. The public informational hearing will be recorded and transcribed.

Anyone who is hearing impaired and/or is non-English speaking who wishes to attend the public hearing should notify Ms. Cheryl Kerr at 410-537-3911 or in writing to the address below. All requests for an oral, sign language, or non-English language interpreter must be received by June 10, 2015. To the extent possible and feasible, an interpreter will be provided.

SUBMITTING WRITTEN PUBLIC COMMENTS: Any person interested in commenting on the proposed regulated impacts under consideration by MDE may submit written comments to MDE at the public informational hearing, email comments to Cheryl.Kerr@maryland.gov or mail written comments to Cheryl Kerr, Maryland Department of the Environment, Wetlands and Waterways Program, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 430, Baltimore, Maryland 21230-1708. All comments must be received by **July 8, 2015**.

APPLICANT: NiSource / Columbia Gas Transmission, LLC, Attn: Ms. Jennifer Cannon, 1700 MacCorkle Avenue, SE, Charleston, West Virginia 25314

PROJECT DESCRIPTION & LOCATION: The Line MB Extension Project involves the extension of an existing 26-inch diameter natural gas pipeline for approximately 21.1 miles from the Owings Mills Metering and Regulating Station located south of Owings Mills Road and west of Reisterstown Road in Owings Mills, Baltimore County, Maryland to the Rutledge Compressor Station located off of Rutledge Road in Fallston, Harford County, Maryland. The project also includes the construction of two 26-inch mainline valves (MLVs) along the Line MB extension to be installed parallel to the existing MLVs on Line MA, a new bi-directional pig launcher/receiver, with valves and fittings, to be installed at the Owings Mills Metering and Regulating Station, and a second bi-directional pig launcher/receiver to be installed at the Rutledge Compressor Station. The project is proposed to be co-located to the extent practicable with Columbia's existing Line MA for approximately 16.5 miles of the total 21.1 miles. The purpose of the project is to provide a backup gas supply source for critical areas north and east of Baltimore, Maryland, to reduce the risk of unscheduled service interruptions, and to enhance reliability and operational flexibility of Columbia's pipeline facilities.

As described further below, prior to the April 30, 2015 Order remanding the Permit to MDE, Columbia completed certain then-authorized regulated activities. At this time, Columbia proposes to complete the construction of its Line MB Extension Project.

Plans generally depicting the proposed impacts are enclosed and are also available on MDE's website at the following link:

http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/Water/WetlandsandWaterways/Pages/Columbia_Nontidal_Permit12-NT-0433.aspx



In addition to proposed impacts to nontidal wetlands, the 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and the 100-year floodplain, the following streams will be crossed or otherwise impacted by the construction activities:

- Gwynns Falls and Unnamed Tributaries to Gwynns Falls (Use III)
- North Branch Jones Falls and Unnamed Tributaries to North Branch Jones Falls (Use III)
- Beaverdam Run (Use III-P)
- Baisman Run and Unnamed Tributaries to Baisman Run (III-P)
- Unnamed Tributary to Oregon Pool (Use III-P)
- Oregon Branch and Unnamed Tributaries to Oregon Branch (Use III-P)
- Western Run and an Unnamed Tributary to Western Run (Use III-P)
- Gunpowder Falls and Unnamed Tributaries to Gunpowder Falls (Use III-P)
- Unnamed Tributaries to Carroll Branch (Use III-P)
- Unnamed Tributaries to Greene Branch (Use III-P)
- Parker Branch and Unnamed Tributaries to Parker Branch (Use III)
- Little Gunpowder Falls (Use III)
- Yellow Branch and Unnamed Tributaries to Yellow Branch (Use III)
- Unnamed Tributaries to West Branch Winters Run (Use IV-P)

Columbia plans to construct the project in three phases. Phase 1 extends approximately five miles from the Manor Road Metering and Regulating Station at MP 16.1 to the Rutledge Compressor Station at MP 21.1. It is the northernmost portion of the project, located largely in Harford County. The Phase 1 pipeline installation impacts were completed in 2014, including installation of a mainline valve at Manor Road and a bi-directional pig launcher/receiver at the Rutledge Compressor Station and the crossing of Little Gunpowder Falls using the horizontal directional drill (HDD) method. Continued restoration activities are necessary for Phase 1.

The pipeline does not cross any designated Tier II stream segments, but does cross streams upstream of Tier II stream segments. Columbia crossed upstream of two Tier II stream segments, Little Gunpowder Falls 3 and Otter Point Creek 3 in Phase 1.

Phase 2 is approximately eight miles long, extending from MP 8.0 to MP 16.0. In 2015, Columbia completed pipeline installation for Phase 2A – approximately 0.6 miles at Hayfields Golf Course in Baltimore County. As with Phase 1, continued restoration activities are necessary along this stretch of the project. Columbia proposes to construct Phase 2B – approximately 5.7 miles of the pipeline in Baltimore County – in 2015. In 2016, Columbia proposes to construct Phase 2C – approximately 1.7 miles in Baltimore County – as well as Phase 3 – the remaining approximately 8.0 miles, extending from MP 0.0 to MP 8.0.

