

**From:** darlene.kingrealtynh@roadrunner.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 24, 2011 4:56 PM  
**To:** Undisclosed-Recipient;  
**Subject:** Fw: update and Call to action on the Northern Pass

----- Original Message -----

**From:** [darlene.kingrealtynh@roadrunner.com](mailto:darlene.kingrealtynh@roadrunner.com)  
**Sent:** Thursday, February 24, 2011 4:01 PM  
**Subject:** update and Call to action on the Northern Pass

Hi Everyone ,

Below you will find a little info on taxes actually received by towns that have high tension in the State of NH

Addition to the EIS meeting for Plymouth

Our US Senators have both requested DOE review the appointment of Normandeau to fo the environmental impact study because of conflict of interest question

and two House Bill hearings important on this front to be heard on 3/9.

Call to action on the part of second home owners, vacationers and those that have moved here as a result of vacationing here

From Tom Burke of Ashland,

Tom said he has been calling all the towns that currently have these large tower sized Utility towers through them. The reason for his call is to find out exactly how much money these towns actually do get from these towers . NP has been telling us the amount that they are estimating the towers will be assessed at not what that translates into dollars to the town . Here are a few key points of what Tom uncovered :1) and I think this has already been said before , The actual taxes paid to the town are only the portion of the taxes for the town. It does not include the school portion of the taxes you and I pay on our house or business. As you also know the school portion of our taxes is the large number . This is what is called "taxes in Lieu". 2) Easch year the utilities come back to the town to apply for an abatement on the assessment and if denied threaten lawsuit. Most of the towns say that they can not afford to fight them so they cave and abate them. 3) The towns have to send an assessor to all property assessed on a regular basis. This includes uilities . A special utilities appraiser has to be hired for this . Most of the towns up north use a man named Skip Sansousi(not sure how this is spelled) from Lancaster. Tom Burke has his phone number if anyone wants it (968-3373). Lastly, th actual taxes collected by these towns varies between \$25-30,000.00 a mile. Not many homes need to depreciate to move that dwarf that .

One question that I have for anyone that might be able to answer it is : PSNH has the rights of way up through to 40 miles from the Canadian. The current high tension poles take AC power north on these ROWs. Once the new 135 foot towers come in going south with DC current, Hydro Quebec will have the sole transmission rights to the towers that head south(which means that even PSNH can not send power south on these lines). How are NH's other 65 facilities getting their power to the transmission grid?

Plymouth will have a scoping hearing as well thanks to Senator Shaheen. She has also requested review of th appointment of Normandeau to do the EIS . Kelley Ayotte followed suit and also asked for the same . No response yet from the DOE . Plymouths meeting may be transfered to Elem School instead of Senior center due to size restrictions .

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

February 22, 2011

**CONTACT:**

Press Office, (202) 224-5553

## **SHAHEEN WINS EXTRA HEARING ON NORTHERN PASS; PRESSES ADMINISTRATION ON CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

(Washington, D.C.) – In response to a request from U.S. Senator Jeanne Shaheen on behalf of local residents, the Obama Administration will announce this week an additional public meeting regarding the proposed Northern Pass high voltage transmission line. Shaheen has also demanded a response from U.S. Energy Secretary Steven Chu about a potential conflict of interest in the environmental approval process.

The proposed line would begin in New Hampshire at the U.S. - Canada border and terminate at a substation in Deerfield, New Hampshire. The Department of Energy is currently conducting an environmental review of the project.

Shaheen has been in frequent contact with the Department of Energy. Earlier this week, her office requested that the Department of Energy hold an additional “scoping” meeting in Plymouth. Today, the Department responded by scheduling a meeting on March 18, from 6 - 9 p.m. at the Plymouth Regional Senior Center, 8 Depot Street, in Plymouth.

“The citizens of our state have many unanswered questions and many concerns about this project, and their voices should be heard,” Shaheen said. “An exhaustive and fair environmental review process is mandated by law, and I intend to see that process is followed.”

