



File Code: 6270
Date: May 4, 2016

Kris Pastoriza
krispastoriza@gmail.com

Dear Ms. Pastoriza:

This is in response to your April 18, 2016 request for Forest Service records, which has been processed under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Specifically, you requested: The Northern Pass special use permit application for surveys and investigations related to their revised proposal.

The White Mountain National Forest located two documents (12 pages) within the scope of your request. These records are enclosed in their entirety.

The Forest Service charges \$20 per hour for search time and 20 cents per copied page to respond to FOIA requests. The first two hours of search time and first 100 pages are provided free to non-commercial requesters. Fees are not collected for requests that are less than the minimum charge for billing, which is \$25. Because the cost for responding to your request is less than the minimum amount for billing, there is no charge.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact Tiffany Benna, Public Services Team Leader and Freedom of Information Coordinator at tbenna@fs.fed.us or (603) 536-6241.

Sincerely,

 THOMAS G. WAGNER
Forest Supervisor

cc: Tiffany Benna, Stacy Lemieux





Northern Pass Transmission LLC
P.O. Box 330
780 North Commercial Street
Manchester, NH 03105-0330

April 7, 2016

Tom Wagner 
Forest Supervisor
White Mountain National Forest
71 White Mountain Drive
Campton, NH 03223

Re: Request for a Special Use Permit for Environmental Survey and Testing in the White Mountain National Forest Relating to the Northern Pass Transmission Project

Dear Mr. Wagner,

Northern Pass Transmission LLC (Northern Pass) respectfully requests a Special Use Permit (SUP) to allow Northern Pass’ contractors Normandeau Associates, Cornerstone Engineering, and Burns & McDonnell (and their subcontractors), to conduct environmental survey and testing activities along New Hampshire Route 112 and 116 within White Mountain National Forest (WMNF). Standard Form 299, Application for Transportation and Utility Systems and Facilities on Federal Lands (SF-299), is attached. Specifically, Northern Pass requests permission to conduct surveys within 250 feet of either side of N.H. Route 112 and 116. The proposed activities include:

1. Performing geotechnical borings;
2. Performing ground surveys;
3. Hand excavating shallow test pits for archeological survey;
4. Hand augering small holes in the ground to describe soil; and
5. Hiking, taking field notes, measurements, and photos.

The Proposed Activities, described in greater detail in the attachment to SF-299, will allow Northern Pass to gather needed environmental and cultural resources information to support both the final design of the underground route of the Northern Pass Project and the ongoing Section 106 process under the National Historical Preservation Act.

To the extent that the Forest Service considers Northern Pass’ requests to conduct the Proposed Activities as subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA),¹ the Proposed Activities fall within a Forest Service categorical exclusion (CE). Importantly, the Proposed Activities that Northern Pass proposes have no significant individual or cumulative environmental impacts—and in fact, have long-term environmental benefits. In addition, there are no extraordinary circumstances that would preclude use of a CE.

The Proposed Activities fall within the Forest Service’s CE for “[a]pproval, modification, or continuation of minor, short-term (1 year or less) special uses of [National Forest System] lands.” 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(d)(8). None of the Proposed Activities will take place for longer than a year, and in fact will be complete by December

¹ NEPA requires that agencies review major federal actions to ensure the environmental consequences of an action are adequately considered. See 42 U.S.C. § 4332. Under NEPA, a categorical exclusion (“CE”) is a “category of actions which do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment and which have been found to have no such effect in procedures adopted by a Federal agency in implementation of these regulations.” 40 C.F.R. § 1508.4. Under these CEs, the agency may categorically exclude a proposed action from further NEPA review if it falls under an identified category, and if there are no extraordinary circumstances. 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(a).

31, 2016. The Forest Service has used this CE to approve various types of activities, including for a year-long snow study² and guided helicopter skiing.³

Second, the Proposed Activities fall within the Forest Service's CE for "approval, modification, or continuation of minor special uses of NFS lands that require less than five contiguous acres of land." 36 C.F.R. §220.6(e)(3). The Proposed Activities will altogether use less than five acres total of WMNF lands.

