

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY
HYDROCARBONS AND GEOTHERMAL ENERGY OFFICE**

IN THE MATTER OF:

Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC

Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC

Cheniere Marketing, LLC

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Docket No. 26-32-LNG

ANSWER IN OPPOSITION TO PROTEST

Pursuant to Section 590.304(f) of the United States Department of Energy’s (“DOE”) regulations,¹ Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC (“CCL”), Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC (together with CCL, “CCL Stage IV”) and Cheniere Marketing, LLC (collectively, “Applicants”) hereby submit the instant answer in opposition (“Answer”) to the Motion to Intervene and Protest of Ingleside on the Bay Coastal Watch Association, Inc., Indigenous Peoples of the Coastal Bend, Karankawa Tribe of Texas, and the Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas, LLC (collectively, the “Protesters”) submitted to DOE’s Hydrocarbons and Geothermal Energy Office on June 15, 2026 (the “Protest”)² in the above-captioned proceeding.

In support of the instant Answer, the Applicants state the following:

¹ 10 C.F.R. § 590.304(f) (2025).

² *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC & Cheniere Marketing, LLC, Motion to Intervene and Protest of Ingleside on the Bay Coastal Watch Association, Inc., Indigenous Peoples of the Coastal Bend, Karankawa Tribe of Texas, and Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas, LLC, Docket No. 26-32-LNG (June 15, 2026).*

I. **BACKGROUND**

On March 19, 2026, pursuant to Section 3 of the Natural Gas Act (“NGA”),³ the Applicants filed an application with DOE (“DOE Application”)⁴ seeking long-term, multi-contract authorization to export domestically produced liquefied natural gas (“LNG”) in a volume equivalent to approximately 1,200 billion cubic feet (“Bcf”) of natural gas per year (“Bcf/y”) from the proposed “CCL Stage 4 Project,”⁵ an expansion of the existing and approved LNG terminal on the La Quinta Ship Channel in San Patricio and Nueces Counties, Texas (“CCL Terminal”).⁶ The Applicants seek to export such LNG to any country which has, or in the future develops, the capacity to import LNG via ocean going carrier and with which the United States either (i) has a free trade agreement (“FTA”) requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas (“FTA Nations”) or (ii) lacks an FTA requiring national treatment for trade in natural gas but with which trade is not prohibited by U.S. law or policy (“Non-FTA Nations”), on a non-additive basis, each for a 25-year term commencing at first commercial export.

Relatedly, on February 3, 2026, CCL Stage IV filed a corresponding application with FERC for authorization to site, construct and operate the CCL Stage 4 Project (“FERC Application”) in Docket No. CP26-82-000.⁷ The Applicants anticipate that DOE will participate

³ 15 U.S.C. § 717b.

⁴ *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC & Cheniere Marketing, LLC*, Application for Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Free Trade Agreement Nations and Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, Docket No. 26-32-LNG (Mar. 19, 2026).

⁵ The proposed CCL Stage 4 Project includes the addition of four liquefaction trains, two LNG storage tanks, three ground flares, a third marine berth, a terminal supply line, and other associated infrastructure.

⁶ CCL Terminal means all existing facilities at the LNG terminal and all authorized but not yet constructed facilities approved in Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC” or “Commission”) Docket Nos. CP12-507-000, as amended in CP19-514-000; CP18-512-000; and CP23-129-000.

⁷ *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, et al.*, Application for Authorizations Under the Natural Gas Act and Amendment of Certificate Authorization, Docket Nos. CP26-82-000, *et al.* (Feb. 3, 2026). As part of the FERC Application, CCL Stage IV’s affiliate, Cheniere Corpus Christi Pipeline, L.P., requested a certificate of public

as a cooperating agency in the environmental review to be conducted under the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”)⁸ as part of the Commission’s review of the CCL Stage 4 Project, with FERC serving as the lead agency.

DOE published notice of the DOE Application in the Federal Register on April 15, 2026, requiring that protests, motions to intervene, or notices of intervention, as applicable, and written comments be filed by June 15, 2026.⁹ On June 15, 2026, the Protest was submitted to DOE, raising a number of issues outside the scope of this proceeding, as well as alleging that DOE may not lawfully apply its Categorical Exclusion B5.7 to the CCL Stage 4 Project, that DOE must perform consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (“NHPA”), and that the request to export LNG should be denied as inconsistent with the public interest. Additionally, the Protest contains numerous instances of inaccurate, as well as patently incorrect, information—including with respect to Applicants’ requested authorization term, which Applicants herein clarify and/or correct.

