

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY**

**Department of Energy Environmental Impact Statement Public Scoping Meeting on
NORTHERN PASS TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT**

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The Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservancy, (with mailing addresses listed above) a Federal and State sanctioned 501(c)(3) non-profit organization, are stewards to the 100 acre “Poore Family Homestead Historic Farm Museum District” (aka The Poore Farm District) in Stewartstown NH, on Scenic and Cultural American Byway Route 145, is an historic resource that will be directly affected by this project, and is one identified by the Northern Pass LLC as an "Historic and Cultural Resources", of which I am the Executive Director, is opposed to granting a Presidential Permit to Northern Pass LLC to import electric power from Hydro Quebec, Canada and through NH, due to the inestimable damage it will cause to our environment.

The Museum District is a historic homestead / settlement portraying one family's life from the 1830's to the 1980s. The house, barns and outbuildings are all in original condition and reflect their use and era. The feeling one gets when entering the homestead is to step back in time, to one that existed prior to rural electrification of the northern-most regions of NH. The Museum is the

last remaining 100-acre historic farm settlement of it's kind in the New Hampshire and the only Museum in this region that has added greatly to area tourism. The Farm is considered by many to be one of the, if not the most important historic landmark in the Northern NH. The Museum has a large collection of historical clothing, artifacts, newspapers, magazines, diaries and letters, including a civil war letter collection, hand tools, horse drawn wagons and farming implements and a vast collection of ever day items, all on display and being preserved for future generations. The genealogical information about the Farm's family and their connection to other members of the New Hampshire community is of particular interest to our visitors tracing their North Country heritage. The house, barns and outbuildings are all in original condition and reflect their use and era. The feeling one experiences when entering the District, is of "stepping back in time, to one that existed prior to the rural electrification of the Northern most regions of New Hampshire."

Geographic Area served: New Hampshire, Northeast Vermont, Northwest Maine and Southeast Quebec, Canada.

The Museum and grounds are open for public interpretation for from June through September, hosting a variety of cultural events, demonstrations, concerts, social gatherings and a summer student jobs program.

Summer employment for youth in our rural area is very limited. The activities at the Museum provides opportunities for youth that need it the most plus provides a vehicle for the Foundation to reach some of its short and long term goals. It is believed that the work experience will foster the next generation of stewards for the Poore Farm and New Hampshire history while providing youth with practical work experience that is transferable to other chosen career paths. One of our former youth volunteers, now in her forth year at UVM, has recently joined the Foundation's Board of Directors.

Two of the Foundation's core tenets are "giving back to the community" and "youth participation". These tenets have been upheld by reinvesting 100% of raised funds back into the local economy and through associations with two local high schools: the Canaan, Vermont, Memorial High School, Building Construction and Restoration Carpentry trades program and the Colebrook, NH, Academy High School National Honor Society Students and Student Council members. Working with these youth and other local youth groups is a time proven success story that builds a strong community bond, especially with our youth. This year, 2011 will be Colebrook Academy's 12th annual day of service and spring clean up at the Museum. All Foundation expenditures, when ever possible, are reinvested in the community to contribute to the local economy. In excess of \$400.000 has been redirected to date.

The Foundation has enjoyed significant growth in through the years and can take pride in its' many years of service to the community. We just completed a multiple phase Arts initiative that has increased our capacity to host outdoor traditional performing Arts events. This has added to the vitality of the region and will meet the growing demand of the local communities for more events like these. As part of our management plan, the Foundation has embarked on an ambitious effort to establish a 70-acre environmental study area that includes a trail system and a Nature Center to enhance science curriculum in the local schools and provide educational and recreational opportunities for the public.

Last year we begin construction of an FHWA approved Visitor Welcoming Center. The Poore Family Homestead District's 2,500 square foot National Scenic Byway Visitor Welcoming Center project, 10 years in the planning, is fully funded, has been approved by the FHWA Byways program, NH State Governor and Council, and is now under construction. The Center will further enhance our capacity to serve the community and provide modern facilities for the touring public.

The placement of the Northern Pass corridor near the Center and this Byway will impede the anticipated development of this region.

The Poore Family Foundation Board of Directors, consisting of community members with a passionate interest in the preservation and public interpretation of this unique Northern New Hampshire historic resource, take the responsibility of stewardship of this inherited homestead most seriously. It is more than the treasure of physical artifacts, buildings and land of the NH's North Country but also as our mission statement, articles of incorporation and by-laws state the "spirit and way of life of the settlers of the Upper Connecticut River Valley" which reflect those of the founders and builders of our country, the United States of America.

Statement of Need:

Tourism, particularly historic and cultural tourism, is a growing industry in the North Country, an industry that fuels our economy.