Additionally, no "extraordinary circumstances" exist that would preclude use of a CE and require a more extensive form of NEPA analysis. *See* 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(a). To determine whether such circumstances exist, the Forest Service considers "resource conditions," including: federally-listed threatened or endangered species or designated critical habitat, species proposed for Federal listing or proposed critical habitat, or Forest Service sensitive species; flood plains, wetlands, or municipal watersheds; congressionally-designated areas, such as wilderness, wilderness study areas, or national recreation areas; inventoried roadless area or potential wilderness area; research natural areas; American Indians and Alaska Native religious or cultural sites; and archaeological sites, or historic properties or areas. *Id.* § 220.6(b)(1). However, the "mere presence of one or more of these resource conditions does not preclude the use of a categorical exclusion." 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(b)(2). There must also be a "cause-effect relationship" between the proposed activity and the potential impact on the resource conditions. Additionally, the degree of the potential impact must be significant.⁴

Given the limited scope and minimal impact of Northern Pass' Proposed Activities, there is no "cause-effect relationship" between the Northern Pass' Proposed Activities and any potential impacts on resource conditions, including wetlands and the Appalachian Trail National Scenic Trail. Without such a relationship, there are no extraordinary circumstances and a CE remains appropriate. Furthermore, the Proposed Activities will allow Northern Pass and the Forest Service to better evaluate projects that will invaluablely benefit both the Forest Service and the general public.

If you have questions or need more detailed information regarding our Proposed Activities, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely yours,



Jerry Fortier

Project Director, Northern Pass Transmission LLC

cc: Marvin Bellis, Senior Counsel, Northern Pass Transmission LLC
Jennifer Biever, Hogan Lovells US LLP

Attachments: SF-299 and attachments

² Forest Service, Decision Memo for the Snow Study Project (Jan. 27, 2009), available at http://www.fs.fed.us/outernet/r2/gmug/policy/ski/telski/teli_decision_memo_08.pdf ("Snow Study Decision").

³ Forest Service, Decision Memo for Commercially Guided Helicopter Skiing (Jan. 2004), available at http://www.fs.fed.us/outernet/r10/chugach/pdf/heli-deis/cpg_h-skiing_1_21.pdf.

⁴ *See* 36 C.F.R. § 220.6(b)(2); *Alaska Ctr. for the Env't v. U.S. Forest Serv.*, 189 F.3d 851, 858 (9th Cir. 1999). In *Utah Environmental Congress*, the Forest Service determined that, with regard to species and habitat, a timber project "may impact individuals, individual territories, and cause displacement within the project area," but would not "contribute to a trend towards federal listing or a loss of population viability since adequate woodpecker habitat would be preserved throughout the forest . . ." *Utah Env'l Congress v. Bosworth*, 443 F.3d 732, 743 (10th Cir. 2006). Based on this analysis, the Forest Service determined that the project did not trigger a finding of extraordinary circumstances, and this decision was upheld by the Tenth Circuit. *Id.* at 744.

APPLICATION FOR TRANSPORTATION AND
UTILITY SYSTEMS AND FACILITIES
ON FEDERAL LANDS

FORM APPROVED
OMB NO. 0596-0082

FOR AGENCY USE ONLY

NOTE: Before completing and filing the application, the applicant should completely review this package and schedule a preapplication meeting with representatives of the agency responsible for processing the application. Each agency may have specific and unique requirements to be met in preparing and processing the application. Many times, with the help of the agency representative, the application can be completed at the preapplication meeting.

