

STATEMENT OF JANET SNYDER MATTHEWS, ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR FOR CULTURAL RESOURCES, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BEFORE THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON NATIONAL PARKS OF THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES, CONCERNING S. 1310, TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR TO ALLOW THE COLUMBIA GAS TRANSMISSION CORPORATION TO INCREASE THE DIAMETER OF A NATURAL GAS PIPELINE LOCATED IN DELAWARE WATER GAP NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.

September 22, 2005

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to present the Department of the Interior's views on S. 1310, a bill to authorize the Secretary of the Interior to allow the Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation to increase the diameter of a natural gas pipeline located in the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. The Department supports enactment of this legislation with one technical amendment.

This bill provides for the Secretary of the Interior to enter into an agreement with the Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation, for no consideration, to grant an easement to permit the enlargement of an existing natural gas pipeline from a diameter of 14 inches to no more than 20 inches. It provides for the Corporation to submit resource information and appropriate restoration and mitigation plans under terms and conditions that assure the protection of the natural and cultural resources of the national recreation area. In addition, the Corporation will have to comply with other requirements for certification set forth by the Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission to permit an increase in the diameter of the pipeline. Finally, the bill states that the Secretary shall not grant any

additional increases in the pipeline's diameter and limits the pipeline's right-of-way to its existing 50-foot width.

Pipeline 1278 is a part of the Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation's interstate pipeline network that delivers natural gas to the Northeastern and Mid-Atlantic states from production areas in the southwest and Appalachia, 3.5 miles of which runs through sections of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area. Pipeline 1278 was constructed in the mid-1940's on easements purchased from landowners. When land was acquired for the national recreation area, five parcels of land were acquired subject to easements for pipeline 1278.

Pipeline 1278 underwent periodic testing in 2002. The inspection showed that the pipeline was showing its age, and there were numerous instances that the wall of the pipeline was thinning. The Corporation was issued a Corrective Action Order by the Department of Transportation. The order required the Corporation to reduce the operating pressure in the pipeline until such time as all anomalies in the pipeline could be repaired. A determination was made by the Corporation that the best way to repair the current pipeline was to replace the existing pipeline with a new, state of the art, cathodically protected steel pipe. At the same time, the Corporation decided to upgrade the diameter of the pipeline from 14 inches to 20 inches.

The National Park Service does not have legal authority to issue rights-of-way for petroleum pipelines across parklands. The deeds for the five parcels of land, subject to

easements for the Corporation pipeline, are very specific about the rights that the Corporation purchased back in the 1940's. Congressional action is needed to allow the increase in pipeline size on two of the parcels totaling 800 feet of parkland.

Congressional action is not required for the remaining three parcels, since the deeds permit the increase in pipeline size.

This legislation simply permits the Columbia Gas Transmission Corporation to fully utilize an easement they purchased 50 years ago. By order of the Department of Transportation, the pipeline must be repaired or replaced, and the replacement of the current pipeline with one of a larger diameter does not increase the impact to parklands of the replacement project. The permit issued to the Corporation has sufficient safeguards in it to insure the rehabilitation and restoration of parklands disturbed by the replacement project.

The one technical amendment we suggest would be to correct the right-of-way number on p. 2, line 9 by striking "16414" and inserting "16413".

This concludes my prepared testimony, Mr. Chairman. I would be pleased to answer any questions you or the committee might have.

Proposed amendment to S. 1310, Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area Natural Gas Pipeline Enlargement Act.

On page 2, line 9, strike "16414" and insert "16413".