

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
BEFORE THE
SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE
Docket No. 2015-06**

**APPLICATION OF NORTHERN PASS TRANSMISSION, LLC AND PUBLIC
SERVICE COMPANY OF NEW HAMPSHIRE D/B/A EVERSOURCE ENERGY
FOR A CERTIFICATE OF SITE AND FACILITY TO CONSTRUCT A NEW
HIGH VOLTAGE TRANSMISSION LINE AND RELATED FACILITIES IN
NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**SUPPLEMENTAL PREFILED TESTIMONY OF
ROBERT J. COTE AND BRUCE A. ADAMI
DEERFIELD ABUTTERS**

APRIL 17, 2017

1 **Please state your name and address.**

2 Robert J. Cote, and Bruce A. Adami, 32 Mountain Road, P.O. Box 507, Deerfield, New
3 Hampshire 03037.

4
5 **What is the purpose of this supplemental testimony?**

6 We offer this testimony to provide information not previously known or available to us,
7 and refinements to our prior submittals, related to the application of Northern Pass
8 Transmission, LLC and Public Service Company of New Hampshire D/B/A Eversource
9 Energy for a certificate of site and facility to construct a new high voltage transmission
10 line and related facilities in New Hampshire before the Site Evaluation Committee.

11

12 **Do you have any corrections to your previously filed testimony?**

13 Yes, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) photo was presented with our
14 original testimony as depicting the proposed transmission line crossing our property.
15 That depiction was in fact not across our property, but at another very similar Deerfield
16 location. Our location is pictured below and is very similar, but was not subject to a
17 visual impact analysis simulation with Northern Pass present.



18

This location is along a local walking route (and is not on Nottingham Road), and is therefore viewed only by local walkers seeking enjoyment of the significant conservation and open-to-the-public current use land in the area. Given that lattice structures are proposed for Northern Pass in this area, and the similarity of the landscape, the DEIS simulation previously identified, does in reality provide a reasonable representation of the view from this location with Northern Pass present.

What is your opinion of the loss in property value that you will incur if Northern Pass is constructed?

It is our opinion that the property valuation loss will be in the range of 10-20 percent of the total property value. Our highly customized home has an insurance replacement value greater than \$700,000. However, a realistic market value without Northern Pass is likely to be in the range of \$550,000 - \$650,000. The home is entirely off the grid, requiring a high degree of self-sufficiency. The long uphill driveway represents a high maintenance obligation. And according to a 1991 appraisal of the land (Attachment A), the “most likely user of this piece is the person who seeks privacy and protection from development.” Accordingly, the market for this property will be a very narrow somewhat affluent segment of the population that can afford alternatives, and that is likely to be highly selective and influenced by an industrial scale transmission line a short distance from the home.

With these factors, our anticipated property value loss ranges from \$55,000 to \$130,000.



Do you have additional evidence that Northern Pass is not in the interests of the public?

Yes, we do. This evidence of unreasonableness is based on the March 2017 election in the Town of Deerfield. The week prior to the election, Eversource distributed the following tax relief information to Deerfield residents.

Deerfield

Illustration of Northern Pass Transmission Local Property Tax Payments Over First 20 Years of Operation

The illustrative example below is based on the current cost estimate of NPT for your community, an annual depreciation rate of 2.5 percent, and a range for growth in the tax rate in the community. It is simulated over 20 years, and defines local tax payments to include municipal plus local education. County and utility education property taxes are estimated separately. The cost estimates do not include costs for land or rebuilding existing infrastructure. The first year estimated tax payment below is based on one simulation within a range of outcomes.

Actual local tax payments will depend upon the actual final cost of the project in each community and its fair market value, municipal and education spending, other sources of revenue, and the relevant total tax base for any given tax year and may differ from the scenario modeled here.