II. **ANSWER IN OPPOSITION**

A. The Protesters Raise Multiple Issues that are Outside of the Scope of this Proceeding, Which Should be Disregarded by DOE.

At the outset, Applicants note that the Protesters raise a litany of issues that are not only beyond the scope of this proceeding, but also beyond the scope of DOE’s regulatory jurisdiction,

convenience and necessity for the proposed “CCPL Expansion Project” in Docket No. CP26-87-000 and requested a limited amendment of its certificate issued in Docket No. CP18-513-000 to vacate the authorization with respect to certain pipeline facilities that it no longer intends to construct and to reflect the associated changes in contracted capacity, costs, and rates. *See id.* at 2-3.

⁸ 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 *et seq.*

⁹ Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC; Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC; and Cheniere Marketing, LLC; Application for Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, 91 Fed. Reg. 20,157 (Apr. 15, 2026).

which extends only to the act of exportation. Among other things, the Protesters attempt to relitigate issues with respect to authorizations that are final and no longer subject to rehearing or judicial review under the NGA.¹⁰ Nevertheless, in the interest of providing DOE with an accurate record upon which it can base its decision, the Applicants provide the following responses.

1. *DOE lacks jurisdiction to review the environmental impacts associated with the siting, construction and operation of the CCL Stage 4 Project.*

The Protesters argue that “DOE must complete a full [environmental impact statement (‘EIS’)] to determine the environmental impacts of the [DOE] Application.”¹¹ In this regard, the Protest demands that DOE extensively review numerous environmental impacts associated with the siting, construction and operation of the CCL Stage 4 Project, including “shoreline erosion from traffic, hazards, risks, spills, or explosions posed by increased traffic, Federal Clean Air Act compliance, [Endangered Species Act] compliance, and a cultural resources review.”¹² The Protesters’ demand that DOE prepare an EIS to review such impacts is both unsupported and unnecessary.

It is well-established that “DOE does not have any authority to exercise under section 3(e) [of the NGA] to authorize siting and construction of LNG export and import facilities.”¹³ Although the Protest attempts to obfuscate this clear jurisdictional line by purporting to focus solely on impacts from LNG carrier (“LNGC”) traffic, the alleged impacts highlighted in the Protest are clearly related to the siting, construction and operation of the CCL Stage 4 Project, which is strictly

¹⁰ See, e.g., *Protest*, at 6 & Exh. 3 (attempting to incorporate by reference filings related to CCL’s “Midscale Trains 8 & 9 Project”); see also *Protest*, at 8 & Exh. 4 (same).

¹¹ *Protest*, at 23.

¹² *Id.* at 20.

¹³ *Venture Global CP2 LNG, LLC*, Order Denying Request for Rehearing of Final Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Countries, DOE/HGEO Order No. 5264-B, Docket No. 21-131-LNG, at 42 (Mar. 26, 2026) [hereinafter, *Order No. 5264-B*].

within FERC’s jurisdiction to review and approve. In this regard, Applicants prepared detailed information on these impacts, which were provided to FERC to assist with review of the FERC Application, including information on LNGC traffic impacts,¹⁴ marine emissions,¹⁵ erosion,¹⁶ vessel strikes,¹⁷ and potential impacts to cultural resources.¹⁸ Thus, as DOE has stated, “[w]ith no authority to approve construction or operation of such facilities, there is no DOE decision to be informed by a NEPA analysis.”¹⁹

2. *There is no basis for DOE to review CCL’s prior export authorizations.*

The Protesters claim, baselessly, that the “[CCL] Stage 4 Project impacts are piled on top of the previously approved, but unevaluated, impacts from the prior three stages.”²⁰ The Protest goes on to state that the “[DOE] Application chooses only to focus on [the CCL Stage 4 Project]—but for purposes of quantifying household harms—DOE must look at the cumulative export volume across Stages 1-4” and that “DOE must evaluate the harms against total approved exports for CCL.”²¹ The Protesters’ assertion that DOE must review Applicants’ requested authorization in the context of CCL’s prior export authorizations is unsupported.

