

SEC COMMENTS COLLECTION

SECDocket	2015-06 Northern Pass Transmission - Eversource
CommenterName	Maureen Doherty
Tilton	Reading, MA
DateReceived	12-22-2017

CommenterWords

To the Site Evaluation Committee (SEC):

After following this issue closely for several years, I am strongly opposed to the Northern Pass project for a plethora of reasons.

Specifically, I support the vehement desire of my neighbors to the north to have their pristine lands preserved for all future generations to enjoy and not to have them sacrificed for the short-sighted GREED of the few and for only their financial gain in this generation.

The people of New Hampshire deserve to have their vocal opposition taken seriously. They are the ones who have made their livelihoods off the land for generations, whether as farmers, craftsmen innkeepers and the like, and they know it best.

I place very little stock in the testimony provided by the dozens of out-of-state paid experts who testified in front of you over these past few months. However, the group of 10 residents of the North Country who put together their video of the pristine wilderness that would be lost, with the sight lines of the transmission lines superimposed over the exact proposed routes, ought to win an Academy Award as that short snippet proved all that N.H. stands to lose by this project.

In the year 2017 to still have such beauty untouched by human hands ought to be celebrated for the diamond & platinum jewel in the rough that it is. Why ANY ENTITY would be granted a permit to destroy it now is simply beyond any words I can express to you in this brief letter.

However, I do know that this world needs easily accessible places of refuge, respite and relaxation such as the North Country can provide, and these stewards of the land deserve to remain just that -- its stewards. They understand that our lives are temporal but the land lives on and it must be preserved. Ordinary folks cannot jet-set around the world to get their respite at exotic locales (while paying no mind to the wasteful carbon footprint such a selfish act involves). Those who run the vacation destinations in New Hampshire said it best — Once miles of these unsightly steel-girdered towers litter the landscape of the state of New Hampshire, from stem to stern, the vacationers who go to New Hampshire — to escape such unsightly infrastructure that is so prevalent in the parts of our world that we have already managed to be very awful stewards.

I am an avid hiker and I have hiked many miles of trails in the WMNF in N.H. I subscribe to the philosophy of “leave no trace” and “carry in/carry out,” as well as “leave everything BETTER than how you found it.” This means carrying out the trash found along the way left carelessly by others or blown out of their backpacks.

The permanent destruction of the landscape caused by a project like Northern Pass for the benefit of Hydro Quebec is the EXACT OPPOSITE of the “leave no trace” philosophy. It is rather ironic that a project that purports to generate “clean energy” is anything but given this permanent destruction to the local landscape.

The “leave no trace” and “leave it better than you found it” philosophies are particularly necessary above tree line in

the alpine zone where a compact 4-foot tall evergreen may be decades old and clusters of tiny alpine flowers that take a quarter of century to grow can be crushed and destroyed by a hiker's careless single misstep off-trail.

Imagine the impact of utility workers canvassing and maintaining transmission lines through such forests .. not to mention the destruction that must take place to build the roads to get to the areas that Northern Pass will permanent alter.

The ecosystem at the lower elevations is no less delicate and deserving of protection than the alpine zone. But into this environment Northern Pass wants to introduce permanent 190-foot tall cross-country steel towers/transmission lines? This infrastructure must be maintained forevermore. That means the land beneath the towers will be trashed by either machinery or chemical defoliant so as not to interfere with the power transmission.

And for what benefit to New Hampshire? None! The state does not need this power generation. The potential tax on the pole infrastructure will not come close to covering the cost of the loss of unmarred landscape. That makes NH the sacrificial lamb for other parts of this country, as well as for other countries, to grab this power and continue to feed the fossil-fuel dependency beast.

Hydro-Quebec has proven not to be a good steward of the land in Canada. Their business practices have seriously and permanently affected Canada's indigenous peoples' land, interfering with their salmon fishing and way of life. Now, this company could be REWARDED for continuing such behavior with a permit to similarly destroy the best that the state of New Hampshire has to offer this world? Why repeat the mistakes of past decades & centuries when we now know where such mistakes lead? And it's no place good!

I'm extremely disappointed in the U.S. Forest Service for signing off on an 11-mile swath of destruction through pristine mountains to advance Northern Pass earlier this year.....Once those forests are maimed, there is no turning back.....And it will become all that more difficult to keep the greedy paws of the next developer off National Forest lands that belong to the people & should be ours to enjoy and PRESERVE...not to enable the few to get filthy rich. Teddy Roosevelt is rolling over in his grave!

Although I have been a lifelong resident of Massachusetts, I have always lived close enough to New Hampshire to vacation in its lakes and mountains. I also belong to a ski club in Bartlett, N.H. that has been active continuously since the 1960s. I prefer winter hiking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing -- all low-impact recreational activities -- as well as photographing NH's wilderness.

I had hoped to buy my first-ever permanent home in N.H. and eventually retire there. But given the uncertainty of the true impact a project like Northern Pass would have on New Hampshire's real estate values, I will not even consider looking at homes there at this point. I would have no way of knowing if my little slice of heaven would be next on the sacrificial lamb chopping block to be negatively impacted by the easements required of such projects. The hit to the real estate values caused by this uncertainty is currently affecting scores of N.H.'s residents. Uncertainty in the real estate market has a de-stabilizing effect on the local economy and real estate values.

If this project is deemed by the SEC to be an absolute must I BEG YOU TO REQUIRE UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION LINES. I would fully expect the advocates of Northern Pass to balk at such a suggestion and claim it to be too costly. Somehow, the economic viability of Northern Pass/Hydro Quebec is suppose to carry weight with the SEC while the opposite is true -- in the minds of the advocates of this project -- that consideration must not be given to the economic viability of hundreds of small business owners in the state testifying against the Northern Pass. The same philosophy holds true for private land owners and homeowners who will see their real estate values plummet.

Throughout this process, Northern Pass has been dismissive of the ultimate cost of this project on those segments of N.H. society in terms of plummeting real estate values in N.H.'s cities and small towns alike due to the permanent scar Northern Pass would bring to New Hampshire.

Northern Pass cannot have it both ways. If its concerns about economic viability are valid for its own bottom line, why then would the same concerns expressed by business owners, homeowners and property owners not be considered to have any validity by Northern Pass?

Thank you for your time as I know you have many responses to read through.

Maureen G. Doherty
42 Bay State Road
Reading MA 01867
Junebug.MD@gmail.com
