



## Proposal to install culverts for maintenance access purposes along a natural gas pipeline right-of-way within Big Thicket National Preserve, Polk County, Texas

### Project Scoping for Environmental Analysis

Dear Friend of Big Thicket National Preserve,

The National Park Service (NPS) is reviewing a proposal from Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company (Tennessee Gas) to install a combination of permeable matting material and culverts along their natural gas pipeline right-of-way (ROW) within the Big Sandy Creek Unit of the Big Thicket National Preserve in Polk County, Texas. The purpose of the installations is to allow for routine maintenance activities to occur along the ROW with minimal disturbance to streams and low lying areas.

The NPS is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act. The purpose of an EA is to evaluate the impacts of the proposed project on the natural environment, consider reasonable alternatives to meet the project objectives, and identify appropriate mitigation measures to minimize potential impacts.

As the Superintendent of Big Thicket National Preserve, I invite you to participate in this scoping process.

Sincerely,

Douglas Neighbor

### Overview of the Process

Project Milestones Include:

- **Public Scoping Period (Closes November 28th)\***
- Preparation of environmental assessment
- Public review of environmental assessment\*
- Analysis of public comment
- Preparation of decision document
- Announcement of decision on proposal

**Bold** indicates where we are now; \* indicates opportunities for public comment

### Alternatives Considered

The preliminary alternatives, including the proposed action, to be evaluated in the EA are:

1) **Alternative A: No-Action Alternative** "No-Action" means the project would not take place. This alternative does not meet project objectives, however, it represents the baseline for comparison of the proposed action and other alternatives.

2) **Alternative B: Proposed Action** Under the proposed action, Tennessee Gas proposes to install a combination of permeable matting material and culverts to allow routine maintenance activities to occur along the ROW with minimal disturbance to streams and low lying areas. This alternative has minimal proposed surface impacts to the Preserve.

3) **Alternative C: Only Culverts** Tennessee Gas would install culverts at all stream crossing locations and use non-permeable fill material in wetlands to allow access across low lying areas without the use of permeable matting materials.

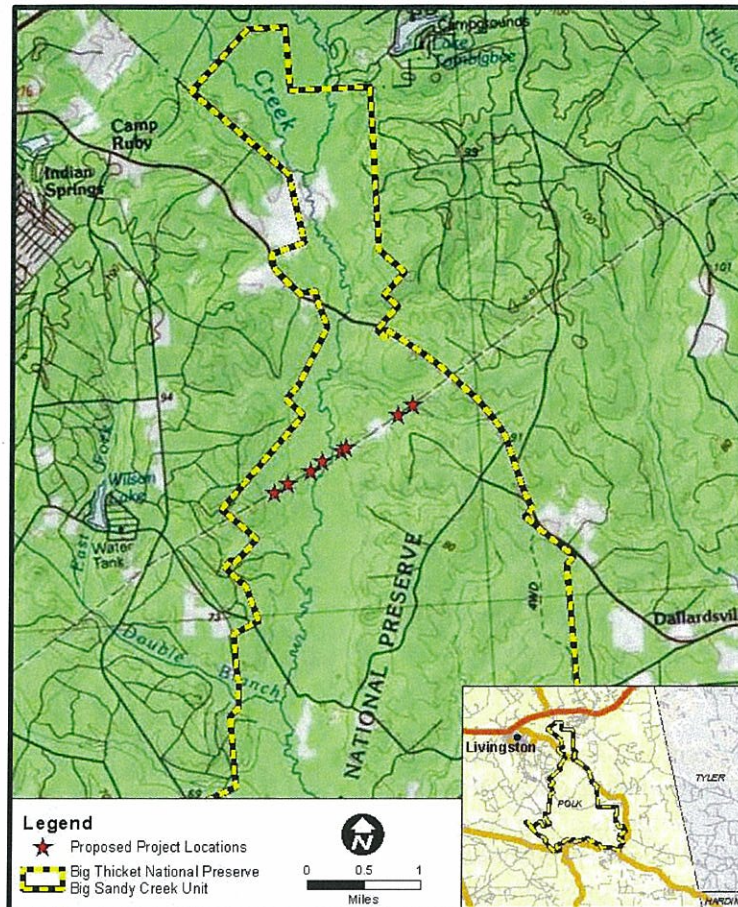
### Resources and Concerns

Initial internal project scoping identified the following resources and other concerns for consideration in the environmental assessment (EA).

- |                                |                        |
|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| ◆Air Quality                   | ◆Cultural Resources    |
| ◆Geology and Soils             | ◆Environmental Justice |
| ◆Water Resources               | ◆Visitor Use           |
| ◆Floodplains/Wetlands          | ◆Natural Soundscapes   |
| ◆Vegetation                    | ◆Adjacent Landowners   |
| ◆Fish and Wildlife             | ◆Socioeconomics        |
| ◆Species of Management Concern |                        |

*\*Please see the back of this page for a project map.\**





**Figure 1: Project Map**

## Ideas to Consider

Following are a few ideas to keep in mind as you develop your comments on this proposal:

1. Do you have any ideas to share about the alternatives and resources/concerns listed in the scoping brochure, or are there any other issues/concerns about the project that you think we should consider?
2. Are there any other alternatives that you think should be considered?
3. Do you have other comments and suggestions for us to consider in the EA?

## How Do I Comment on This Project?

Please submit your comments online at the NPS Planning, Environment, and Public Comment website:

**<http://parkplanning.nps.gov/bith>**

**Please provide all comments by November 28th.** If you wish to be added to or removed from the Preserve's mailing list for future correspondence, please indicate that in your response.

If you are unable to submit comments electronically through this website, then you may also submit written comments to:

**Superintendent  
Big Thicket National Preserve  
Attn: Stephanie Burgess  
6044 FM 420  
Kountze, TX 77625**

You may also hand-deliver written comments to the visitor center at Big Thicket National Preserve.