First, DOE has validly authorized exports of LNG from the CCL Terminal on multiple occasions, each time finding that the proposed exports were not inconsistent with the public

¹⁴ *FERC Application*, at Exh. F/F-I, at Resource Report 5, at pp. 5-16 – 5-17.

¹⁵ *FERC Application*, at Exh. F/F-I, at Resource Report 9, at p. 9-36 & App. 9D.

¹⁶ *FERC Application*, at Exh. F/F-I, at Resource Report 2, at pp. 2-22 – 2-23.

¹⁷ *See, e.g., FERC Application*, at Exh. F/F-I, at Resource Report 3, at pp. 3-36 – 3-37.

¹⁸ *FERC Application*, at Exh. F/F-I, at Resource Report 4.

¹⁹ *Order No. 5264-B*, at 42.

²⁰ *Protest*, at 2.

²¹ *Protest*, at 16.

interest.²² CCL's prior authorizations from DOE are each final, and no longer subject to rehearing or judicial review under the NGA. The Protesters' attempt to collaterally attack DOE's prior authorizations of LNG exports to Non-FTA Nations has no support in DOE precedent, and nothing in the NGA requires DOE to review cumulative export volumes when determining whether an application for a new authorization is not inconsistent with the public interest.

Although the environmental impacts from siting, construction and operation of the CCL Terminal are outside of the scope of DOE's review, as explained above, environmental impacts from each individual project, which together make up the CCL Terminal were, in each instance, fulsomely reviewed by FERC, with DOE acting as a cooperating agency during the environmental

²² See *Cheniere Marketing, LLC*, Order Granting Long-Term Multi-Contract Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas by Vessel from the Proposed Corpus Christi Liquefaction Project to Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FE Order No. 3164, FE Docket No. 12-99-LNG (Oct. 16, 2012); *Cheniere Marketing, LLC*, Order Amending Application in Docket No. 12-97-LNG to Add Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC as Applicant, and Granting Request in DOE/FE Order No. 3164, Docket No. 12-99-LNG to Add Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC as Authorization Holder, DOE/FE Order Nos. 3538 & 3164-A, FE Docket Nos. 12-97-LNG & 12-99-LNG (Oct. 29, 2014); *Cheniere Marketing, LLC & Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC*, Final Opinion and Order Granting Long-Term, Multi-Contract Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas by Vessel from the Proposed Corpus Christi Liquefaction Project to Be Located in Corpus Christi, Texas, to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FE Order No. 3638, FE Docket No. 12-97-LNG (May 12, 2015); *Cheniere Marketing, LLC & Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC*, Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FE Order No. 4519, FE Docket No. 19-124-LNG (Apr. 14, 2020); *Cheniere Marketing, LLC & Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC*, Order Extending Export Term for Authorizations to Free Trade and Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations through December 31, 2050, DOE/FE Order Nos. 3164-B, 3638-B & 4519-A, FE Docket Nos. 12-97-LNG, 12-99-LNG & 19-124-LNG (Oct. 28, 2020); *Cheniere Marketing, LLC & Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC*, Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FECM Order No. 4799, FE Docket No. 19-124-LNG (Mar. 16, 2022); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage III, LLC*, Order Granting Long-Term, Multi-Contract Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas by Vessel from the Proposed Stage 3 LNG Facilities to be Located at the Corpus Christi LNG Terminal in San Patricio and Nueces Counties, Texas, to Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FE Order No. 4277, FE Docket No. 18-78-LNG (Nov. 9, 2018); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage III, LLC*, Opinion and Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FE Order No. 4490, FE Docket No. 18-78-LNG (Feb. 10, 2020); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage III, LLC*, Order Extending Export Term for Authorizations to Free Trade and Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations Through December 31, 2050, DOE/FE Order Nos. 4277-A & 4490-A, FE Docket No. 18-78-LNG (Oct. 21, 2020); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC*, Order Granting Request to Amend Authorizations to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Reflect Corporate Reorganization, DOE/FECM Order Nos. 4277-B & 4490-B, Docket No. 18-78-LNG (Aug. 25, 2022); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, CCL Midscale 8-9, LLC & Cheniere Marketing, LLC*, Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FECM Order No. 5019, Docket No. 23-46-LNG (Jul. 19, 2023); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, CCL Midscale 8-9, LLC & Cheniere Marketing, LLC*, Order Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/HGEO Order No. 5391, Docket No. 23-46-LNG (Feb. 26, 2026) [hereinafter, *Order No. 5391*].

review process.²³ Moreover, as explained above, environmental impacts from the CCL Stage 4 Project will be reviewed in compliance with NEPA by FERC, with DOE yet again acting as a cooperating agency. Finally, the Applicants note that the Council on Environmental Quality rescinded its regulations defining “cumulative effects” and requiring consideration thereof.²⁴ Therefore, the Protesters’ unfounded claim that cumulative impacts from the CCL Terminal and the CCL Stage 4 Project must be reviewed by DOE, is meritless.

