Department of Energy
Golden Field Office
1617 Cole Boulevard
Golden, Colorado 80401-3393

April 6, 2005

DOE/EA-1517

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT for the PROPOSED DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A FUEL ETHANOL PLANT, JASPER COUNTY, INDIANA

AGENCY: U.S. Department of Energy, Golden Field Office

ACTION: Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI)

SUMMARY: The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) conducted an environmental assessment (EA) that analyzed the potential environmental impacts associated with the construction and operation of a proposed fuel ethanol plant in Jasper County, Indiana. DOE, through its Golden Field Office, in Golden, Colorado, would provide partial funding to the Iroquois Bioenergy Company (IBEC), an Indiana limited liability company, to subsidize the design and construction of the proposed plant.

Annually, the proposed plant would dry-mill, ferment, and distill approximately 14.3 million bushels of locally grown corn that would normally be delivered to the proposed plant by truck. Annually, the proposed plant would produce up to 40 million gallons of denatured fuel ethanol; 128,600 tons of distillation by-products; and 121,000 tons of raw carbon dioxide gas (CO2). The denatured ethanol would be shipped from the proposed plant by rail or truck for use as a gasoline additive in regional markets. Distillation by-products would be shipped from the proposed plant by rail or truck and sold as agricultural feedstock. CO2 would be recovered and sold to a third party for liquefaction in a prefabricated CO2 liquefaction plant that would be located adjacent to the proposed fuel ethanol plant. DOE funding would not subsidize design and construction of the CO2 plant.

In accordance with applicable regulations and policies, DOE sent scoping letters to potentially interested agencies, including the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service, the Indiana State Historic Preservation Office, and the Indiana Department of Transportation (INDOT). The scoping letters described the Proposed Action and requested assistance in identifying potential issues that should be evaluated in the EA. DOE also sent scoping letters to other potentially interested individuals, organizations, and agencies and a three-day legal notice was published in a local newspaper to inform the public of the Proposed Action and to solicit public comment. The scoping process determined the scope and

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critical elements of the environment to be addressed in the EA. In response to scoping letters, DOE received no public comments or comments from private organizations voicing any objections to or concerns about its Proposed Action. On February 14, 2005, DOE transmitted letters announcing the availability of the draft EA and inviting comments on the draft. DOE received three substantive comments on the draft EA, one from the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM) and two from the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The comments and DOE's responses are shown in Appendix F of the final EA.

As a requisite for the issuance of a permit for a new driveway access to State Road-114, the INDOT required that a traffic impact analysis for the proposed plant be conducted. The analysis, which is incorporated into the EA by reference, included a finding that the proposed plant would "have a significant number of trucks using its entrance." Consequently, the analysis recommended that a large commercial driveway with acceleration/deceleration lanes be installed and that a traffic blister be installed on the north side of State Road-114 opposite the driveway to allow traffic to maneuver around trucks turning left into the driveway. The INDOT concurred with this recommendation and IBEC has committed to constructing the driveway, acceleration and deceleration lanes, and passing blister as elements of the Proposed Action.

All discussions and findings related to the project site and Proposed Action are contained in the Final EA, including the applicant-committed practices presented in the Proposed Action. The final EA is hereby incorporated by reference.

DETERMINATION

DOE determines that providing partial funding to subsidize the design and construction of the proposed fuel ethanol plant in Jasper County, Indiana, would not constitute a major Federal Action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment, as defined by the National Environmental Policy Act. The applicant-committed measures identified in the Proposed Action of the EA to secure a permit for a new driveway access to State Road 114, shall be incorporated into and enforceable through DOE's funding award documents to IBEC. In addition, DOE's funding award documents to IBEC shall stipulate that IBEC meet all discharge monitoring and reporting, and all other conditions-of-operation specified in IBEC's National Pollution Discharge Eliminations System Permit (wastewater discharge) and Federally Enforceable State Operating Permit (air emissions).

The preparation of an environmental impact statement is not required and DOE is issuing this Finding of No Significant Impact.

COPIES OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSSESSMENT ARE AVAILABE AT THE DOE GOLDEN FIELD OFFICE WEBSITE AT http://www.eere.energy.gov/golden OR FROM:

Joyce Beck, NEPA Documents Manager
DOE Golden Field Office
1617 Cole Boulevard
Golden, CO 80401-3393
(303) 275-4774 or 1-800-644-6735, extension 4774
FAX (303) 275-4790
joyce.beck@go.doe.gov

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE DOE NEPA PROCESS CONTACT:

Office of NEPA Policy and Assistance
U. S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, S. W.
Washington, D. C. 20585
(202) 586-4600 or 1-800-472-2756

Issued in Golden, Colorado, the 6th day of April, 2005.

Christine A. Phoebe
Acting Manager

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION OF A PROPOSED FUEL EHANOL PLANT
JASPER COUNTY, INDIANA
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT (FONSI) DISTRIBUTION LIST

Kyle J. Hupfer
Division of Historic Preservation & Archaeology
402 W. Washington Street, W274
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2739

Christie Kiefer, Environmental Coordinator
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
Division of Water
Environmental Unit
402 W. Washington Street, W264
Indianapolis, IN 46204-2641

Kenneth A. Westlake, Chief
U. S. Environmental Protection Agency
Region 5
Office of Science, Ecosystems, and Communities
NEPA Implementation Section
77 West Jackson Boulevard
Chicago, IL 60604-3590

Howard Jones
Jasper County Coop
2530 N. McKinley Ave.
Rensselaer, IN 46204

The Honorable Herbert H. Arihood, Mayor
122 S. Van Rensselaer
Rensselaer, IN 46204

Ronald P. McIlwain, President
Jasper County Council
1130 W. Wood Rd.
Rensselaer, IN 46204

David Wuethrich
Wuethrich Pork & Grain Inc.
5547 E. 200 St.
Rensselaer, IN 46204

Roger E. Ward
15558 W. 500 St.
Francesville, IN 47946

Ms. Elizabeth McCloskey
U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service
P. O. Box 2616
1000 W. Oak Hill Rd.
Chesterton, IN 46304

Mr. David Parry, Permit Coordinator
Indiana State NEPA Point of Contact
Indiana Department of Environmental Management
Indiana Government Center North, Room 1315
100 North Senate Avenue
P. O. Box 6015
Indianapolis, IN 46204

Steve Rothblatt, Director
Air and Radiation Division
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
77 West Jackson Blvd. (A-18J)
Chicago, Il 60604

Gary Stewart
Trunkline Gas Company
10483 W600S
Ambia, IN 47917

Jane Hardesty
State Conservationist
Indiana State Office
6013 Lakeside Boulevard
Indianapolis, IN 46278-2933

David P. Kennedy
CSX Transportation
Agricultural Products Marketing
500 Water St.
Jacksonville, FL 32202

Mr. Robert G. Lewis, Treasurer
Historic Preservation Association of Jasper County
4916 Locksley Drive East
Rensselaer, IN 47978

Ms. Beulah Arnott
Jasper County Historian
128 S. Augusta St.
Rensselaer, IN 47978

Mr. LaVern Meyer, President
Jasper County Historical Society
479 N. Van Rensselaer
Rensselaer, IN 47978