To read more about the environmental assessment scoping process, and for information on additional scoping meetings, go to:

[http://northernpasseis.us/Permitting\\_Process/scoping\\_process.asp](http://northernpasseis.us/Permitting_Process/scoping_process.asp)

In a separate letter to Chu, Shaheen expressed deep concerns over the Department of Energy’s choice to conduct what is required to be an objective environmental assessment. The Department’s choice, Normandean Associates, is also contracted by the company applying to build the new line, Northern Pass LLC, for expert testimony and other professional services related to the project.

Shaheen, a member of the Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee, writes that even the perception of a conflict of interest is problematic given the significance of this Northern Pass project.

Shaheen's full letter is below and attached:

February 22, 2011

The Honorable Steven Chu

Secretary

U.S. Department of Energy

Forrestal Building

1000 Independence Avenue, SW

Washington, DC 20585

**Re: Northern Pass Transmission Project Environmental Impact Statement (DOE/EIS-0463)**

Dear Secretary Chu,

I write regarding the selection of Normandeau Associates to perform environmental assessment work required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for the proposed Northern Pass high voltage transmission line that would begin in New Hampshire at the U.S. – Canada border and terminate at a substation in Deerfield, New Hampshire.

I have the utmost respect for Normandeau Associates and the professionalism of their employees. They are widely respected in New Hampshire and other states where they do work, but I am deeply troubled that the Department of Energy (DOE) selected a firm to perform what should be an objective assessment while it is also doing work for the project applicant. Specifically, Normandeau Associates has been contracted by Northern Pass LLC to provide state and federal agencies with data and permit applications intended to aide in the approval of the project by those agencies. Normandeau has also been contracted to provide expert witness testimony in support of the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) permitting process as well as to participate in public outreach meetings, as requested by the applicant, in support of the project in the SEC process.

As some project interveners have noted in their correspondence to DOE about the selection of Normandeau (see attachment), the Council on Environmental Quality's NEPA regulations require federal agencies, such as the DOE, to avoid any conflict of interest in selecting a contractor to perform NEPA work. "It is the intent of these regulations that the contractor be chosen solely by the lead agency ... to avoid *any* conflict of interest." (40 C.F.R. § 1506.5(c)) If a prospective NEPA compliance contractor has a conflict of interest, "it should be disqualified from preparing the EIS, to preserve the objectivity and integrity of the NEPA process." (46 Fed. Reg. 18026 (1981))

In order for the public and those affected by the proposed transmission project to have confidence in the DOE permitting process, it is essential that there be no conflict of interest in the approval process. While DOE, Normandeau and Northern Pass LLC have sought to address the potential conflict of interest by separating the employees and teams working on their respective aspects of the project, even the perception of a conflict is problematic given the significance of this project

At your earliest convenience, could you please explain the DOE decision-making process that resulted in the selection of Normandeau Associates and how that selection is consistent with both the letter and the spirit of NEPA? I would also appreciate an update on the status of requests made by interveners to have another contractor selected to perform the NEPA environmental assessments.

I appreciate your attention to this matter and I look forward to your timely responses to my questions.

Sincerely,

Jeanne Shaheen  
United States Senator

Enclosure

cc: The Honorable Ms. Nancy Sutley, Chair, Council on Environmental Quality

**IMPORTANT Upcoming Legislation Both are being heard on 3/9 one 11 other at 1:30 - Both are crucial . The first is to protect the rights of individual citizens from Private company takings through Eminent Domain. The second bill is entitled Northern Pass project**

**The eminent domain bill has been assigned HB 648 and will be heard in my committee (Science, Technology, and Energy). The public hearing will be held on 3/9/2011 in Representative's Hall in the State House. This bill seeks to limit the use of eminent domain and specifically excludes**

private projects. The text is not yet available online, but it should be shortly (Thursday, 11:00 am)

March 9 is a Wednesday which is normally a legislative session day, but there is no legislative session that week.

Please pass the word around and encourage people to come to Concord to attend and (optionally speak at) the hearing. If you don't want to speak but you wish to register your approval or opposition to the bill, there will be a sheet that you can sign. After a hearing in our committee, there could be a work session, then an executive session. The bill then goes to the floor of the House with the committee recommendation of OTP or ITL ("ought to pass" or "inexpedient to legislate")

If the bill is approved by the House of Representatives, it will go onto the Senate where it will be heard first in their energy committee and then by the full Senate with a recommendation by their energy committee. If the Senate approves it, it goes to the Governor for signature. If he signs it, it becomes law. If he vetoes it, it comes back to the House and Senate where an override vote will be held. If both houses then approve it, it becomes law.