3. *DOE is not required to assess upstream or downstream impacts.*

The Protesters further assert that “DOE cannot ignore upstream and downstream impacts in its decision-making under the NGA[.]”²⁵ According to the Protest, given the “statutory aims and purposes” of the NGA, “how exports will impact production, whether that production will be ‘orderly,’ and what environmental impacts it will have are all pertinent to the ‘public interest’ protected by the statute.”²⁶ The Protesters’ assertion is squarely contrary to settled law and DOE precedent. As DOE and the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals have made abundantly clear, DOE is not required to consider upstream and downstream environmental effects associated with the export of natural gas.²⁷ Section 3(a) of the NGA provides DOE with broad discretion to determine

²³ *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC & Cheniere Corpus Christi Pipeline, L.P.*, Corpus Christi LNG Project Final Environmental Impact Statement, Docket Nos. CP12-507-000 & CP12-508-000 (Oct. 8, 2014); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage III, LLC, Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC & Cheniere Corpus Christi Pipeline, L.P.*, Stage 3 Project Environmental Assessment, Docket Nos. CP18-512-000 & CP18-513-000 (Mar. 29, 2019); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC*, Corpus Christi Liquefaction Amendment Project Environmental Assessment, Docket No. CP19-514-000 (Feb. 28, 2020); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC & CCL Midscale 8-9, LLC*, Corpus Christi Liquefaction Midscale Trains 8 & 9 Project Environmental Assessment, Docket No. CP23-129-000 (June 21, 2024).

²⁴ See 40 C.F.R. § 1508.7 (2019) (defining “cumulative impact”); see also Council on Environmental Quality, Removal of National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Regulations, 90 Fed. Reg. 10,610 (Feb. 25, 2025) (interim final rule rescinding CEQ implementing regulations), 91 Fed. Reg. 618 (Jan. 8, 2026).

²⁵ *Protest*, at 16.

²⁶ *Id.* at 17.

²⁷ See *Order No. 5264-B*, at 24 (“DOE is clearly not ‘required’ by NGA section 3(a) to consider the upstream and downstream environmental effects of proposed exports.”). See also *Freeport LNG Expansion, L.P., et al.*, Order

whether proposed exports to Non-FTA Nations will (or will not) be consistent with the public interest, “but the statute does not identify any environmental criteria that DOE is required to consider in evaluating the public interest.”²⁸ As DOE has recognized, “DOE’s narrow role is to consider how the act of ‘export’ and ‘the proposed exportation’ impacts the public interest.”²⁹ Given that “[u]pstream, downstream, and cumulative environmental effects are beyond the scope of DOE’s authority under NGA Section 3(a)[,]”³⁰ DOE should disregard the Protest’s unsupported demand.

B. The Protesters’ Arguments with Respect to Application of Categorical Exclusion B5.7 are Meritless.

In the context of an application for an LNG export approval, the only decision for which DOE has authority is with respect to the export of the commodity itself, and in the absence of extraordinary circumstances, DOE may comply with its NEPA obligations through application of Categorical Exclusion B5.7.³¹ At the outset, Applicants note that the Protest’s discussion with respect to Categorical Exclusion B5.7 is rife with inconsistencies and inaccuracies, and misstates both the facts and the law in multiple instances. First, citing to non-existent language in the regulation, the Protest argues that DOE’s Categorical Exclusion B5.7 cannot be applied here

Granting Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FECM Order No. 4961, Docket No. 21-98-LNG, at 21-24 (discussing caselaw from the D.C. Circuit Court of Appeals in which the court held DOE was not required to consider effects of “export-induced [natural] gas production” or “downstream” emissions resulting from the indirect effects of exports (quoting *Sierra Club v. DOE*, 867 F.3d 189 (D.C. Cir. 2017))).