Year	Illustrative Value of NPT	Illustrative NPT Local Property Tax Payments Range
2019	\$122,955,076	\$1,938,836 - \$1,958,032
2020	\$119,881,199	\$1,908,013 - \$1,945,983
2021	\$116,807,322	\$1,876,389 - \$1,932,668
2022	\$113,733,445	\$1,843,924 - \$1,918,043
2023	\$110,659,568	\$1,810,631 - \$1,902,059
2024	\$107,585,691	\$1,776,488 - \$1,884,669
2025	\$104,511,814	\$1,741,481 - \$1,865,822
2026	\$101,437,937	\$1,705,595 - \$1,845,468
2027	\$98,364,061	\$1,668,819 - \$1,823,553
2028	\$95,290,184	\$1,631,136 - \$1,800,023
2029	\$92,216,307	\$1,592,532 - \$1,774,823
2030	\$89,142,430	\$1,552,993 - \$1,747,894
2031	\$86,068,553	\$1,512,505 - \$1,719,179
2032	\$82,994,676	\$1,471,051 - \$1,688,616
2033	\$79,920,799	\$1,428,617 - \$1,656,142
2034	\$76,846,922	\$1,385,187 - \$1,621,695
2035	\$73,773,045	\$1,340,745 - \$1,585,208
2036	\$70,699,168	\$1,295,276 - \$1,546,610
2037	\$67,625,292	\$1,248,764 - \$1,505,638
2038	\$64,551,415	\$1,201,201 - \$1,463,176
Total		\$32,697,834 - \$35,691,180
Average		\$1,634,892 - \$1,784,559

For more information please refer to NH SEC Docket No. 2015-06, Joint Application for Certificate of Site and Facility, Appendix 44 for a detailed discussion and simulations of property tax payments by community using a range of assumptions about the cost of the project and local tax and spending conditions over time.

February 21, 2017

51 Despite Eversource's financial enticement for property tax relief, the Townspeople on
52 March 14, 2017 voted on Warrant Article #24 asking, "Based on your current
53 understanding do you support Northern Pass coming to Deerfield?" The vote was 632
54 NO to 397 YES.

55
56 **How well do you think the project will comply with construction stormwater-related**
57 **Best Management Practices?**

58 At this time there is concern on our part regarding the commitment of the Applicant to
59 comply with applicable environmental programs, as evidenced by Mr. Cote's familiarity
60 with one program in particular (stormwater permitting under the federal NPDES
61 program). During the peak of the NPT Technical Sessions in FEB-MAR 2017, a
62 relatively minor power line maintenance project (insulator replacement) included work
63 on our segment of the Right-of-Way (ROW). Due to a relatively warm winter, the upper
64 layer of soil was not frozen during the performance of this work, and significant rutting
65 occurred on a relatively steep slope leading to a major important wetland that is part of
66 the Lamprey River watershed (a designated National Wild and Scenic River). Photos A
67 and B that follow illustrate the terrain impacts.

68
69 On the date these photos were taken, March 1, 2017, a significant rainfall event had been
70 predicted, but fortunately failed to materialize. If it had, runoff would have been
71 conveyed along the rutted vehicle tracks, which extended entirely down INTO the
72 unfrozen wetland, carrying silt and sediment along with any precipitation. In addition to
73 the potential wetland impact, this conveyance represents a "discharge point" under EPA's
74 stormwater Construction General Permit, a working definition that has previously not
75 been acknowledged by the Applicant's representatives and if completely implemented
76 along the 192-mile project would entail significant effort.

77
78 Additionally, although timber matting was provided as a Best Management Practice
79 (BMP) on the uphill Berglund property, NO BMPs were evidently used during the
80 construction activity on the steeply sloping Cote-Adami property leading directly down
81 into the wetland.



Photo A (see Attachment B for Right-of-Way location) – March 1, 2017



Photo B (see Attachment B for Right-of-Way location) – March 1, 2017

It is worth noting, that the day after complaining and sending the above photographs to Eversource representative Mr. George Samaras, that a relatively effective post-construction restoration was implemented, some of which is present in photographs that follow.

On the western facing side of the hilltop Berglund hayfield, the ROW slopes steeply downhill toward Mountain Road. My previously submitted testimony discusses the need for the Applicant under the terms of the CGP to identify discharge points and to identify for each discharge point the BMPs that will be used in the areas of construction that drain to those discharge points.