Application Number

Date Filed

1. Name and address of applicant (*include zip code*)
Northern Pass, LLC.
780 North Commercial street
Manchester, NH 03101

2. Name, title, and address of authorized agent if different from item 1 (*include zip code*)

3. Telephone (area code)
(603) 634-2534

Applicant
Jerry Fortier
Authorized Agent

4. As applicant are you? (*check one*)

- a. Individual
- b. Corporation*
- c. Partnership/Association*
- d. State Government/State Agency
- e. Local Government
- f. Federal Agency

5. Specify what application is for: (*check one*)

- a. New authorization
- b. Renewing existing authorization No.
- c. Amend existing authorization No.
- d. Assign existing authorization No.
- e. Existing use for which no authorization has been received *
- f. Other*

* If checked, complete supplemental page

* If checked, provide details under item 7

6. If an individual, or partnership are you a citizen(s) of the United States? Yes No

7. Project description (describe in detail): (a) Type of system or facility, (*e.g., canal, pipeline, road*); (b) related structures and facilities; (c) physical specifications (*Length, width, grading, etc.*); (d) term of years needed; (e) time of year of use or operation; (f) Volume or amount of product to be transported; (g) duration and timing of construction; and (h) temporary work areas needed for construction (*Attach additional sheets, if additional space is needed.*) See Attached Project Description

8. Attach a map covering area and show location of project proposal

9. State or Local government approval: Attached Applied for Not Required

10. Nonreturnable application fee: Attached Not required Will follow when invoiced

11. Does project cross international boundary or affect international waterways? Yes No (*if "yes," indicate on map*)

12. Give statement of your technical and financial capability to construct, operate, maintain, and terminate system for which authorization is being requested. See attached statement of financial and technical capability.

13a. Describe other reasonable alternative routes and modes considered.
N/A

b. Why were these alternatives not selected?
N/A

c. Give explanation as to why it is necessary to cross Federal Lands.
Proposed work follows an existing highway ROW on Federal Lands

14. List authorizations and pending applications filed for similar projects which may provide information to the authorizing agency. (Specify number, date, code, or name) N/A

15. Provide statement of need for project, including the economic feasibility and items such as: (a) cost of proposal (construction, operation, and maintenance); (b) estimated cost of next best alternative; and (c) expected public benefits.
See attached statement of need.

16. Describe probable effects on the population in the area, including the social and economic aspects, and the rural lifestyles. No effects anticipated, except for minor traffic control for short periods of time.

17. Describe likely environmental effects that the proposed project will have on: (a) air quality; (b) visual impact; (c) surface and ground water quality and quantity; (d) the control or structural change on any stream or other body of water; (e) existing noise levels; and (f) the surface of the land, including vegetation, permafrost, soil, and soil stability. None

18. Describe the probable effects that the proposed project will have on (a) populations of fish, plantlife, wildlife, and marine life, including threatened and endangered species; and (b) marine mammals, including hunting, capturing, collecting, or killing these animals. None

19. State whether any hazardous material, as defined in this paragraph, will be used, produced, transported or stored on or within the right-of-way or any of the right-of-way facilities, or used in the construction, operation, maintenance or termination of the right-of-way or any of its facilities. "Hazardous material" means any substance, pollutant or contaminant that is listed as hazardous under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act of 1980, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 9601 et seq., and its regulations. The definition of hazardous substances under CERCLA includes any "hazardous waste" as defined in the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (RCRA), as amended, 42 U.S.C. 6901 et seq., and its regulations. The term hazardous materials also includes any nuclear or byproduct material as defined by the Atomic Energy Act of 1954, as amended, 42 U.S.C. 2011 et seq. The term does not include petroleum, including crude oil or any fraction thereof that is not otherwise specifically listed or designated as a hazardous substance under CERCLA Section 101(14), 42 U.S.C. 9601(14), nor does the term include natural gas.

None

20. Name all the Department(s)/Agency(ies) where this application is being filed.

US Forst Service

I HEREBY CERTIFY, That I am of legal age and authorized to do business in the State and that I have personally examined the information contained in the application and believe that the information submitted is correct to the best of my knowledge.

