

Service Date: August 18, 1986

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE REGULATION
BEFORE THE PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION
OF THE STATE OF MONTANA

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IN THE MATTER Of The Application)
Of The MONTANA STATE AFL-CIO And)
The MONTANA STATE BUILDING AND) UTILITY DIVISION
CONSTRUCTION TRADES COUNCIL And)
The INVESTIGATION BY THE MONTANA) DOCKET NOS. 83.11.82
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION Into)
The and 84.1.3 Alleged Safety)
Defects In The Montana Power)
Company's New 16-Inch Natural) ORDER NO. 5057c
Gas Transmission Line.)

FINDINGS OF FACT

1. On June 9, 1986, the Commission received The Montana Power Company's (MPC) Pipeline Monitoring Program pursuant to Order No. 5057b. The Monitoring Program generally covers three areas of the Project:

- 1) Cracked weld monitoring over a five year period, which will consist of ultrasonic, radiographic, and strain gage testing and analysis on a combination of six welds containing cracks that were waived by Order No. 5057b.
- 2) Pipeline dimensional stability monitoring by Kaliper Pigging Surveys for the first three years of operation after an initial survey establishes baseline data for comparison to future surveys.
- 3) Pipeline coating monitoring to determine the condition of the corrosion protection (coating) on the constructed portion of the pipeline.

Copies were sent to the service list.

2. The Commission requested that the Federal Office of Pipeline Safety review and comment on the proposed monitoring program.

3. On July 16, 1986, Montana Power Company submitted a letter to the Commission (copy to the service list) reiterating their position that they would not proceed with the construction on the north section of the line until the south section was fit for service and the issues surrounding the line had been resolved. MPC stated that they are currently prepared to begin construction on the north section. Required repairs to the welds and dents remaining in the line have been completed in accordance with the waiver order (5057b). The coating tests have been completed and no problem indicated. MPC ran the baseline Kaliper survey in June, 1986, and T.D. Williamson's (TDW) interpretation of the results indicates there are two dents that are outside the code limits. MPC proposed that these dents would be removed and would be done as "extra work" by the contractor on the north section. The letter requests the Commission to expedite and grant approval of the monitoring program and order that the constructed portion of the line may be put into service and that this Docket be closed.

4. On July 22, 1986, the Commission issued a Notice of Commission Action requesting comments regarding MPC's July 16, 1986 request. Comments were due by July 30, 1986.

5. The only comment received was from Dr. Bruce Christ, a former consultant for the Montana Public Service Commission. He stated in part:

. . .MPC's conservative remedial approach to the engineering aspects of girth welds, pipeline installation in

the ditch, and pipeline corrosion protection, as well as MPC's efforts to ensure conformity to the performance requirements of CFR49-Part 192, should result in a high level of pipeline reliability and safety over its design lifetime.

6. On July 21, 1986, the Commission received Williams Brothers Engineering Company's Final Report on the Physical Integrity Progress on the 16-inch Warm Springs-Sun River Portion of the Warm Springs-Cut Bank Natural Gas Pipeline. Copies were sent to the service list.

7. On July 25, 1986, the Commission received a letter from MPC with the final conclusions from Williams Brothers on the Coating Conductance Leakage Survey and T.D. Williamson on the recent Kaliper Pig Run for baseline information under the proposed monitoring program. Copies were sent to the service list.

8. On August 5, 1986, the Commission received a letter from MPC that advised the Commission that MPC, with the aid of their consultants, implemented the initial step of the stability monitoring and had completed the coating monitoring. Work has also been started on cracked weld monitoring by the Southwest Research Institute (SWRI) by making the initial on-site ultrasonic measurements. The results of these measurements have been analyzed and SWRI has refined the method of gathering and evaluating radiographic, ultrasonic and strain gage data. A revised Appendix "A" to the Monitoring Program was submitted. MPC feels the addition strengthens the proposed Monitoring Program. The Company proposed to repair the two additional dents that were indicated in the baseline Kaliper survey conducted in June. Copies of this letter were sent to the service list.

9. On August 11, 1986, the Commission received:

(1). MPC's excavation reports for numbers 111 and 112, with photographs.

(2). Williams Brothers Engineering Company's Progress Report.

These reports cover the excavations made to remove the two dents mentioned previously in Findings of Fact of this order.

10. Mr. Jack C. Overly, Chief, Western Region Pipeline Safety, U.S. Department of Transportation, Lakewood, Colorado, submitted a letter that the monitoring plan proposed by Montana Power Company is acceptable to the office of Pipeline Safety and offers no objection to the plan. This letter was received on August 13, 1986. Copies sent to the service list.

11. The Pipeline Monitoring Program submitted by MPC meets the requirements specified by the Commission in Order No. 5057b.

CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. The Commission has jurisdiction over the matter addressed in these dockets, pursuant to the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act of 1968, 49 U.S.C. 1671 et seq. and 69-3-207, MCA.

2. Since 1968, the Commission has been authorized by the U.S. Department of Transportation to enforce the provisions of the Natural Gas Pipeline Safety Act.

3. Based upon a thorough review of the record, the

Commission concludes that:

a). The Pipeline Monitoring Program submitted by The Montana Power Company is appropriate and reasonable and complies with the requirements of Order 5057b.

b). The completed repair work to the constructed portion of the 16-inch pipeline was performed in a reasonable manner and The Montana Power Company has an acceptable and appropriate repair program for any dents requiring repair which may be indicated by Kaliper Pigging surveys conducted pursuant to the Pipeline Monitoring Program.

c). The Company has reasonably demonstrated the integrity of the installed portion of the 16-inch pipeline.

ORDER

1. The Pipeline Monitoring Program, as submitted on June 5, 1986, and updated on August 4, 1986, is hereby approved as complying with the monitoring needs described in Order 5057b.

2. The pipeline may be placed in service and this Docket is closed.

DONE IN OPEN SESSION at Helena, Montana this 14th day of August, 1986 by a 5 - 0 vote.

BY THE MONTANA PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION.

Clyde Jarvis, Chairman

John B. Driscoll, Commissioner

Howard L. Ellis, Commissioner

Tom Monahan, Commissioner

Danny Oberg, Commissioner

ATTEST:

Ann Purcell,
Acting Commission Secretary
(SEAL)

NOTE: Any interested party may request the Commission to reconsider this decision. A motion to reconsider must be filed within ten (10) days. See 38.2.4806, ARM.