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Federal Coordinator releases new permits matrix

The Office of the Federal Coordinator today posted online its new, searchable permits matrix to help the public better understand the complexities, the data needs and schedules of the multiple federal approvals required for the Alaska North Slope natural gas pipeline.

The revised permits matrix is available at www.arcticgas.gov/permits-matrix.

The new matrix provides detailed information on major federal authorizations and permits that may be required for construction of the gas pipeline project, from the Bureau of Land Management's right-of-way to U.S. Coast Guard's bridge permits. The information includes the permit, its supporting laws and regulations, the data required with each application, timing and scheduling requirements, public comment periods and an agency contact for each permit.

Turning the matrix into a searchable database allows users to query for specific permits, retrieve all permits from a given agency, find permits associated with a particular law, pull up permits that deal with specific resource issues or pinpoint authorizations or permits required for a specific portion of the pipeline project. Users can view their search results on the website or use another feature to produce a printable report.

“We will continuously update the permits matrix as new information becomes available, including tracking the progress of the project applicant and permitting agencies,” said Larry Persily, Federal Coordinator for the pipeline project that would move Alaska natural gas to Lower 48 markets.

“The website is not just there for government agencies,” Persily said. “We want interested groups and the general public to see what is happening with the project, especially as the project sponsor moves closer to filing its application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in October 2012.” Upon receipt of the complete application, FERC will have 12 months to prepare its draft environmental impact statement for the project.

Congress created the Office of the Federal Coordinator in 2004 to expedite and coordinate federal permitting for the pipeline project that would deliver natural gas from Alaska to North American markets.

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