It should also be noted that Representative Rick Ladd's bill was assigned HB 649, also assigned to my committee and the public hearing for that bill will also be heard in Representative's Hall on 3/9/2011 at 1:30 pm (the afternoon of the same day). His bill is titled: "relative to the Northern Pass Project to construct and operate transmission lines from the Canadian border to a proposed terminal in Franklin, New Hampshire". I believe it is imperative that people attend that hearing as well.

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Larry  
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#### **VACATIONERS, SECOND HOME OWNERS AND TOURISTS:**

Many of you have felt helpless in this struggle as you do not have a vote in NH. We who live here do not have a direct vote either. Even our house and senate members at the state level do not get to weigh in on this decision. It is only through loud and many that we are able to get heard and through that have the possibility to affect a stop to this. In the upcoming battle your voice will be as important to be heard (maybe more so) than the locals. One of the issues that central and northern NH faces if these towers are allowed to come in, is the loss of this area's only source of income, tourism. This will in addition to the direct loss of real estate values caused by the towers but additionally if tourism is lost or diminished there will be business and job loss that will indirectly but significantly affect the value of our homes and businesses as well. Since one of the impacts that can be studied in the environmental impact study is the effect on socio economics, The effect on tourism can be (if noted by enough people in comments to the DOE) part of the scoping, The engineering firm that does the impact study will need to address this impact if it comes from enough requests to the committee. Here is where your voice is possibly more important than ours, Northern Pass is saying when asked that real estate values will have a loss of less than 10% , that tourism will not be affected as people will still want to ski. They are additionally saying once the towers are set people will get use to them as they have gotten use to the current 45 foot wood towers. That over time we and you will not even see them. Those of who live here know that is not true. Your voice to say as a tourist as a home owner as a vacationer, it is not true. If you tell them that you regularly vacation or have a second home and your decision to vacation here will be affected in the future if these towers happen. By doing so you will be helping us fight by making the environmental impact study look more seriously at the impact of the towers on tourism . Those that have become residents as a result of vacationing here, you too have a strong voice here . Write to [Brian.mills@hq.doe.gov](mailto:Brian.mills@hq.doe.gov) please tell him you are commenting on the Environmental Impact Studies about to take place for the Northern Pass Project. For more information on writing your comment to be most effective ,you can look read the blog on writing a comment on Tuesday February 22's blog at <http://burynorthernpass.blogspot.com/> The written

comments according to information on the Federal Registrar on this process will have as much importance as the ones made verbally at the scoping EIS public hearings. NP is discounting any loss to tourism as a scare tactic of the opposition but it is a very real threat to our way of life as well as your enjoyment of your visit and or second home. So please get your typing finger limber and get a comment off to him as soon as your can . All comments made prior to April 12 will have to be considered.

Two further footnote: If you can go only to one of the scoping EIS meetings and want to be the most effective - Franklin meeting will probably be the more pro

Town meetings are usually early March: It will be important to get out the vote at these meetings as Governor Lynch has said that he will not force this project down the throats if the towns do not want it . We need these votes to send him a decisive message so that he has to do as he said he would . He will be weighing in on this decision. On this matter for the towns that have a warrant article into vote on this matter, it will be important that each town has someone that can speak to the project and why it is important that the towns people vote against the Northern Pass. So if you are willing to stand up in your town, please notify us so that we can make sure that all towns are covered along the line where a warrant article is in. For any of the towns that the article did not get in on time, there usually is another business article at the end of the meeting that allows for nonappropriations(no money) business. An article may be able to be presented to your moderator to be addressed as other business. This will have to be in writing and usually required additional signatures to be accepted, check in with your town to see the requirements to be accepted as other business or if they will allow this as other business.

Thank you all for your help in this battle. It is the most important issue that the State of NH, its citizens and vacationers have faced in a very long time .