

State of NH

Site Evaluation Committee

Docket No. 2015-06

**Joint Application of Northern Pass, LLC and Public Service Co. of NH d/b/s Eversource Energy for
a Certificate of Site & Facility**

Pre-filed Testimony of Mary A. Lee, Intervenor from Northfield NH

November 15, 2016

1. Please identify yourself:

Mary A. Lee
93 Fiddler's Choice Rd
Northfield NH 03276

I have been assigned to the Abutters Group (overhead lines) from Ashland to Allenstown.

2. Why are you giving pre-filed testimony as Intervenor?

I own 6.47 acres of property in Northfield. This property is located in a Conservation Zone; a brook runs @ the edge of my land. I am situated in a Groundwater Protection District. Since 1981, I have enjoyed the quiet remote nature of my home. Its natural beauty, its wildlife, my health, my property value—all these would be adversely affected if the Northern Pass proposal is allowed into NH.

I urge the Site Evaluation Committee to decide on "No Build" for Northern Pass project.

3. Will there be Unreasonable Adverse Effects on Aesthetics?

The former Public Service of NH built a transmission line that runs through part of my property. In order to access my property, I must use a deeded right-of-way dirt driveway that runs along & crosses under the transmission lines. Standing @ the end of my driveway, facing south, I can see 5 monopoles & 5 H-frame poles. As I go up my .2 mile-long drive, facing north, I can see 5 H-frames & 2 monopoles. If I walk further beyond my yard, I can see many more poles all the way down the powerline cut to the banks of the Merrimack River.

In summary, I own a unique property—once you enter my yard, the trees that line the edge of the ROW provide a buffer. When trees sprout leaves in spring, you do not see the poles. But with the proposed Northern Pass project, the height of the steel towers & steel monopoles would not be hidden from view. Such tall towers & steel structures would not be aesthetically in keeping with the woods that surround my property. I would view such steel poles as eyesores. So would my neighbors—who would see the planned 100 ft. tall steel poles. Currently the wooden poles' heights do not tower over the trees.

Trees that line the edge of the ROW would be cut to accommodate the relocated poles' fall line; that means when I look outside my east-facing kitchen & dining room windows my view would be of the proposed steel poles.

4. Will there be Unreasonable Adverse Effects on Natural Environment?

The proposed Northern Pass plans to relocate & build new steel structures would alter the terrain of the ROW through which I walk & drive. The area is composed of very sandy soil. Past experience with plowing, tree clearing, digging, driving large construction vehicles, motoring with ATVs have shown me that the soils & vegetation, when moved in any way, takes a long time to grow back & suffers from damage to the tender surface vegetation. I must maintain my driveway with replacement gravel & filling & grading for .2 mile to get out to the dirt street off which I live. When it rains, any ruts & damaged parts of the drive puddle up & freeze in cold weather.

When I walk on my driveway & onto the ROW, I see many types of trees & shrubs as well as wildlife: bears, deer, moose, fox, rabbits, fisher cats. Many birds live here: ruffed grouse, wild turkeys, woodpeckers, cardinals, bobwhites, hummingbirds, & other diverse flyers. While I have not identified the Karner Blue butterfly here, I still see monarchs, bees & other insects. Bats still fly @ dusk. Any disturbance to their habitat would affect my natural environment & my quiet enjoyment.

Since I live in a Conservation Zone that includes a Groundwater Protection District, I want to preserve & protect this special habitat for me, the wildlife & the watershed that feeds my well & those of my neighbors. While plans to build the steel poles would be temporary work, the damage to natural environment would last much longer; it could be permanent & set a negative precedent for future utility corporations wishing to enter NH to make money & leave us with a bad legacy.

5. Will there be Unreasonable Adverse Effects on Health & Safety?

The research on electromagnetic fields has indicated it is not safe to be near transmission lines. A current 115 kV line at the end of my drive bears the sign "DANGER." I was informed by a line worker that the high voltage lines emit a hum. I sometimes hear a light hum under the current 115 kV lines. I would not be able to sell my home to a family with children, as childhood leukemia has been linked to electromagnetic fields.

6. Will there be a change in the value of your property?

If I want to sell my property, I would have to disclose that Northern Pass threatens to build more & taller transmission lines along the ROW. I cannot imagine a potential buyer wanting to see such a proposal. The original poles built by former PSNH utility were more integrated with the surrounding landscape. Their heights were not above the trees. Proposed new 345-kV poles could reach 100 ft. (more than twice the height of the existing poles that reach a minimum height of 48 ft.).

Eversource has appealed the amount of taxes that Northfield has assessed. Currently the Northern Pass Applicant does not want to be transparent about their financial estimates to build the proposal. I do not trust the estimated tax benefits that Northern Pass put out on their website.

A couple of inquiries to our Northfield Tax Collector have concerned whether or not Northern Pass would come through our town & negatively affect the views & values of homes.

7. Will there be a Public Interest with the proposal by Northern Pass?

How dare Northern Pass propose to build this project through NH? It's to make huge profits for Hydro-Quebec & Eversource. The damage Hydro-Quebec has done by damming rivers in Quebec Province has adversely affected the natural environment, fishing grounds of native Inuit, the air quality & climate (by creation of methane) and our relationship with nature & people who value truly *green* methods for getting electricity.

Thousands of NH people have opposed the Northern Pass proposal based on strongly held beliefs that value private property, the environment, the quality of life we live here. My neighbors & I love NH as it is & do not want to lose its beauty & clean environment, free of over-development. Tourists do not visit NH to see transmission lines. Tourism to NH is a significant business asset; do not ruin one of the best attractions of our state by allowing Northern Pass to cut through.

I want to continue to "...live free" from the tyranny of industrial utilities that want to ignore the public good. We the people who live here want to have a Site Evaluation Committee listen to our real public interests.

Thanks for your work to keep NH beautiful.

Sincerely,

Mary A. Lee

Northfield Intervenor, Abutters Group: Ashland to Allenstown

Copy will be sent via email to current Distribution List & Pamela Monroe

Copy will be sent via US mail