²⁸ *Order No. 5264-B*, at 23.

²⁹ *Id.* at 25 (“Upstream, Congress assigned responsibility for regulating ‘the business of transporting and selling natural gas for ultimate distribution’ elsewhere. The provisions of the NGA do ‘not apply . . . to the facilities used for such distribution or the production or gathering of natural gas. Downstream, the statute likewise contemplates no authority over ‘ultimate public consumption.’ Indeed, once the act of ‘export’ is complete and the issue becomes one of foreign use, there is a presumption against the extraterritorial application of federal law.”) (internal citations omitted).

³⁰ *Order No. 5264-B*, at 43.

³¹ *See Order No. 5264-B*, at 42.

“because it specifically exempts ‘new construction’ from the list of actions which can be excluded from an Environmental Assessment, or an EIS, under NEPA.”³² Second, the Protest goes on to state that, even if not exempted, Categorical Exclusion B5.7 still cannot be applied, as the impacts of the CCL Stage 4 Project will be significant because of the “more-than-doubled vessel traffic”.³³ The Protesters’ claims materially misstate the law and the facts of the CCL Stage 4 Project, respectively, and once again seriously call into question the Protesters’ credibility.

First, Applicants note that the Protest largely relies on the erroneous claim that DOE’s Categorical Exclusion B5.7 “is not applicable here because it specifically excludes new construction from its reach.”³⁴ However, nowhere in the text of Categorical Exclusion B5.7 is new construction excluded.³⁵ Instead, it appears that the Protesters are relying on language exempting “new construction” from an outdated regulation, which has not been in effect for more than half a decade.³⁶ The applicable Final Rule implementing the current version of Categorical Exclusion B5.7 became effective on January 4, 2021,³⁷ and does not limit the applicability of the categorical exclusion to existing facilities. Therefore, the Protest’s claim that Categorical Exclusion B5.7 cannot be applied to the DOE Application is meritless on its face.

Second, the Protest appears to deceptively inflate the number of additional vessels associated with the CCL Stage 4 Project. In this regard, the Protesters cite to the FERC Application

³² *Protest*, at 18.

³³ *Protest*, at 19.

³⁴ *Protest*, at 18.

³⁵ *See* 10 C.F.R. Part 1021, App. B, Categorical Exclusion B5.7.

³⁶ *Protest*, at 18; *see* National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, 85 Fed. Reg. 78,197 (Dec. 4, 2020) (revising text of Categorical Exclusion B5.7).

³⁷ *See* National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, 85 Fed. Reg. 78,197 (Dec. 4, 2020).

to claim that the CCL Stage 4 Project “include[s] at least 870 LNGC trips per year.”³⁸ However, on the same page of the FERC Application cited by the Protest, CCL Stage IV clearly explains that “[t]he CCL Stage 4 Project is anticipated to increase maximum LNGC vessel traffic **by 390 vessels from the currently-authorized 480 vessels per year**, to a maximum of 870 vessels per year.”³⁹ Thus, the Protesters’ claim that the CCL Stage 4 Project will result in “more-than-doubled vessel traffic”⁴⁰ is clearly false, and should not be the basis for finding that Categorical Exclusion B5.7 does not apply.

For more than half a decade, it has been DOE’s formal position that “transport of natural gas by marine vessel normally does not pose the potential for significant environmental impacts.”⁴¹ Moreover, DOE has applied Categorical Exclusion B5.7 to projects that have proposed to export larger quantities of LNG than the CCL Stage 4 Project.⁴² As “[a]gencies have substantial discretion in determining the appropriate scope and methodology for environmental analysis,”⁴³ DOE is entitled to substantial deference in its application of the categorical exclusion to the CCL Stage 4 Project.

³⁸ *Protest*, at 11 (citing *FERC Application*, at 9); *see also Protest*, at 3 (“the current Project guarantees decades of significantly increased vessel traffic—at a minimum, 870 LNG Carriers [] yearly, plus barges, support vessels, tugs, and any other necessary ships.”); *see also Protest*, at 20 (“the Project’s additional 870 annual LNG Carriers plus any necessary support vessels, to transit the La Quinta Ship Channel for (at least) up to 30 years.”).

³⁹ *FERC Application*, at 9.

