

Kinder Morgan expects to produce first LNG 'imminently' at Elba Island

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Theme Energy

Kinder Morgan Inc. expects the Elba Island LNG export project to produce its first LNG "in the coming weeks" as the midstream company edges closer to bringing the first of small production units at the facility into service, a Kinder Morgan official said at a regional industry conference.

"We are deeply in commissioning right now ... and we are hopeful that it will come on in April," Ryan Leahy, a manager of business development at Kinder Morgan, said in an April 16 interview on the sidelines of the LDC Gas Forum Southeast in Atlanta. He told attendees that the first unit will go in service "imminently."

Elba Island, near Savannah, Ga., would be capable of producing about 2.5 million tonnes per annum of LNG once all 10 of its modular trains are online, making it the smallest LNG project already under construction or in operation in the U.S.

The project has faced a series of delays, with commissioning activities most recently stretching beyond Kinder Morgan's anticipated in-service date and into the second quarter.

Leahy said it could take more than a month for the first 0.25-mtpa train to produce enough LNG for an initial cargo, but he could not speak to the exact timing. [Royal Dutch Shell PLC](#) has a 20-year contract to off-take 100% of volumes at Elba Island.

The project [reached](#) a significant milestone March 6 when FERC granted the Elba Island developers' request to introduce feedgas and other fuel as it tests the facility. The approval allowed the developers to bring feedgas into the main pipe rack that will eventually feed all of the 10 production units.

After the first train, Kinder Morgan has said the remaining nine units would be expected to come online one after another, with a new one entering service roughly every month. Under that timeline, it could be early 2020 before all of the trains are online.

"We are ready to get there," Leahy said of the first unit. "We are certainly excited."

