

# Gas pipeline to cross county

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with landowners in the next four-five weeks.”

He said the company needs a 50-foot permanent easement and a 100-foot temporary construction easement. He said some areas, especially where the pipe will go under roads, and in rough terrain may need more than the 100 feet.

“We will maintain landowner access and put in trench plugs for livestock,” he said.

The construction will be in eight phases beginning with the survey crews to mark the centerline and construction widths to keep the contractor on that property. There will be a fence crew to handle any cuts and repairs.

Clearing and grading will be the first of the construction, but Christensen said that across this route they are going to try not to remove much of the topsoil, and believe in the flatter portions this may be possible. The next phase is the ditching and he said they will be using a ditching machine for this to dig a ditch 4 feet wide and 7-8 feet deep. This will ensure that the pipe is at least four feet below the surface.

Once the ditching is underway, the pipe sections will be laid out, and he expects these to arrive in the area by rail where possible.

“It is not entirely flat along the whole route, he said, “and we will be bending the pipe where necessary.”

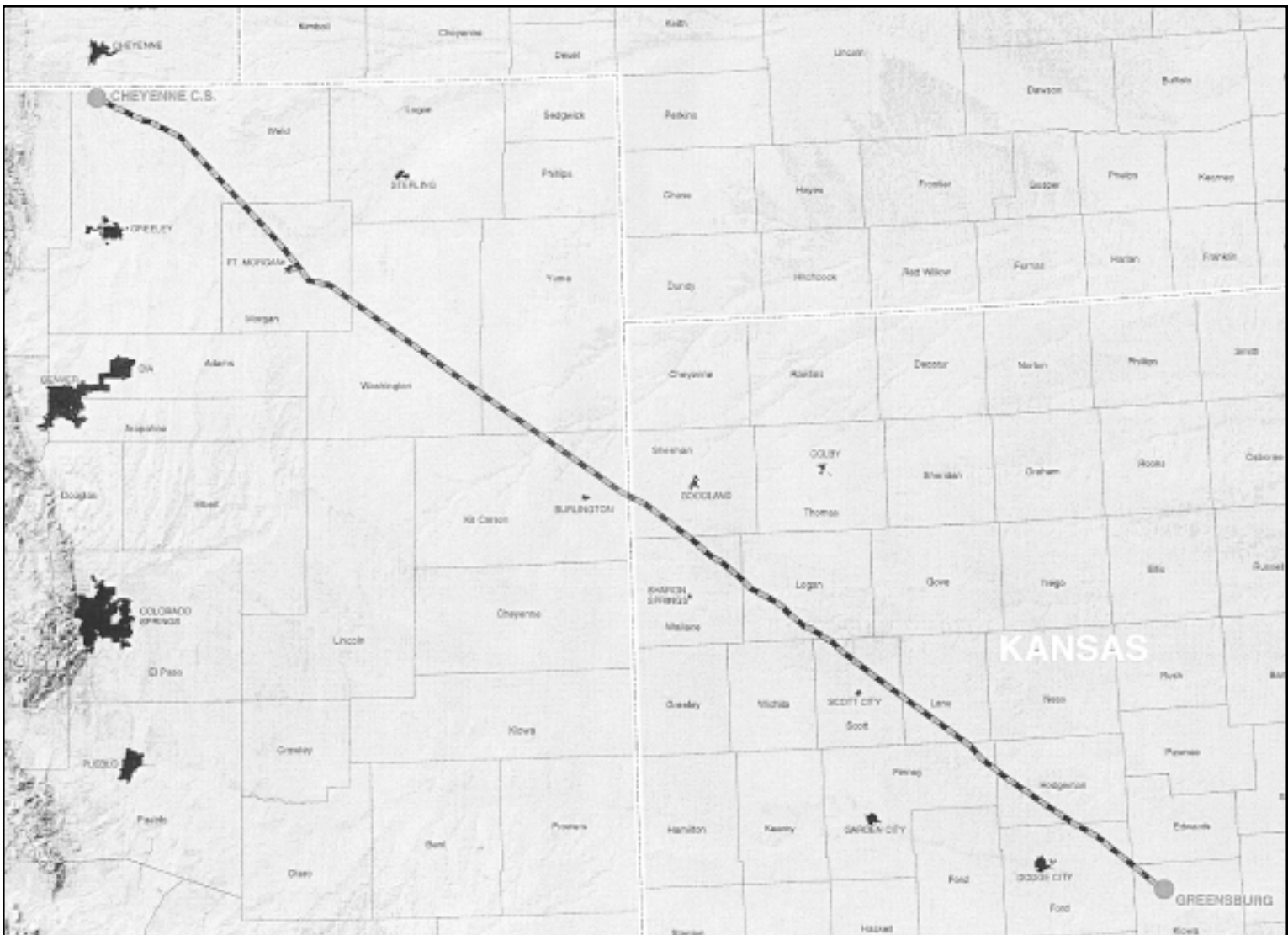
The most critical part is the welding, and Christensen said that all the welders will be tested before being

used, and they will x-ray each of the welds on the line. This will be followed with a special coating before the pipe is lowered into the ditch, and he said there will be up to 25 inspectors watching every aspect of the project. The last two phases are the backfilling to cover the ditch, and then the reclamation of the construction area to bring the land back to the way it was originally or better.