⁴⁰ *Protest*, at 19.

⁴¹ National Environmental Policy Act Implementing Procedures, 85 Fed. Reg. at 78,198.

⁴² *See Venture Global CP2 LNG, LLC*, Categorical Exclusion Determination, Docket No. 21-131-LNG (Oct. 20, 2025) (applying Categorical Exclusion B5.7 to a project exporting 1,446 Bcf/y of natural gas).

⁴³ *See Order No. 5264-B*, at 44; *see also Seven Cnty. Infrastructure Coal. v. Eagle Cnty.*, 605 U.S. 168, 185 (2025) (“The bedrock principle of judicial review in NEPA cases can be stated in a word: Deference.”).

C. DOE is Not Required to Perform Consultation Pursuant to Section 106 of the NHPA.

The Protest devotes substantial discussion to the notion that DOE must review potential cultural resource impacts from the CCL Stage 4 Project, and “engage in the Section 106 process and determine what historic properties or cultural resources may be impacted—directly or indirectly—by its licensure of the commercial movement of LNG tanker ships.”⁴⁴ As the Applicants have noted above, much of what the Protesters seek from DOE is plainly outside of its jurisdiction. In this regard, Applicants note that the Protesters raised nearly identical arguments regarding cultural resource impacts in their filings before FERC, the appropriate jurisdictional entity.⁴⁵ The NGA, as amended, makes clear that FERC “shall act as the lead agency *for the purposes of coordinating all applicable Federal authorizations* and for the purposes of complying with [NEPA].”⁴⁶ Similarly, the regulations promulgated under NHPA provide:

If more than one Federal agency is involved in an undertaking, some or all the agencies may designate a lead Federal agency, which shall identify the appropriate official to serve as the agency official who shall act on their behalf, fulfilling their collective responsibilities under section 106.⁴⁷

As FERC is acting as the lead Federal agency for purposes of authorizing the CCL Stage 4 Project pursuant to the NGA, and reviewing the potential environmental (including cultural resource) impacts, FERC will be responsible for ensuring compliance with applicable laws and regulations governing cultural resources potentially impacted by the CCL Stage 4 Project.

⁴⁴ Protest, at 24-25.

⁴⁵ See *Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC, Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, & Cheniere Corpus Christi Pipeline, L.P.*, Protest and Motion to Intervene of Ingleside on the Bay Coastal Watch, Inc., Indigenous Peoples of the Coastal Bend, Karankawa Tribe of Texas, and the Carrizo/Comecrudo Tribe of Texas, LLC, Docket Nos. CP26-82-000, *et al.*, at 29-39 (Mar. 10, 2026); *Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC, Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC, & Cheniere Corpus Christi Pipeline, L.P.*, Comments of Ingleside on the Bay Coastal Watch Association, Inc. in opposition to Corpus Christi Stage 4 LNG Project *et al.*, Docket No. PF25-10-000, at 8 (Dec. 24, 2025).

⁴⁶ 15 U.S.C. § 717n(b)(1) (emphasis added).

⁴⁷ 36 C.F.R. § 800.2(a)(2).

D. The Protest Contains Multiple Misstatements Regarding the Export Term Requested by the Applicants.

The Protesters grossly misstate the export term Applicants requested in the DOE Application. To clarify, Applicants requested that the term of the respective authorizations to FTA and Non-FTA Nations each commence at first commercial export from the CCL Stage 4 Project and continue for a period of 25 years.⁴⁸ First, as noted herein, the term would commence at “first commercial export” not, as the Protesters incorrectly assert, “beginning whenever the Project comes online or has its first commercial export.”⁴⁹ Second, regarding the length of the term, the Protesters engage in confusing assertions to argue that Applicants seek a potentially 40-year term.⁵⁰ This is incorrect. As noted above, and as clearly stated in the DOE Application, Applicants seek a ***25-year term*** commencing at first export from the CCL Stage 4 Project.

As discussed in the DOE Application, the requested term reflects a minor deviation from DOE’s typical export term, in order to allow Applicants to enter into standard 20-year contracts for both natural gas supply and/or LNG exports from all liquefaction trains proposed for the CCL Stage 4 Project. The proposed term is consistent with DOE’s recently stated policy in approving a make-up period, the long-standing historic DOE policy of allowing applicants sufficient time to enter into such 20-year contracts, and the administration’s goals of ensuring U.S. energy dominance, reducing regulatory burdens and providing sustained energy security to our trading partners and allies.

