

Nov. 20, 2015

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Northumberland Conservation Committee

Edwin Mellett, Chairman

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The Northumberland Conservation Committee has reviewed the Northern Pass Transmission Project and offer the following observations.

The transmission line will enter the town at the Stark town line and then go west and south crossing Lost Nation Road and Page Hill Road exiting the town at the Lancaster town line following an existing ROW. Most of this existing ROW is in wetlands. They have been delineated by NP only to the extent that they are within the ROW. These wetland extend beyond their ROW and the impact of this project will also extend beyond the ROW. They have not detailed how they will mitigate these impacts within the town so we cannot comment on this aspect of the project and submit that the application is incomplete without this information. We also believe that NP should address the impact of the project on wetlands beyond the ROW.

In 2006 the wetlands in the town were mapped by Watershed To Wildlife, INC. One of the goals of this project was to provide to the town the background for the adoption of local ordinances and designation of Prime Wetlands. The town has not completed that part of this project at this time. There were six wetland complexes that were identified that would meet the qualifications for Prime Wetlands. Three of the six would be impacted by the NP project. The NP project enters the town at the Stark line in the Gun Club Wetland Complex (#4) . This wetland is 296 acres in size within the town and also extends into the town of Stark. The ROW then crosses The Lost Nation Wetland Complex(#5) that is 176 acres in size. The third wetland that NP project crosses is the Page Hill Complex(#1). This wetland is the largest in the town at 1036 acres. It connects to an 1800 acre wetland in Lancaster that the NP project also crosses. This wetland could be one the largest upland wetlands in NH at 2836 acres. This is an extremely diverse wetland and should be considered an important natural resource for the town. In summary the NP project is crossing three wetlands that total over 1500 acres in the Town of Northumberland.

The existing transmission line was built a long time ago before we understood the importance of wetland to the ecology of the region. We would doubt if a transmission line could get permitted from scratch today that impacted that much wetland.

Secondly the impact of this project on the aesthetics of our town is unacceptable. It will cross both Lost Nation Rd. and Page Hill Rd. This town and the North Country has changed and our survival now depends on tourism. The town has endorsed the Ride the Wilds project and have opened both Page Hill and Lost Nation Roads to ATV's. Lost Nation Rd. is one of the most scenic in the state. If this project is allowed to proceed it is noted that some of the tallest towers ( 130 feet) are planned for the crossing of Lost Nation Rd.

For these reasons we do not support this project as proposed and if it get built should be buried in State Owned ROW,s. We support the SPNHF position that the entire project be buried.

Very Truly Yours,

Ed Mellett, Chairman

Northumberland Conservation Committee

CC: Northumberland Selectmen

Ms. Jane Difley, President SPNHF

Ms. Tracie Sales, NHDES Interim River Management Coordinator

Mr. Nick Coates, NHAOCC

NCC

Town of Lancaster Selectmen