

**From:** [widhu@myfairpoint.net](mailto:widhu@myfairpoint.net) <[widhu@myfairpoint.net](mailto:widhu@myfairpoint.net)>

**Sent:** Friday, April 28, 2017 2:22 PM

**To:** Monroe, Pamela

**Subject:** Northern Pass proposals

I am a Nashua resident who spends much time in northern New Hampshire hiking and fishing, and I am greatly concerned about the environmental damage that would be done by installing high transmission towers through our State. I would greatly appreciate your consideration of my following letter.

Thank you,  
Richard Widhu

Northern Pass (NP) is a proposal by Eversource Energy to build 192 miles of high voltage DC (HVDC) transmission lines with towers through 2/3 of New Hampshire to carry electricity generated by hydropower in Quebec. These 80-155 foot high towers and widened transmission corridors will scar views in the landscape, hurting tourism and cutting property values. Many communities in New Hampshire depend upon their natural undeveloped and pastoral scenic beauty as a critical asset for their economic survival. Tourism is the second largest industry in New Hampshire. A report from Return on Investment for NH in 2014 states that every \$1 spent conserving land returns \$11 and supports thousands of people in tourism, recreation, agriculture, forestry and fishing. Residents and visitors spend \$4.2 billion a year on outdoor recreation which directly supports about 49,000 jobs in the State. A Department of Energy (DOE) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) reports that the proposed above-ground HVDC lines would reduce taxable assessed property values by \$7.1 million.

A further DOE draft EIS states that fully burying these transmission lines would impose the fewest visual impacts and could use already disturbed roadway corridors and would not affect residential property values. DOE also released an analysis that full burial would cost \$2.113 billion versus the NP preferred overhead route cost of \$1.377 billion, not what NP said full burial would cost: 5-10 times the preferred route. A November 2015 DOE EIS report states that full burial would produce 10,687 construction jobs over 3 years as opposed to 6921 for the above-ground proposal, and 1518 permanent jobs versus 974. Eversource admits that full burial is technically feasible, and there are two fully permitted and fully buried HVAC lines being started in Vermont and New York, as well as a proposal in Maine for a 300-mile buried line partially using the median of I-95.

The NH Dept. of Transportation has identified 3 existing interstates plus Route 101 as "appropriate" corridors for buried lines. Even where NP proposes to place transmission towers on Eversource's existing rights-of-way, these would need to be widened close to the easement limits on residences and clearcut right up to people's houses, and structures would be built in wetlands where none now exist.

32 New Hampshire towns along the proposed NP route voted against the current proposal, and 80% of the comments at public input sessions in September 2015 either opposed NP or called for full burial of the lines.

NP has shown some environmental sensitivity by proposing to bury its line through the White Mountains National Forest, offering to fund programs in NH which advance

clean energy and energy conservation, giving to the National Fish & Wildlife Federation to restore NH forests and rivers, and helping the town of Londonderry establish critical habitat for a variety of species. NP could really show concern for our State's natural environment by fully burying their transmission lines.

I am not opposed to importing electricity from hydropower sources in Quebec, but not at the expense of the beauty of NH.