

27 May 2015

Attention: Interested and Affected Party

1st Commenting Public Participation Period: 27 May 2015 – 29 June 2015

GNEC Code: 20331

Dear Interested and Affected Party

NOTICE OF 1ST COMMENTING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PERIOD: THE PROPOSED PIPELINE DEVELOPMENT ON SOUTHERN FARMS, FARM NO 410, PORTIONS 3; 4; 5; 6; 7 AND 8, SKUIT DRIFT, NORTHERN CAPE

Bordering the Orange River, Farm 410, Southern Farms, is located in the Northern Cape, approximately 120 km North – West of Kakemas and 62 km from the world known Augrabies Falls National Park. The N14 road, connecting Kakemas and Pofadder runs approximately 40km south of the farm. The property currently comprises 390 ha vineyard and 64 ha date orchards and employs 450 permanent - and 1 100 seasonal workers. Southern Farms are solely dependent on the Orange River in order to irrigate crops which ultimately supports several families and ensure sustainable income.

The Client, owner of Southern Farms (PTY) Ltd, proposes to develop an additional pipeline (total length 6 000 m with 0.4 m diameter) which will irrigate the newly developed areas (10 ha vineyard and 236 ha date orchards of which environmental authorization has been obtained), thus 11 500 m³ and 14 500 m³ of water is required respectively. The proposed pipeline will cross Portions 3; 4; 5; 6; 7; and 8 of The Property, subsurface adjacent to existing pipelines on the property. As a result of the expanding agricultural activities at Southern Farms additional labour housing is required and may be developed within the near future (approximately in the next 3-5 years).

Alternative A (Preferred route of the three pipelines and proposed labour housing):

To ease the explanation of the route of the pipeline, the pipeline is divided into three sections (Sections 1; 2 and 3)

The Proposed route of Section 1 of the pipeline is to run directly from the Orange River, subsurface in a southern direction for approximately 760 m. This runs past the first prevailing dam to the west and second prevailing dam to the east.

Section 2 crosses a small drainage line (not a natural drainage line, this drainage line occurs as a result of irrigation water run-off) and runs concurrently 300 m from Section 1 in order to irrigate newly developed vineyards.

Section 1 curves in an eastern direction for approximately 300 m where Section 2 of the proposed pipeline will connect and simultaneously run for 140 m in an eastern direction. Thereafter the pipe will switch (Section 3 of the proposed pipeline) in a Southern direction running subsurface alongside the existing gravel road for approximately 2 km with a slight curve in a south western direction connecting to the third existing dam.

Thereafter the pipeline will continue in a southern direction adjacent to existing vineyards on the right-hand side for approximately 1 km. Once the pipeline reaches the gravel road the direction will change to east and will run for approximately 800 m gradually curving north. The final part of section 3 will run in a northern direction subsurface and adjacent to newly developed agricultural fields on the eastern side.

Alternative B:

No alternative layout is proposed with regard to the development of the new pump station and pipeline. The existing five (5) existing pump stations and pipelines runs along an specific route, as indicated on the map, thus the proposed pipeline will run subsurfaced adjacent to the existing pipelines.

No-Go Alternative

Should the activity not be approved the property will remain in its current state. This will result in no water pipeline infrastructure being constructed on this site that is not considered to be ecologically or heritage sensitive. Due to the fact that the site is regarded as being highly desirable for irrigation purposes for newly developed agricultural land, GNEC is of the opinion that this site should be utilized for the construction of the water pipeline in order to ensure sufficient irrigation.

The proposed activity will benefit society in general by creating jobs during both the construction (temporary jobs) and operational (temporary and permanent jobs) phases of the proposed project. The project will also help satisfy the need for water availability and will economically boost Southern Farms. It is evident that Southern Farms is not considering the No-Go Alternative as the project is critical for the irrigation of newly developed agricultural land. It is GNEC's objective opinion that the No-Go Alternative should therefore not be supported in this case.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

Potential environmental issues that will be addressed in the assessment include inter alia:

Noise pollution:

Construction activities could be a hindrance in terms of noise to the immediate surroundings. During the operational phase the noise pollution will be permanent, however this will not have a significant impact on the surrounding environment as the preferred site is located outside the urban edge on an isolated farm (Southern Farms, Farm No 410, Skuit Drift, Northern Cape) adjacent to the Orange River.

Heritage impact:

It is not expected that any artefacts of heritage or archaeological significance are present on the site.

Visual impact:

The proposed development is expected to have a visual impact during the construction phase. However, the proposed pipeline will run subsurface and topsoil will be rehabilitated with indigenous vegetation, thus no significant long-term visual impact will occur.

Impact on fauna and flora:

Vegetation on the property has totally been transformed as a result of agricultural activities, thus the proposed pipeline will follow the route of existing pipelines on the property, thus no significant impact on flora or fauna are expected.

As a result of the above mentioned proposed development and associated possible environmental impacts, the following listed activities in terms of the National Environmental Management Act, Act 107 of 1998 and EIA Regulations (Regulations 983 and 985 of 2014, are triggered:

Government Notice No. R.983 of 2014: Activity 9, Activity 12, Activity 19, Activity 27

Government Notice No. R.985 of 2014: Activity 12

The aim of this Basic Assessment Report (BAR) is to ensure that:

- The environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed development are taken into consideration.
- Public participation is conducted, i.e. to provide stakeholders and/or the community sufficient opportunity to comment on the proposed development; and
- Sufficient information is submitted to decision-makers to support an informed decision-making process.

Please send your written registration and comments to GNEC by no later than the **Monday 29 June 2015** in order for us to include and address it in the Basic Assessment Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP) to be submitted.

Should you have any queries, please feel free to contact me, at:

Tel: (021) 870 1874, **Fax:** (021) 870 1873 or

E-mail: wn@gnec.co.za .

We look forward to receiving your comments.

Yours sincerely

Willene Naudé

For GNEC