Signature of Applicant



Date

4/7/2010

Title 18, U.S.C. Section 1001, makes it a crime for any person knowingly and willfully to make to any department or agency of the United States any false, fictitious, or fraudulent statements or representations as to any matter within its jurisdiction.

GENERAL INFORMATION
ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS

This application will be used when applying for a right-of-way, permit, license, lease, or certificate for the use of Federal lands which lie within conservation system units and National Recreation or Conservation Areas as defined in the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act. Conservation system units include the National Park System, National Wildlife Refuge System, National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, National Trails System, National Wilderness Preservation System, and National Forest Monuments.

Transportation and utility systems and facility uses for which the application may be used are:

1. Canals, ditches, flumes, laterals, pipes, pipelines, tunnels, and other systems for the transportation of water.
2. Pipelines and other systems for the transportation of liquids other than water, including oil, natural gas, synthetic liquid and gaseous fuels, and any refined product produced therefrom.
3. Pipelines, slurry and emulsion systems, and conveyor belts for transportation of solid materials.
4. Systems for the transmission and distribution of electric energy.
5. Systems for transmission or reception of radio, television, telephone, telegraph, and other electronic signals, and other means of communications.
6. Improved right-of-way for snow machines, air cushion vehicles, and all-terrain vehicles.
7. Roads, highways, railroads, tunnels, tramways, airports, landing strips, docks, and other systems of general transportation.

This application must be filed simultaneously with each Federal department or agency requiring authorization to establish and operate your proposal.

In Alaska, the following agencies will help the applicant file an application and identify the other agencies the applicant should contact and possibly file with:

Department of Agriculture
Regional Forester, Forest Service (USFS)
Federal Office Building,
P.O. Box 21628
Juneau, Alaska 99802-1628
Telephone: (907) 586-7847 (or a local Forest Service Office)

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
Juneau Area Office
Federal Building Annex
9109 Mendenhall Mall Road, Suite 5
Juneau, Alaska 99802
Telephone: (907) 586-7177

Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
222 West 7th Avenue
P.O. Box 13
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7599
Telephone: (907) 271-5477 (or a local BLM Office)

| | |
|---|--|
| U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (FWS) Office of the Regional Director 1011 East Tudor Road Anchorage, Alaska 99503 Telephone: (907) 786-3440 | National Park Service (NPA) Alaska Regional Office, 2225 Gambell St., Rm. 107 Anchorage, Alaska 99502-2892 Telephone: (907) 786-3440 |
|---|--|

Note - Filings with any Interior agency may be filed with any office noted above or with the Office of the Secretary of the Interior, Regional Environmental Office, P.O. Box 120, 1675 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska 99513.

Department of Transportation
Federal Aviation Administration
Alaska Region AAL-4, 222 West 7th Ave., Box 14
Anchorage, Alaska 99513-7587
Telephone: (907) 271-5285

NOTE - The Department of Transportation has established the above central filing point for agencies within that Department. Affected agencies are: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Coast Guard (USCG), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Railroad Administration (FRA).

OTHER THAN ALASKA NATIONAL INTEREST LANDS

Use of this form is not limited to National Interest Conservation Lands of Alaska.

Individual department/agencies may authorize the use of this form by applicants for transportation and utility systems and facilities on other Federal lands outside those areas described above.

For proposals located outside of Alaska, applications will be filed at the local agency office or at a location specified by the responsible Federal agency.

SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

(Items not listed are self-explanatory)

- 7 Attach preliminary site and facility construction plans. The responsible agency will provide instructions whenever specific plans are required.
- 8 Generally, the map must show the section(s), township(s), and range(s) within which the project is to be located. Show the proposed location of the project on the map as accurately as possible. Some agencies require detailed survey maps. The responsible agency will provide additional instructions.
- 9, 10, and 12 The responsible agency will provide additional instructions.
- 13 Providing information on alternate routes and modes in as much detail as possible, discussing why certain routes or modes were rejected and why it is necessary to cross Federal lands will assist the agency(ies) in processing your application and reaching a final decision. Include only reasonable alternate routes and modes as related to current technology and economics.
- 14 The responsible agency will provide instructions.
- 15 Generally, a simple statement of the purpose of the proposal will be sufficient. However, major proposals located in critical or sensitive areas may require a full analysis with additional specific information. The responsible agency will provide additional instructions.
- 16 through 19 Providing this information in as much detail as possible will assist the Federal agency(ies) in processing the application and reaching a decision. When completing these items, you should use a sound judgment in furnishing relevant information. For example, if the project is not near a stream or other body of water, do not address this subject. The responsible agency will provide additional instructions.

Application must be signed by the applicant or applicant's authorized representative.

EFFECT OF NOT PROVIDING INFORMATION: Disclosure of the information is voluntary. If all the information is not provided, the application may be rejected.

DATA COLLECTION STATEMENT

The Federal agencies collect this information from applicants requesting right-of-way, permit, license, lease, or certification for the use of Federal lands. The Federal agencies use this information to evaluate the applicant's proposal. The public is obligated to submit this form if they wish to obtain permission to use Federal lands.

SUPPLEMENTAL

| NOTE: The responsible agency(ies) will provide instructions | CHECK APPROPRIATE BLOCK | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| I - PRIVATE CORPORATIONS | ATTACHED | FILED* |
| a. Articles of Incorporation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Corporation Bylaws | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. A certification from the State showing the corporation is in good standing and is entitled to operate within the State | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Copy of resolution authorizing filing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. The name and address of each shareholder owning 3 percent or more of the shares, together with the number and percentage of any class of voting shares of the entity which such shareholder is authorized to vote and the name and address of each affiliate of the entity together with, in the case of an affiliate controlled by the entity, the number of shares and the percentage of any class of voting stock of that affiliate owned, directly or indirectly, by that entity, and in the case of an affiliate which controls that entity, the number of shares and the percentage of any class of voting stock of that entity owned, directly or indirectly, by the affiliate. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. If application is for an oil or gas pipeline, describe any related right-of-way or temporary use permit applications, and identify previous applications. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. If application is for an oil and gas pipeline, identify all Federal lands by agency impacted by proposal. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| II - PUBLIC CORPORATIONS | | |
| a. Copy of law forming corporation | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Proof of organization | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Copy of Bylaws | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Copy of resolution authorizing filing | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. If application is for an oil or gas pipeline, provide information required by item "I-f" and "I-g" above. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| III - PARTNERSHIP OR OTHER UNINCORPORATED ENTITY | | |
| a. Articles of association, if any | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. If one partner is authorized to sign, resolution authorizing action is | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Name and address of each participant, partner, association, or other | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. If application is for an oil or gas pipeline, provide information required by item "I-f" and "I-g" above. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

* If the required information is already filed with the agency processing this application and is current, check block entitled "Filed." Provide the file identification information (e.g., number, date, code, name). If not on file or current, attach the requested information.

NOTICES

Note: This applies to the Department of Agriculture/Forest Service (FS)

This information is needed by the Forest Service to evaluate the requests to use National Forest System lands and manage those lands to protect natural resources, administer the use, and ensure public health and safety. This information is required to obtain or retain a benefit. The authority for that requirement is provided by the Organic Act of 1897 and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which authorize the secretary of Agriculture to promulgate rules and regulations for authorizing and managing National Forest System lands. These statutes, along with the Term Permit Act, National Forest Ski Area Permit Act, Granger-Thye Act, Mineral Leasing Act, Alaska Term Permit Act, Act of September 3, 1954, Wilderness Act, National Forest Roads and Trails Act, Act of November 16, 1973, Archeological Resources Protection Act, and Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act, authorize the Secretary of Agriculture to issue authorizations or the use and occupancy of National Forest System lands. The Secretary of Agriculture's regulations at 36 CFR Part 251, Subpart B, establish procedures for issuing those authorizations.

