

Pipeline company: IA order could compromise names

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Summit Carbon Solutions wants the Iowa Utilities Board to reverse an order to divulge the names of business and governments with property in the path of its proposed \$4.5 billion carbon capture pipeline, saying it would force the release of farmers' information, as well.

Ames-based Summit has proposed capturing carbon dioxide emissions from ethanol plants in Iowa and four other states, liquefying the greenhouse gas under pressure and transporting it through the 2,000-mile pipeline to North Dakota, where it would be permanently sequestered deep underground.

In August, Summit asked the Iowa Utilities Board to keep confidential the names of 15,000 Iowa property owners in the planned path of the pipeline. Summit needs right-of-way access from the landowners to build about 710 miles of pipeline across 30 counties in Iowa.

Environmental advocates contend that by advocating to keep the names secret, Summit is trying to quash attempts to organize opposition to the pipeline. But a majority of the three-member state utilities board agreed in November keep the identities of individual landowners confidential, saying their right to privacy outweighed the public's interest in knowing who they are.

The board, however, ordered the release of the names of government entities and businesses targeted in the project, saying they do not have the same "privacy expectations."

Summit, in a last Monday filing with the board, argued that the order would force the release information about a "vast majority" of farmers affected by the project because their operations often are held in trusts or organized as limited liability companies, partnerships and corporations.

Releasing trust information also could divulge estate planning and financial management information, the filing said.



Steve and Karmin McShane paint a sign in opposition to a carbon capture and sequestration pipeline in Linn County. JOSEPH CRESS/IOWA CITY PRESS-CITIZEN

"The board should reconsider its order and hold that business entity names and addresses — the vast majority of which belong to small family farm operations — be held confidential," it said.

The company also filed a petition last Tuesday in Polk County District Court, seeking temporary and permanent injunctions preventing the utilities board from releasing any property owner information.

The board sent Summit a letter in late November saying an objection the Sierra Club's Iowa Chapter filed a few days before the order included a public records request and could result in the release of all landowner information.

"If injunctive relief is not requested within 14 days, or is denied by the court, the materials will be released in full," wrote Jon Tack, the board's general counsel.

Jess Mazour, the Sierra Club's conservation coordinator, said Friday that the information should be made public so landowners can join forces to protect

their interests.

"The minute landowners know they're not alone, that they don't have to feel hopeless, that there are things they can do to protect their land, they don't want to sign" pipeline easements, Mazour said. "And Summit doesn't want that to happen."

Jennifer Easler, the Iowa attorney general's consumer advocate, joined the Sierra Club, other environmental groups and hundreds of individual Iowans in asking the board to release Summit's mailing lists.

In addition to saying landowners' information should be confidential to protect their privacy and "peace of solitude," Summit has contended the information's release would help its competitors.

Texas-based Navigator CO2 Ventures proposes building a 900-mile carbon capture pipeline across 36 Iowa counties, including some of the same ones where Summit's pipeline will go. The \$3 billion, 1,300-mile Navigator

pipeline also would cross Nebraska, Minnesota, South Dakota and Illinois, where carbon would be sequestered.

Navigator and Summit say their projects will help ethanol production remain viable as the nation seeks to cut greenhouse emissions in half by 2030 to address climate change.

On Thursday, the Iowa Utilities Board issued an order that Navigator's and NuStar Pipeline, which proposes building an ammonia pipeline in Lee County, along with all future pipeline projects, must file landowner mailing lists with the board.

Individual landowner information will be treated as confidential.

The board also said developers can't begin surveying landowners' property, even with the owners' permission, until after the companies have held informational meetings in all affected counties.

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