
Environmental Assessment of the Proposed Longhorn Pipeline System



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Research and
Special Programs
Administration**

**PRELIMINARY
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT**

TO INTERESTED AGENCIES, ENVIRONMENTAL GROUPS, AND INDIVIDUALS:

In accordance with the environmental review guidelines of the Council on Environmental Quality found at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1500, and the environmental review procedures found at 40 CFR Part 6 entitled "Procedures for Implementing the Requirements of the Council on Environmental Quality on the National Environmental Policy Act," the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 6, and the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Office of Pipeline Safety, have completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) on the following proposed project:

Longhorn Partners Pipeline, L.P.
Petroleum Products Pipeline
Houston to El Paso, Texas

The proposed Longhorn Partners Pipeline (LPP) project would convert the former Exxon Pipeline Company pipeline, transporting crude oil from Crane to Baytown, Texas, to a refined products pipeline transporting primarily gasoline and diesel fuel from Houston to El Paso, Texas. This purpose of the Longhorn system is to provide refined petroleum products to third-party common carrier pipelines accessing markets in west Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

The proposed pipeline is planned to initially transport 72,000 barrels per day (bpd) of product. Over a ten year period, phased construction of additional pump stations will increase the throughput of refined product(s). Phase one, with four additional pump stations, will increase capacity to 125,000 bpd. Phase two, with another nine pump stations, will increase throughput capacity to 206,000 bpd. An additional flow-improving agent could further increase system capacity to a maximum of 225,000 bpd. The EA is based on the proposed maximum throughput of 225,000 bpd to take into account "reasonable worst-case spill" scenarios. However, it does not include review of the construction or operational impacts of the additional required new pump stations. Those would need to be addressed in a subsequent supplemental EA review prior to their construction.

In addition to the no action alternative, several pipeline routes were evaluated, including: 1) aquifer avoidance/minimization alternative; 2) Austin re-route alternative; and 3) El Paso lateral alternatives. The aquifer avoidance/minimization is the same as a portion of the 1987 All American Pipeline northern route from near Brenham, to southwest of Waco, to near Big Lake. The Austin re-route is 21 miles long and would bypass 12 miles of existing pipeline running

through densely populated areas of south Austin. The El Paso route alternatives include one through undeveloped desert land on Fort Bliss, and another running southwest along Montana Avenue where there is developed property, including the El Paso International Airport, and several road crossings.

The enclosed EA examined the total systems operations, including the existing condition of the pipeline and the potential for the transport of refined petroleum products to result in impacts on the human and natural environments. Planned operations and maintenance activities, developed as LPP's mitigation plan, include not only DOT-required and industry-accepted practices, but also additional measures to substantially reduce the risk and consequences of potential significant adverse impacts.

Based on the EA, the EPA and DOT have made a preliminary determination that the proposed pipeline project is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human and natural environments and an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is not warranted. Comments regarding this preliminary determination will be accepted during the 30-day review period, including a total of five public meetings to be held in Houston, Bastrop, Austin, Fredericksburg, and El Paso, Texas. Address written comments, and requests for copies (subject to supply limits) of the EA and preliminary FNSI, to:

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Enclosure