Moreover, contrary to the Protesters’ assertions, to approve an export term extending beyond 2050, DOE need not undertake any public interest analysis other than what is customary

⁴⁸ *DOE Application*, at 2.

⁴⁹ *Protest*, at 30.

⁵⁰ *Protest*, at 30-31.

in connection with the exports requested in the DOE Application. In recently approving a make-up period for Port Arthur LNG Phase II, LLC,⁵¹ Cameron LNG, LLC,⁵² and others, DOE has already affirmed that exports after 2050 are not inconsistent with the public interest, if such a term is for the purpose of allowing an applicant the ability to enter into industry standard supply and export contracts, recognizing that “with the passage of time since the 2050 Policy Statement was implemented in 2020, together with the time required for the construction of an authorization holder’s associated LNG export facility, ‘a standard 20-year contract now could extend beyond December 31, 2050.’”⁵³ In this regard, the Protesters’ unfounded objections to the Applicants’ proposed export term should be disregarded.

E. Protestors Fail to Affirmatively Demonstrate that Exports from the CCL Stage 4 Project are Inconsistent with the Public Interest.

Contrary to Protesters’ assertions, exports from the CCL Stage 4 Project to FTA and Non-FTA Nations are not inconsistent with the public interest, but rather will serve the public interest for the reasons enumerated in the DOE Application. As detailed therein, DOE’s public interest analysis focuses on four primary factors: “(i) the domestic need for the LNG proposed to be exported, (ii) whether the proposed exports pose a threat to the security of domestic natural gas supplies, (iii) whether the arrangement is consistent with DOE’s policy of promoting market competition, and (iv) any other factors bearing on the public interest as determined by DOE”,⁵⁴ such as international and environmental impacts. Furthermore, Executive Order 14154 directs

⁵¹ *Port Arthur LNG Phase II, LLC*, Order Amending Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Nations, DOE/FECM Order No. 5292-A, Docket No. 20-23-LNG, at 3-5 (June 30, 2025).

⁵² *Cameron LNG, LLC*, Order Amending and Partially Vacating Long-Term Authorization to Export Liquefied Natural Gas to Non-Free Trade Agreement Countries, DOE/HGEO Order No. 3846-C, Docket No. 15-90-LNG, at 16 (April 30, 2026).

⁵³ *Id.* at 15-16.

⁵⁴ *See* DOE Application, at 14 (quoting *Order No. 5391*, at 22).

DOE, in evaluating the public interest of LNG exports, to “consider the economic and employment impacts to the United States and the impact to the security of allies and partners that would result from granting the application.”⁵⁵ The LNG exports proposed by the Applicants hit the mark on all counts.

First, both DOE and the U.S. Energy Information Administration affirm that U.S. gas supply conditions are more than adequate to satisfy both domestic needs and exports of LNG.⁵⁶ Second, DOE has repeatedly affirmed that any domestic price impact from additional LNG exports “is expected to be minimal due to the abundant U.S. supply of natural gas.”⁵⁷ Third, constructing the CCL Stage 4 Project, and producing and exporting LNG at the CCL Stage 4 Project will provide the United States with significant benefits, including stimulating the local, regional, and national economies through direct job creation, purchases of goods and services, wages, increased economic activity and tax revenues.⁵⁸ Fourth, the CCL Stage 4 Project will also have significant global security and trade benefits including promoting liberalization of the global natural gas trade through fostering of a liquid global LNG market, advancing national security and the security of U.S. allies through diversification of global natural gas supplies, increasing economic trade and

⁵⁵ Exec. Order No. 14154, Unleashing American Energy, 90 Fed. Reg. 8,353, § 8 (Jan. 29, 2025).

⁵⁶ U.S. Dep’t of Energy, Office of Fossil Energy & Carbon Management, Energy, Economic, and Environmental Assessment of U.S. LNG Exports: Response to Comments, at 43 (May 19, 2025) [hereinafter, *Response to Comments*].

