

Thomas N.T. Mullen
9 Deacon Willey Road
Campton, NH 03223
tntmullen@gmail.com

HEADS UP--THIS COULD HAPPEN IN YOUR TOWN TOO!

DON'T BE MISLED BY EVERSOURCE AGAIN!

Open Letter New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee

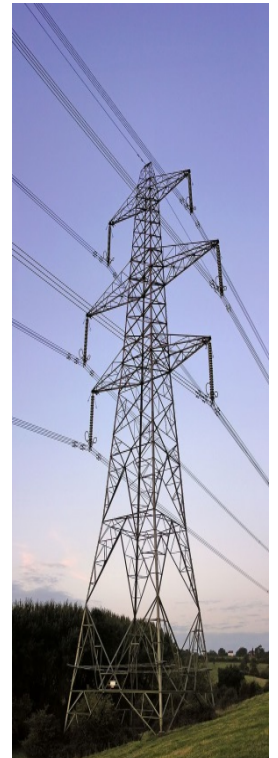
Re: Site Evaluation Committee, Docket No. 2014-04, Rulemaking

CAMPTON, NH, January 10, 2017---Many of our state's citizens find the presumption by the Northern Pass Project (NP) and EverSource that they are somehow entitled to use local citizens' town owned and maintained roadways for the purposes of burial and over-heading of its transmission lines without any approval from those towns to do so, simply defies comprehension! NP believes that because installing conventional utility lines to citizens' homes and businesses along these same ROW's has been permitted in the past, NP now has a green light to put its HVDC high voltage lines coming down from Canada above and below ground in those same town owned roadways.

It is NP's contention that the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (NH SEC) has the power to override local authorities on this matter. And even though the NH SEC has not ruled yet on this issue of NP using town roads, NP is proceeding as though permission has already been granted. This is a blatant attempt to deny duly elected town and city officials the right to act on behalf of their constituents.

As recently as the informational hearing last year at Loon Mountain in Lincoln, NH, Bill Quinlan, who heads up the NP operation in New Hampshire for EverSource, actually told all the folks in the room that NP has a presumptive right to use State of New Hampshire owned ROW's for transmission line burial simply because the right to do so has already been well established over the years. While this may or may not be true in the case of *State of New Hampshire owned and maintained roads*, it is *not the case with regard to locally owned and maintained town roads*, but NP feels differently. Now, NP and Quinlan want to presume they automatically have the same rights to use town roads throughout New Hampshire for these same purposes without having to seek permission from the towns that own and maintain those ROW's. Wishing will make it so seems to be the logic NP is using in arriving at this outrageous and faulty conclusion.

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There is conflicting case law in New Hampshire over the issue of whom or what entity has the right to control what happens in or next to town owned roads. These issues are sure to become fodder for legal fights in the coming months if not years, so the matter of who can say what can take place in these roadways is far from resolved at this moment in time.

Many of the municipalities being impacted by NP's plans to use town owned roadways without the permission of those towns have banded together to fight NP's plans in front of the SEC and in court if necessary. Many other towns not currently being impacted by NP's transmission line routings, have lined up together to support the fight on the theory that an adverse ruling by the



SEC could impact town owned roads all over the state for such installations as gas pipelines, power lines and all types of utilities like communication and cable television lines without the express written permission of those towns. **Selectmen of New Hampshire towns reading this release, you were elected to oversee the well-being of your citizens, you need to join this fight now to protect what happens in your roadways. Contact me or alternatively, Jack Savage at the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests at 602-224-9945 for information on how your town can join the other 18 towns already in the fight!**

Changing gears, this writer recently drove the NP underground route from Bethlehem to Bridgewater. Clearly, NP engineers did not carefully inspect this routing. In many places along the route, it will be almost impossible to bury HVDC power lines in the very narrow shoulders of these roadways. In numerous places, ledge comes to within a foot or two of the narrow shoulders, and then, directly across the road, there are 45-degree drop-offs protected only by guard rail posts barely a foot from the sides of the roadway making burial atrociously expensive, if not impossible!