BURDEN AND NONDISCRIMINATION STATEMENTS

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0596-0082. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 8 hours per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination in all its programs and activities on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, and where applicable, sex, marital status, familial status, parental status, religion, sexual orientation, genetic information, political beliefs, reprisal, or because all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.) Persons with disabilities who require alternative means for communication of program information (Braille, large print, audiotape, etc.) should contact USDA's TARGET Center at 202-720-2600 (voice and TDD).

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington, DC 20250-9410 or call toll free (866) 632-9992 (voice). TDD users can contact USDA through local relay or the Federal relay at (800) 877-8339 (TDD) or (866) 377-8642 (relay voice). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

The Privacy Act of 1974 (5 U.S.C. 552a) and the Freedom of Information Act (5 U.S.C. 552) govern the confidentiality to be provided for information received by the Forest Service.

Attachment to SF-299 for Northern Pass, LCC

Special Use Permit Application

Transportation and Utility Systems and Facilities on Federal Lands

April 7, 2016

Response to Item 7 – Project Description:

A Special Use Permit (SUP) is requested for work on portions of Routes 112 and 116 within the WMNF (Alternative 7 in the Draft EIS for Northern Pass). The location of the work area is attached (Figure 1). The work will be conducted by Northern Pass or its contractors, including Normandeau Associates, Inc, Burns & McDonnell, and Cornerstone Energy Services. All proposed activities would take place within 250 feet of the existing roads, and primarily within the road, shoulder, or immediately adjacent roadside in the Towns of Easton and Woodstock.

1. Performing Geotechnical Borings

The project proposes to perform geotechnical analysis of the substrata along the NH DOT ROW on Routes 116 and routes 112 in the towns of Easton and Woodstock, NH. This analysis will be done by drilling bore holes approximately every 1000' along the route and at potential HDD locations (approximately 28 borings). Each boring location should take approximately ½ to 2 days depending on the depth required to complete the analysis. All of the borings will be performed within the established NH DOT ROW. Traffic maintenance and control will consist of a traffic management plan, traffic flagger or police detail as needed, and signage. Layout of the proposed boring locations will be done in the field using a Global Positioning System (GPS). Utility clearance (Dig Safe®) will be provided by our subsurface exploration contractor, including townships where local notification (apart from Dig Safe®) is required.

2. Performing Standard Class C surveys

The project proposes to perform a Class C survey along the NH DOT ROW on Routes 116 and Route 112 in the towns of Easton and Woodstock, NH. The project proposes to have three to four 2-man crews in the field using GPS location devices. Typical items of interest are shallow water crossings, deep water crossings, bridge crossings, inverts, utilities where present, edge of pavement, edge of shoulder, guardrails, trees and other locally situated items. It is expected that these activities will last approximately 1 to 2 weeks. All of the survey will be performed within the established NH DOT ROW. Traffic maintenance and control will consist of a traffic flagger or police detail as needed, and signage.

3. Hand Excavating Shallow Archeological Test Pits

The Phase I-B archeological field effort includes shovel test sampling along transects and grids at locations near the toe of the shoulder previously identified as potentially archeologically sensitive. Test pits are hand excavated at 8 m intervals, adjusting for

variation in terrain, standing water, prior disturbance, intrusions or such features as large trees, stones or ledge. In locations of Paleo-Indian resource sensitivity, a 4 m interval will be utilized, per NH DHR requirements. Tests will measure 50 cm square and will be excavated to refusal; likely depths range from 30 cm to 100 cm below surface, depending on roots, rocks, soil type and drainage. Soils will be screened through one-quarter inch mesh onto tarps and backfilled upon completion. Artifacts will be cleaned, identified, described, cataloged, photographed and prepared for curation, and notes, photos, sketches and GPS coordinates recorded. Work will take place in summer of 2016, and no traffic control will be necessary.