⁵⁷ *Order No. 5264-B*, at 13 (quoting *Response to Comments*, at 46) (emphasis original). As support for their claim that exports for the CCL Stage 4 Project will not be consistent with the public interest, the Protesters make general claims that exports will result in domestic price increases. *See, e.g., Protest*, at 15. In this regard, the Protesters claim that exports “have harmful distributional impacts” and cite to DOE’s study, Energy, Economic and Environmental Assessment of U.S. LNG Exports (“2024 LNG Export Study”), claiming that DOE predicts that U.S. LNG exports “could raise domestic prices more than thirty percent[.]” *Protest*, at 16. However, DOE “explored these price impacts on a distributional basis in both the [2024 LNG Export Study] and the Response to Comments,” and noted that the “projected impact for the lowest income group corresponds to a 0.01% to 0.22% increase[.]” *Order No. 5264-B*, at 17.

⁵⁸ *FERC Application*, at Exh. F/F-I, Resource Report 5.

ties with foreign nations, thus improving the U.S. balance of trade, and displacing fuels with more significant environmental impacts in foreign countries.⁵⁹

Finally, as discussed above, review of the majority of the limited environmental impacts associated with the CCL Stage 4 Project fall under the purview of FERC, and DOE's environmental review is limited to the marine transport effects. However, as also discussed above, DOE has found these impacts are limited and thus has determined that a categorical exclusion applies to approvals or disapprovals of new authorizations to export natural gas under Section 3 of the NGA and any associated transportation of natural gas by marine vessel.⁶⁰

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the LNG exports proposed in the DOE Application are not inconsistent with, and clearly serve, the public interest. DOE should make a similar finding regarding exports from the CCL Stage 4 Project as it has for all other exports from the CCL Terminal.⁶¹

⁵⁹ See, e.g., *Response to Comments*, at 47-49; see also *Order No. 5391*, at 7 (“DOE finds that CCL’s non-FTA exports are likely to yield economic benefits to the United States, diversify global LNG supplies, and improve energy security for U.S. allies and trading partners over the course of the export term”).

⁶⁰ *Supra* n.41.

⁶¹ *Supra* n.22.

III.
CONCLUSION

WHEREFORE, for the forgoing reasons, the Applicants request that DOE accept this Answer and reject the arguments raised by the Protest for the reasons discussed herein.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Lisa M. Toney

Lisa M. Toney

Mariah T. Johnston

Jacob I. Cunningham

Anna K. Simon

Attorneys for

Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC,

Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC

and Cheniere Marketing, LLC

Dated: June 30, 2026

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that I have this day served the foregoing document upon each person designated on the official service list in this proceeding.

Dated at New York, N.Y., this 30th day of June, 2026.

/s/ Dionne McCallum-George

Dionne McCallum-George

Senior Executive Assistant on behalf of

Corpus Christi Liquefaction, LLC,

Corpus Christi Liquefaction Stage IV, LLC and

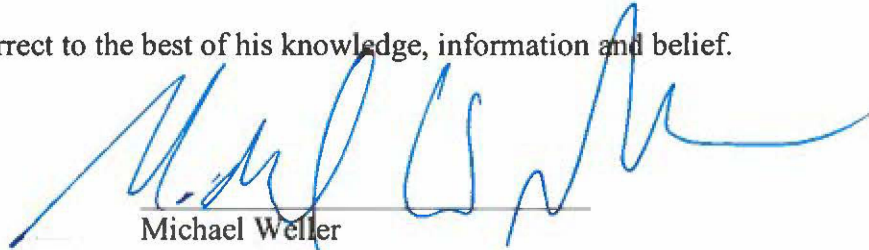
Cheniere Marketing, LLC

VERIFICATION

State of Texas)

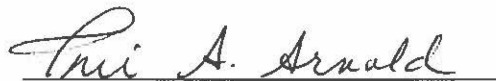
County of Harris)

BEFORE ME, the undersigned authority, on this day personally appeared Michael Weller, who, having been by me first duly sworn, on oath says that he is Vice President, Environmental and Regulatory Projects, and Managing Counsel, for Cheniere Energy, Inc. and is duly authorized to make this Verification; that he has read the foregoing instrument and that the facts therein stated are true and correct to the best of his knowledge, information and belief.



Michael Weller
Vice President, Environmental and Regulatory Projects
Managing Counsel

SWORN TO AND SUBSCRIBED before me on the 29th day of June, 2026.



Name: Toni A. Arnold

Title: Notary Public

My Commission expires: December 3, 2029

