

To: Dept. of Environmental Services
Thomas Burack, Chair

Attached please find a copy of my letter of protest to the US Department of Energy, who will be reviewing the application for a Presidential Permit for the Northern Pass Transmission project. Please consider this letter when performing your duties as a member of the Site Evaluation Committee. Thank you.

Terri L. Parks
Dalton, NH

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December 10, 2010

Brian Mills
Office of Electricity Delivery & Energy Reliability (OE-20)
U.S. Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Re: Application for Presidential Permit: Northern Pass Transmission LLC
OE Docket No. PP-371

Following is a Letter of Protest per Rule 211 (18 CFR 385.211) of the Rules of Practice and Procedure of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. An original and fourteen copies are enclosed.

Dear Mr. Mills,

As a lifelong resident of New Hampshire, in particular, Coos County, I am expressing my opposition to the proposed NSTAR-PSNH 1200 MGW DC Transmission Line from Quebec, Canada to the New England power grid. This 180-mile long line will run nearly the entire length of our beloved state. Typical widths for the project's right-of-way will vary from 150' to 410'.

It is unrealistic to expect residents and landowners to be able to respond within thirty days to a project which has been at least two years in the making. Northern Pass has not provided maps with adequate detail to allow landowners to determine if and how their homes, property, livelihoods and quality of life might be affected. We have been given a deadline, during the holiday season, while snow is starting to accumulate and hinder our efforts "in the field" to determine the possible impact on our land and in our communities.

While I am not opposed to hydroelectric power, or doing business with our neighboring country of Canada, I do feel that the United States needs to be more reliant on our own resources and focus on developing renewable and "green" energy right here at home. The northern area of New Hampshire has been very hard-hit in recent years with the loss of nearly all of our wood products industry, which has been a mainstay for about two-hundred years. Much of this work has been outsourced to foreign countries. It's time to bring back jobs to our area, but not short-term jobs that result in a utility that will be of no benefit to those who must live with it.

Currently, our best assets are our natural resources. We have miles and miles of forests, fields, farmland, quaint "Norman Rockwell" towns, and scenic areas. Many people here depend on a livelihood that focuses on tourism. Visitors to our area come to see the beauty, experience the remoteness, fish in a clear stream or lake, hunt in the deep woods, or hike to the top of a mountain. They like to experience the sweet steam inside a sugarhouse, the sight of a majestic moose, the beauty of autumn's colors in an unspoiled region, or an invigorating walk with the family on a snow-covered tree farm where they can cut their own Christmas tree.

One can view centuries-old stone walls crisscrossing open fields, disappearing into the woods, leading to abandoned cellar holes that are the only evidence of farms and communities long gone. These features offer continuity and a sense of place. They speak to us without voices, telling us about the people that came before us. This land has value. It has traditions. It has character.

I am sure that a transmission line of this magnitude will not have any positive impact in northern or central New Hampshire. In fact, it will be an eyesore, and detrimental to our best economic opportunities – tourism. Who wants to see a man-made parade of steel towers cutting a swath from the Canadian border to southern New Hampshire? These towers, ranging from 90 to 135 feet in height, will be taller than the average trees here, in fact, about as tall as a ten-story building. This Northern Pass, as they call it, will be in sight of some of our National Scenic Byways. It will traverse part of the White Mountain National Forest, the Cape Horn State Forest, the Silvio O. Conte National Wildlife Refuge, the Appalachian Trail, and numerous privately owned lands and locally important cultural, historic and scenic areas. For some of us, it threatens to cut through the very heart of our towns, both literally and figuratively.

The people in the area feel like we are being misled, coerced, and pressured into allowing the big power companies to construct their power lines over our region, so they can sell this power to southern New Hampshire and New England, while lining their own pockets. The electric power in these lines won't be going to our homes or businesses. We'll hardly see any local benefits, such as cheaper electricity or long-term jobs. We may see a little increase in our tax base, but this will be offset by the fact that individual property values in the vicinity of the power line will decrease. Don't forget the cost for each town to hire a professional utility appraiser to assess the value of the lines and towers on a regular basis, or the time and possible expenses incurred by the towns when the utility company asks for tax abatements.

I attended a public meeting where representatives from Public Service of New Hampshire (PSNH – owned by Northeast Utilities, one of the creators of Northern Pass Transmission, LLC) gave a presentation to discuss their plans for the Northern Pass project. They were well versed in how to skirt around the public's questions. Their rehearsed answers were that the project was in the beginning stages, and they didn't have the answers yet. For something in the beginning stages, it sure got a long way before we, the people who will be affected the most, had any information on the route or the scope of the project. One answer that rang loud and clear, though, was that if necessary, they would resort to "eminent domain" to obtain the right-of-way for their project. Not very neighborly, I thought. In fact, it's downright threatening. Many of our residents view this as a sign of corporate greed.

The government officials who are responsible for reviewing NSTAR's application (including the Department of Energy and the Site Evaluation Committee) must carefully consider many aspects of this project's adverse affects, including health and safety, damage to the tourism industry, quality of life, impact on natural resources, and how much of a need exists for this energy source. What alternatives are available? Can it make better use of the existing ROW in Vermont? Can the power line be buried underground? Will overhead towers and lines be a potential target for terrorists? Will a power line provide a new route for illegal aliens to enter this country from Canada?

Those of us who live in this colder region of the country won't soon forget the ice storm of 1998 that greatly affected New England and Quebec. Some people were without electrical power for

weeks. According to www.canadianencyclopedia.com, "Hydro Quebec officials said that it would take weeks before all areas of the province have power restored. " Then another one occurred in December 2008. Underground lines could avoid the expense of repairing damaged towers and lines after such an event.

Finally, have there been any studies done on the effects of high voltage power lines and interference with television, broadband and/or wireless internet, cell phones and local emergency communication systems? Every North Country town relies heavily on "mutual aid" from neighboring communities, in the event of fire, police and medical emergencies. A few years ago, radio communication problems were an issue. I don't know if they have been resolved, but what a shame it would be if we discovered the 1200 MW lines caused interference with emergency communication systems.

We live in an area where some of us no longer have access to our "local" television stations (thanks to the government), cell phone reception is spotty, sometimes non-existent, and very few of us are fortunate enough to have access to high-speed internet. The latter "luxury" has been making slow progress. Now that I have been blessed with wireless internet for a couple of months, after about twelve years of painful dial-up internet services, it would be devastating to find that the service is compromised because the proposed power lines might cause interference. As you can see, I am not against human "progress", but it needs to be done right the first time.

Please consider the potential impacts from this huge undertaking. Think of the residents who have to live with the consequences, both known and unknown. Would you feel the benefits are worth the drawbacks? Would you buy a house situated near this transmission line? Would you let your children play near it?

Do not allow this permit to be granted without serious thought to the necessity, the alternatives, and the impact to New Hampshire's residents, lands and economic health.

Respectfully yours,



Terri L. Parks

cc: Anne Bartosewicz
Northeast Utilities
107 Selden Street
Berlin, CT 06037

cc: Mary Anne Sullivan
Hogan Lovells, LLP
555 13th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20004

cc: NH Governor John Lynch; members of the Site Evaluation Committee; various local and state government officials