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(Neb. TransCanada to Participate in Upcoming Information Sessions on Keystone XL Re-route in Nebraska)

By: John Thayer Posted at: 04/30/2012 08:33 AM

At the request of the Nebraska Department of Environmental Quality (NDEQ), TransCanada representatives will be on hand at a series of information sessions to be hosted by the Department in the coming weeks. The NDEQ has called these meetings to discuss with the public the proposed alternative route corridor information that TransCanada recently submitted for the Keystone XL Project in Nebraska.

Last week, the NDEQ announced the following schedule for the upcoming information sessions:

- O'Neill – May 9
 - Neligh – May 10
 - Albion – May 16
 - Central City – May 17

(More information about the NDEQ's information sessions and the Department's review process can be found [here](#).)

In an April 26 [news release announcing the information sessions](#), NDEQ Director Mike Linder said the "meetings will be one opportunity for the agency to meet with interested persons and discuss where we are at in the pipeline review process. We will have detailed maps available, so that people can get a clearer idea of where the corridor is proposed, and we will have staff on hand to discuss the next steps in the process, and how comments can be submitted."

As reported in this space last week, TransCanada submitted a report on April 18 to the NDEQ that assessed alternative routing corridors for Keystone XL, all of which avoid the Nebraska Sandhills. [The report, which is posted on NDEQ's project website](#), provides a comprehensive analysis of a number of potential re-route options and presents a preferred alternative corridor that runs to the east of the Sandhills region.

Following the information sessions, the NDEQ said in its news release, it will provide TransCanada with "initial reactions" to its proposed re-route alternatives, which will allow the company to develop a more refined route proposal for further evaluation. The NDEQ said it will then develop a "draft evaluation report" – expected to be completed in "several months" – for review at a public hearing before it submits a final report to the Governor.

In announcing the information sessions, the NDEQ also initiated a public comment period, which is facilitated by an online submission process via the Department's project website (at <https://ecmp.nebraska.gov/deq-seis/>).

TransCanada will be responsive to the NDEQ throughout the route-evaluation process – including its participation at the May information sessions – and will also be consulting directly with landowners and communities affected by the proposed Nebraska corridor alternatives for Keystone XL. That process is already beginning with some landowners.

TransCanada Seeks Land Access for Surveys as Part of Route Evaluation

The proposed alternative corridors TransCanada developed and submitted to the NDEQ are based largely on desktop analysis and publicly available information. TransCanada is currently contacting some landowners, seeking permission for access to their property to evaluate first-hand its suitability for pipeline construction.

The survey work we will be conducting includes:

- On-the-ground evaluation of topographical features or other local land features;

- Biological resource surveys, including delineations of wetlands and other water bodies; and assessments related to protected species and their habitat;
- Cultural resources surveys to identify and evaluate any potential historic and prehistoric objects, structures, or sites;
- Location or civil surveys to accurately locate the boundaries of the corridor being evaluated and to obtain an accurate description of existing features; and,
- Land-use evaluation, with input from landowners.

This process will help TransCanada to gather additional information, to begin to understand landowner issues and to minimize potential impacts of pipeline construction.

TransCanada has a long-established set of principles that guide our relationships with landowners, which you can [read about here](#).

We appreciate your feedback. Please contact us – or find more information – at the following:

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