

In Reply Refer To:
El Paso Pipeline Group,
Western Pipelines
Docket No. PF03-1-000

January 24, 2003

Robert T. Tomlinson
Director, Regulatory Affairs Department
El Paso Natural Gas Company
P.O. Box 1087
Colorado Springs, CO 80903

RE: Colorado Interstate Gas Company (CIG) Cheyenne Plains Project,
Docket No. PF03-1-000

Dear Mr. Tomlinson:

Thank you for your letter dated January 13, 2003, notifying the Commission of El Paso Pipeline Group, Western Pipeline's (El Paso) request to initiate the FERC's NEPA-pre-filing process. Your intention is to file a certificate application in May for its CIG Cheyenne Plains Project. I grant your request to begin NEPA-pre-filing even though your filing date does not meet our guidance to begin the NEPA pre-filing process seven to eight months prior to filing. We believe that beginning the Commission's NEPA review now would greatly improve the chances of completing the process in the requested timeframe. As outlined in your request, El Paso has already made significant progress with consulting the affected federal, state, and local agencies, who have agreed to participate in our pre-filing process. El Paso has also demonstrated that it is willing to resolve any issues and work with my staff in promoting the involvement of all stakeholders affected by this project.

El Paso's CIG Cheyenne Plains Project has been assigned Docket No. PF03-1-000. All future "pre-filing" correspondence and filings that are sent by El Paso to the Commission for this project should reference Docket No. PF03-1-000.

I have also determined that the use of a third-party contractor to assist the Commission staff in preparing the NEPA documentation for the CIG Cheyenne Plains Project is appropriate. We have concluded that Natural Resources Group, Inc. (NRG) should be the third-party contractor working under the direct supervision and control of

Commission staff to prepare the environmental impact statement/environmental impact report for the project. Please let us know when the contractual arrangements between El Paso and NRG are complete and when NRG is available to commence work. If you have any questions, please contact Alisa Lykens at (202) 502-8766.

Sincerely,

J. Mark Robinson
Director
Office of Energy Projects