Photo C (see Attachment B for Right-of-Way location) – March 11, 2017

This drainage point directly within a ROW construction zone discharges on the opposite side of Mountain Road and is an indisputable example of regulated storm water drainage. The ample BMPs in this area (straw mulch and straw roll barriers) were placed after construction work was complete.

107



108

109 Photo D (see Attachment B for Right-of-Way location) – March 11, 2017

110

111 This culvert under Mountain Road drains the ROW area on the opposite side of the road.
112 The water flowing in the vegetated channel enters the Lamprey River about 50 feet
113 downstream. Although the culvert creates an obvious discharge point, the presence of the
114 channelized flow capturing runoff from an area of construction activity, whether natural
115 or man-made, constitutes a discharge point.

116 **Why are you providing a new version of the previously submitted Attachment C?**

117 During the second round of technical sessions, it became evident that a 20-year time
118 frame was a protocol used by Eversource for financial planning purposes, including the
119 Transmission Service Agreement, so the time frame in my spreadsheet was reduced from
120 40 years to 20 years to increase its consistency with other analyses that may exist.
121 Additionally, the cost for undergrounding now includes an assumption of an eight percent
122 interest rate applied to a 20-year term one billion dollar loan, whereas no financing
123 expenses were originally considered.

124 **Do you have new environmental concerns?**

125 Yes, transformers and other electrical devices can contain 500 gallons or more of oil
126 subject to federal and state regulatory oil spill prevention programs.

127

128 The Deerfield substation will also be subject to the NH Aboveground Storage Tank
129 (AST) regulations of Env-Or 300 if any device contains greater than 660 gallons of oil.

130 The Applicant was not aware if it would be subject to this program at the time of the
131 initial technical sessions.

132

133 In response to a technical session data request, the Applicant identified (Attachment D)
134 that existing Deerfield substation devices contain 65,800 gallons of mineral oil-based
135 insulating fluid, while new SVC transformers will contain an additional estimated amount
136 of 27,000 gallons.

137

138 This is a significant quantity of oil, and we are unable to evaluate the adequacy of the
139 Applicant's plans to address the potential for spills since the AST registration and
140 required oil Spill Prevention, Containment and Control Plan (SPCC Plan) are not
141 currently available.

142

143 **Do you have concerns regarding NHDES regulatory oversight with this project?**

144 Yes. A March 14, 2017 letter from Mr. Cote (Attachment E) to Mr. Rene Pelletier,
145 NHDES Assistant Director, Water Division, included several precise questions regarding
146 regulatory intent of NHDES' March 1, 2017 recommendation to conditionally approve
147 the Northern Pass application. Mr. Pelletier provided an email response (Attachment F)
148 on April 3, 2017 and none of the questions (repeated below) received a clear response.

With outfall identification in consideration, several of my specific questions are as follows:

- Page 25 of 31, Item 12 of your letter requires turbidity sampling. With respect to this requirement, please clarify at what points along the path of the project do you intend this requirement to apply.
- Page 25 of 31, Item 13 requires pre- and post-construction water quality monitoring. I believe this is inconsistent with the CGP, in that the most significant requirement, monitoring DURING construction, is missing from this DES condition.
- Page 28 of 31 Item C requires Emergency Inspections During Storm Events. With respect to this requirement, please clarify at what points along the path of the project do you intend this requirement to apply. Please clarify how “inspections shall occur...whenever plumes are visible” can be determined unless inspections are required during all storm events.

I formally request that a copy of the CGP Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, referenced on Page 25 of 31, Item 9 of your letter be required to be submitted to DES and specifically made available to the public no later than when the Applicant files its Notice of Intent for coverage under the CGP.

I also request confirmation regarding the availability of DES personnel to adequately provide compliance monitoring for a project of this magnitude. Please provide any available information regarding the need for changes in DES staffing levels to oversee the permitting requirements described in your letter, and whether you believe authorization to fund these changes will be provided by the State.

CONCLUSION

This concludes our supplemental prefiled testimony. We continue to maintain our position that Northern Pass will have unreasonable impacts on our community, us personally, as well as the environment and economy.