He said El Paso is concerned about safety, and that they will work to meet and exceed the rigid federal and company standards. One-Call Centers are being established for anyone to call who will be doing any digging along the pipeline route once it is buried. In Colorado, he said, the phone number is 1-800-922-1987 and in Kansas it is 1-800-344-7233. Christensen said once a call is made to these numbers, a person is to be on the scene of the proposed digging within 48 hours to locate the pipe.

As another part of safety built into the pipeline will be isolation valves which will block the line, and these will be installed every 15-18 miles along the route. He said the pipeline will be monitored around the clock from Colorado Springs using telemetry, and the company will conduct monthly aerial patrols.

A Kit Carson County commissioner asked what the pressure will be in the line, and if there are any plans to increase the pressure. Christensen said the design pressure will begin at 1,615 pounds at the north end and drop to 1,480 pounds about one-third of the way down. By the time the gas reaches



The Cheyenne Plains pipeline to be built by Colorado Interstate Gas will start near the Wyoming border and run for 380 miles south-east to Greensburg. It is expected to cost \$340 million and begin construction by the fall of next year.

the Greensburg area it will be 800-900 pounds.

He said there is a possibility of increasing the pressure later by the addition of five pressure stations along the pipeline, but this would probably not be done for several years. To get the project done in the shortest time, Christensen said the work will be divided into three sections of about 130 miles each and there will be three contractors. He said each crew will have 450-500

men for a total of 1,500 people. He said each contractor is expected to hire a lot of local people.

Once the crews begin construction, he expects them to do about two miles a day, and they will work six days a week, 12 hours a day. Once the pipe is completely laid, it must be tested by filling it with water and then put under pressure for 48 hours. Christensen said they may need to buy some water both for the construction phases and for the test-

ing. He said it would take 210 acre feet of water to fill the entire pipeline, but it will be tested in sections.

One woman asked what they were going to do with all the extra dirt, and Christensen said there wouldn't be any.

“I am not sure what happens,” he said, “but we don't have any extra dirt.”

“You're going to have some,” she said.

“It all goes back in,” he said, “I

don't know how it happens, but we don't have any extra dirt.”

Asked about how much the company will pay for the right-of-way, Christensen said they will do a market analysis, and try to get the best price for everyone.

“We pay by the rod basis, which is 16.5 feet,” he said, “and keep it as constant as possible.”

Information about the project can be found at [www.elpaso.com](http://www.elpaso.com) or by calling 1-877-898-5263.

## Alco executives suddenly close 84-year-old Garden City store

Employees and shoppers of the Alco store in Garden City were surprised last week when “store closed” signs filled the windows and fliers thanked customers for 84 years of patronage. Inside, the checkout isles were blocked with carts and the inventory was being loaded into trucks. The scene was similar to one almost exactly a year ago when the Goodland store was

closed after 77 years in the city. Dean Van Horn, vice president of Alco Western Division, said competitors like Wal-Mart and Target have convinced the company to focus more on communities with populations of 5,000 or less. He said the Garden City store is the only one closing in Kansas right now. With the closure of the Garden City store, the only store in far western Kansas

is a new one opening in Scott City, and some of the inventory from Garden City was being sent to that store. There is also an Alco store in Burlington, just across the Colorado line. Van Horn said the Garden City store had been losing money.

“Probably what prompted the timing is our lease is coming due,” he said, adding that it ends in May.

That is a similar story to the clos-

ing of the Goodland store because they said the lease was ending in March of last year. As in the case last year, store employees in Garden City found out about the closing the morning it happened.

District Manager Craig Hogan said the employees will be allowed to stay for the final 30 days of packing up inventory. He said the manager was being transferred to an-

other store, and Garden City employees were being offered positions at other Alco stores. The Scott City Alco, expected to open in April, and a store in Ulysses expected to open in May, are among six replacing Gibson's Discount Centers closed in late 2002. Hogan said other stores remain in Hays, Russell, Larned and Pratt in western Kansas. Smaller Duckwalls

stores operate in Syracuse, Leoti and Oberlin. Hogan said the surprise closing is typical for the chain.

“Really, we close our stores that way,” he said. The practice of closing suddenly, Van Horn said, has developed over time.

“We've done it all kinds of ways,” he said. “We've just found this way is quick and clean and easy.”

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