4. **Hand Augering Small Holes for Soil Analysis**

The purpose of this activity is to supplement the wetlands delineation survey if necessary and to make biological and other purely visual observations about this area. The auger holes will be a few inches in diameter and descend about 18 to 30 inches (or to rock, whichever is shallower) from the ground surface. This is accomplished using a hand-held tool that is slowly screwed into the soil surface, and is virtually silent. The number of holes will depend on the quantity of wetlands and the complexity of the delineation. There are no less intrusive alternative methods for gaining this information.

NPT will avoid any auguring within 100 feet of the Appalachian Trail crossing of N.H. Rt. 112. A person on the hiking on the Appalachian Trail would not be affected by these activities. No wetland boundary flagging will be left on WMNF land.

5. **Hiking, Taking Field Notes, Measurements, and Photographs**

The work area may be accessed on foot for the purpose of taking non-invasive measurements, notes and photographs. The purpose of this activity is to visually identify engineering/design issues and to make biological, landscape, and other purely visual observations about this area.

There are no alternative methods to those stated above for gaining this information. These activities are expected to have no or minimal impacts on WMNF lands. These activities would take place within 250 feet of N.H. Route 112 and 116, within the towns of Easton and Woodstock (See Attached Figure 1).

The Proposed Activities are consistent with laws, regulations, orders, and policies of the National Forest System lands, as well as other federal laws, and all local and state laws. They are also consistent with the 2005 WMNF Land and Resource Management Plan. All field work will be closely coordinated with appropriate USFS staff.

Response to Item 9 – State or Local Government Approval

An application for a permit to conduct geotechnical borings will be submitted to the New Hampshire Department of transportation. An application for a Shoreland Permit by Notification will be submitted

to the NH Department of Environmental Services for one geotechnical boring near Beaver Pond in Woodstock, NH.

Response to Item 12 – Statement of Technical and Financial Capability:

Northern Pass Transmission LLC is a subsidiary of Eversource Energy. Eversource Energy and its subsidiaries have extensive experience in planning, designing, constructing and operating electric transmission infrastructure projects. Eversource is the recipient of an Edison Award for outstanding development and construction of four critical projects. Eversource has been working on a significant number of other transmission projects including the Greater Springfield Reliability Project, the Interstate Reliability Project, and the Central Connecticut Reliability Project, which are three of the four major projects that are part of the \$1.2 billion New England East-West Solution. Eversource enjoys an investment grade rating with a stable outlook from each of the three major credit rating agencies. As of December 31, 2014, Eversource held transmission assets in excess of \$7.6 billion and has plans to invest an additional \$3.9 billion in new transmission infrastructure over the next four years. NPT will recover the costs of constructing the Project from Hydro Renewable Energy Inc. (“HRE”), an indirect, wholly-owned U.S. subsidiary of Hydro-Québec, under a Transmission Service Agreement (“TSA”) approved by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (“FERC”). The HVDC facilities located on the Canadian side of the border will be owned and operated by Hydro-Québec TransÉnergie, a division of Hydro-Québec. The TSA allocates transmission capacity over the Project to HRE on the U.S. side of the border in exchange for transmission service payments that cover the costs of the investment made by NPT in the Project.

Response to Item 15 – Statement of Need:

The proposed work is necessary for completing the final design of the underground portions of the Northern Pass Project along Routes 112 and 116 in the WMNF. There are no alternative methods for gaining this information. These activities are expected to have no or minimal impacts on WMNF lands. These activities would take place within 250 feet of N.H. Route 112 and 116, within the towns of Easton and Woodstock. See Attached Figure 1.

The Proposed Activities are consistent with laws, regulations, orders, and policies of the National Forest System lands, as well as other federal laws, and all local and state laws. They are also consistent with the 2005 WMNF Land and Resource Management Plan. All field work will be closely coordinated with appropriate USFS staff.

Figure 1. WMNF Project Area - Route 112 & 116