If the actual plan is to bury the electrical cables right under the pavement of state roads like Route 3, the process of excavating and laying down the power lines will snarl traffic and disrupt peoples' lives for many months if not longer. There are places like downtown Plymouth where installing the HVDC lines under busy streets would cause weeks of severe disruption that the town's citizens should never have to tolerate. Now that Plymouth has fully grasped the level of chaos the NP's plans will cause, it has made its opposition to the NP plans crystal clear.

It doesn't seem possible NP can be serious about this undergrounding proposal, but it is! It was created in a panic by the realization that bringing unsightly towers and thick cables down through the White Mountain National Forest would undoubtedly be dead on arrival at Forest Service Headquarters in late 2010.

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Then, rather than face the red tape that would surround use of the shoulders along Interstate 93, NP had to act quickly to identify the current underground route – a route that will almost certainly change again.

The current underground routing the NP has currently settled on, grew out of the utility's desperation and greed, but it has been presented to the public like NP was making a gigantic concession. Educated observers now feel going underground for the present 52 mile route, is a nonsensical move typical of other recent desperate attempts to give legs to the NP. EverSource is now desperate to beat totally underground and/or underwater powerline projects in Vermont and Maine to market. One of the Vermont projects that started the permitting process far behind NP has now been fully permitted. As these projects get to market before NP, the demand for the NP power has been significantly diminished, if not eliminated!

A big reason NP has been so strongly resisted is its unrealistic and stubborn insistence in keeping the routing within the existing EverSource power line ROW's as much as possible. The reason is simple! By doing so, EverSource is able to charge rent to the Canadian owned project for the use of its ROW's through New Hampshire. Here again, a tail is wagging the dog at the expense of local towns and property owners who physically own or abut the ROW land. If NP were to use Interstate 93, it would have to pay rent to the State of New Hampshire for using that route. EverSource wants that rent for itself. Again, greed is overpowering common sense!

The ROW's NP wants to use for its new power line were originally purchased for peanuts to distribute power to the North Country of NH. Most of the former owners of these ROW's gave the property to Public Service Company of New Hampshire (PSNH) for next to nothing to help out their fellow citizens up north who were without a dependable source of power.

It's time for the Northern Pass Project to step back and reconsider its routing plan yet again. The shoulders of Interstate 93 are the perfect routing for the NP. If the lines are installed underwater or underground along sensible routes like I-93 that will easily accommodate the readily available HVDC Light Cable technology, this project will be able to go ahead in time for the NP to get a strategic place in the stack of transmission line projects that are steadily moving forward throughout Northern New England.

But this solution will require the EverSource planners and executives to lift their index fingers off the "barrel forward in our own ROW at any cost button" and to tune their hearing to listen more carefully to the people who live in this beautiful state, and who want to keep it this way. Thousands of people, mostly opponents of the NP, have attended meetings all over the state during the last two years and the message has been very clear – **Underground all the way or Northern Pass, just go away!**

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The real truth about this project has just been uncovered by experts retained by Counsel for the Public. In a scathing report that has just come to light, the public has learned that the supposed significant cost benefits to the public are just part of NP's imagination. It turns out that under the absolute best case scenario, the average EverSource customer might see a reduction in rates of \$3.15 per month in 2020.

No one with any sensitivity to the beauty and grandeur of our state would ever agree to sacrifice our surroundings to the greed of EverSource and NP for a paltry \$3.15 saving on their monthly electricity bills starting a number of years down the road.

And, the \$3.15 monthly savings was the best possible outcome. Three other scenarios were also examined and in the worst case projection of future rates, the NP would cause domestic residential rates to actually rise. The answer to NP and its request to hijack the natural beauty of our surroundings is **NO, NOT NOW, NOT EVER!**

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