METHOD OF STREAM CROSSINGS & EXTENT OF REGULATED IMPACTS: The Permit, as it was initially issued, required Columbia to use the HDD stream crossing method at three locations contingent upon MDE's review of geotechnical findings. During Phase 1, one of these locations – Little Gunpowder Falls – was crossed using HDD. MDE may require the use of HDD at one or both of the two remaining locations – Unnamed Tributaries to North Branch Jones Falls, and/or Gunpowder Falls. If MDE does not require HDD for those two locations, then all of the remaining stream crossings will be crossed using open-cut trenching. The width of the construction right-of-way for all proposed wetland and stream crossings is 75 feet. The total extent of the project's regulated impacts resulting from each of these four options is provided below. All temporary impacts to nontidal wetlands, the 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, the 100-year floodplain, and streams will be restored upon completion of the project.



If open-cut trenching is used to cross all of the remaining stream crossings, the project would result in permanent impacts to approximately 32,439 square feet (0.75 acres) of nontidal wetlands, and 27,430 square feet (0.63 acre) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and temporary impacts to approximately 4,644 linear feet (52,262 square feet) of streams, 198,411 square feet (4.55 acres) of nontidal wetlands, 143,389 square feet (3.29 acres) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and 184,554 square feet (4.24 acres) of 100-year floodplain.

If HDD is used to cross Gunpowder Falls (and not the unnamed tributaries of North Branch Jones Falls), the project would result in permanent impacts to approximately 32,439 square feet (0.75 acres) of nontidal wetlands, and 27,430 square feet (0.63 acre) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and temporary impacts to approximately 3,640 linear feet (27,901 square feet) of streams, 198,218 square feet (4.55 acres) of nontidal wetlands, 141,064 square feet (3.24 acres) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and 150,074 square feet (3.45 acres) of 100-year floodplain.

If HDD is used to cross several unnamed tributaries of North Branch Jones Falls (and not Gunpowder Falls), the project would result in permanent impacts to approximately 30,425 square feet (0.70 acres) of nontidal wetlands, and 26,697 square feet (0.61 acre) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and temporary impacts to approximately 4,350 linear feet (49,811 square feet) of streams, 194,427 square feet (4.46 acres) of nontidal wetlands, 138,134 square feet (3.17 acres) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and 184,554 square feet (4.24 acres) of 100-year floodplain.

If HDD is used to cross both Gunpowder Falls and several unnamed tributaries of North Branch Jones Falls, the project would result in permanent impacts to approximately 30,425 square feet (0.70 acres) of nontidal wetlands, and 26,697 square feet (0.61 acre) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and temporary impacts to approximately 3,346 linear feet (25,450 square feet) of streams, 194,234 square feet (4.46 acres) of nontidal wetlands, 135,809 square feet (3.12 acres) of 25-foot nontidal wetland buffer, and 150,074 square feet (3.45 acres) of 100-year floodplain.

MITIGATION: While the overwhelming majority of impacts associated with this project are temporary impacts, certain wetland areas within the project's permanent right-of-way will require maintenance to prevent the reestablishment of woody vegetation. The permanent conversion of 0.75 acres of nontidal forested wetlands and nontidal scrub-shrub wetlands to emergent wetlands is considered permanent nontidal wetland impacts for which mitigation is required. In accordance with Columbia's Phase II mitigation plan, Columbia has temporarily impacted 86 linear feet of stream (452 square feet) in order to restore 0.87 acres of nontidal forested wetlands and to conduct 0.36 acres of wetland enhancement at the First Mine Run property, located on the south side of White Hall Road approximately 0.5 miles west of the intersection of White Hall Road and Norrisville Road in the White Hall area of Baltimore County. MDE has determined that the mitigation plan adequately offsets the permanent wetland losses. Because all proposed stream impacts are temporary, stream mitigation is not required.

INTERESTED PERSONS LIST: If you have received this notice by mail, you are included on MDE's interested persons list for this project. MDE's interested persons list includes contiguous property owners, public officials, and individuals that commented on or inquired about this application prior to MDE's permit issuance in April 2014. If you did not receive this notice by mail and would like to be placed on the interested persons list, please contact Cheryl Kerr by telephone at (410) 537-3911, by email at Cheryl.Kerr@maryland.gov, or by mail at Cheryl Kerr, Maryland Department of the Environment, Wetlands and Waterways Program, 1800 Washington Boulevard, Suite 430, Baltimore, Maryland 21230-1708. Further notices concerning actions on this application will only be provided by mail to persons on the interested persons list for this project.

