

## THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

### SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Joint application of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC and Public Service Company of NH d/b/a EverSource Energy for a certificate of Site and Facility for the construction of a New High Voltage Transmission Line in New Hampshire

Docket No. 2015-06

#### **PEMIGEWASSET RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S (PRLAC) PETITION TO INTERVENE**

The New Hampshire Rivers Management and Protection Program (RMPP) was established in 1988 with the passage of RSA 483 to protect certain rivers, called "Designated Rivers", for their outstanding natural and cultural resources. The program is administered by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES). The Pemigewasset was designated by the NH Legislature in 1991. Upon designation, a volunteer Local River Management Advisory Committee (LAC) must be formed, made up of citizens of river corridor towns. The LAC then develops and implements a River Management Plan so that the outstanding qualities of the river may be protected for future generations. Other duties outlined in 483:8-a:

- LAC members are nominated by towns and represent a cross-section of interests
- To advise the commissioner, the advisory committee, the municipalities through which the designated river or segment flows, and municipalities within the tributary drainage areas, on matters pertaining to the management of the river or segment and tributary drainage areas
- **To consider and comment on any federal, state, or local governmental plans to approve, license, fund or construct facilities that would alter the resource values and characteristics for which the river or segment is designated**
- Develop and adopt local river corridor management plans under RSA 483:10. Local planning boards may adopt such plans as an adjunct to the local master plan. No such plan shall have any regulatory effect unless implemented through properly adopted ordinances.

The protected area on a Designated River is  $\frac{1}{4}$  mile from the normal high water mark. Any significant disturbance in that area requires a permit. PRLAC is a part of that permit review process – providing the NH DES with on-site review input. PRLAC is available to assist all Pemigewasset Corridor towns from Franconia to Franklin with river related issues with the exception of Lincoln and Woodstock (never included in RMPP). We are most active in and receive financial support from the 8 towns from Thornton to Hill. We have membership representatives from all those communities but one. Our focus is on the implications of proposed development activity on water quality, water quantity, and aesthetic impact on the Pemi - considered one of the region's most valuable tourist resources. The Pemigewasset is a Class B river – acceptable for fishing, swimming, and many other recreation activities. It is used for drinking with adequate treatment.

PRLAC just completed its 14<sup>th</sup> year of Pemigewasset/tributary water quality testing with all data submitted to NH DES. Stormwater runoff and increases in impervious surfaces were (and continue to be) our number one concern identified in the 2013 update to the Pemigewasset River Corridor Management Plan. Over 80% of the "impaired water" listed in DES's biannual report is due to or related to stormwater runoff occurring in a variety of situations. As boundaries of existing rights-of-way are widened and altered (i.e. tree cutting) to accommodate the expansion of towers and high voltage power lines, the river and supporting wetlands will be negatively affected. Temporary roads, construction, possible use of herbicides add concerns.

The Pemigewasset River Local Advisory Committee respectfully requests that the Site Evaluation Committee grant our petition to intervene.

Respectfully submitted,

February 3, 2016

PEMIGEWASSET RIVER LOCAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

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