The Museum's initial determination of need for a regional historic and cultural NH destination was based on a site assessment by staff from the New Hampshire Historical Society and Canterbury Shaker Village. The NH Historical Society has demonstrated the State wide need and interest in this project. Subsequent site assessments, supported on the national level with grants from the Institute of Museum and Library Services and the American Association of Museums, performed by experts in the field of museum collections and historic structures, further reinforced the Poore Family Foundation's mission, vision and direction.

In recent years the Poore Family District has made traditional Arts programming and cultural activities more accessible with our annual concert series and the newly constructed out-

door stage and amphitheater venue that can accommodate much larger audiences. We recently introduced our first theatrical production. (The autumn performance of Shakespeare's Hamlet presented by Momentum Theatre Troupe was a huge success that gained the attention of local schools whom offered literature students school credit for attending.) We have also improved access to hiking and environmental study through a blend of education and sound stewardship of our 70-acre Bishop Brook Gorge Environmental Study Area. The new Welcoming Center project will contribute to the before mentioned efforts plus make the Poore Museum District and grounds more accessible to the local community and the motoring public.

The Welcoming Center will provide modern handicap accessible facilities along a Byway that currently has none. The Welcoming Center project will directly benefit the touring public, the community and contribute to the region's vitality, the proposed Northern Pass corridor will not.

The yearly support from the Tillotson North Country Foundation, the NH State Council on the Arts, the NH Electric Co-op Foundation, the NH Charitable Foundation, NH preservation Alliance and from many other philanthropic organizations and volunteers, is a significant acknowledgment of The Poore Foundation's successful track record of providing intelligent programs while improving the region's vitality and infrastructure. The Museum attracts an average of 1000+ visitors per year. This year will be our 16th year of operation as an important historical and cultural New Hampshire destination.

Need for a study of the District's Historical Significance:

The District, circa 1825, will be directly affected by the sight and sound of these massive transmission towers and high voltage power lines looming over the eastern boundary of our 70 acre Environmental Study area or right over that section of conservancy property, the maps presented

by the applicant are not precise enough to determine the actual location of the line in relation to Poore Foundation Conservancy property boundaries. Either way, the pylons and lines will be twice the height of any tree in the region and the towers and lines will be viewed just east of the Poore Homestead and south from our Visitor Center's entrance and viewing deck, from the Homestead's Scenic Vista and from our Amphitheater / Performance area and parking, all of which commands a view south towards the Blue Mountain range in Columbia and in sight of the proposed corridor that is also headed southward just to the east of the Route 145 Byway. The line will also have a visually adverse affect on the Byway and upon approaching this District, along a FHWA designated National Scenic and Cultural Byway. **The transmission corridor will have a detrimental affect to the "incredible sense of being" one experiences when entering the District, of "stepping back in time", (in perfect silence) "to one that existed prior to the rural electrification of the Northern most regions of New England".**

At midpoint on the National Scenic Byway, NH Route 145 / the Hollow Road meanders through the entire length of the 100 acre Poore Family Homestead Historic Farm Museum District. The District abuts other historic parcels of land, mile after mile of them, creating a historic and cultural region along this Byway. This region is part of the American Byways system, the Connecticut River Byway system, the North Section. (see attached map: <http://www.bywaysonline.org/inventory/byways/15801/maps/797>) Please use this map for an overlay with the applicant's map to see where the Byway and the HVDC corridor intersect or parallel one another and at what distance. The applicant's placement of this corridor, along side, crossing over and within view from the Byway will have a negative visual affect on the Byway and diminish the touring publics natural and scenic experience. The 135+ feet high towers, standing 70

feet above the tree line within this corridor, will be visible from miles away in all directions. The applicant will not be able to simply hide these massive structures behind some ridge, or camouflage them like some malformed gigantic tree, as is the current practice with Cell towers. These will be visible and detract from ones natural experience and the Byway's grandeur and it's cultural characteristics. The origins that defined the roadway and the Poore Farm District will be directly affected. The Northern Pass corridor is an industrial machine, winding though NH and many similar districts and contradicts the philosophy of the American Scenic Byways program and that of The Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservancy.

The corridor will degrade the region and the Byways' status, which could contribute to a portion of or the entire Connecticut Byway System to be declassified.

Our scenic splendor is what drives our economy, which is primarily tourism based and is all that the Northern NH communities have left to sustain our lifestyle. **The HVDC Corridor will directly affect this. Please just say no to the Northern Pass through NH.**

The Foundation Directors and I believe, if the applicant can actually prove there is a need for this power and DOE is contemplating issuing a permit for a corridor, the Northern NH region and New England as a whole would be better served by simply widening or burying the proposed HVDC Line down the existing NE Corridor in Vermont. (See attached map) This route is shorter, will meet less resistance, and can possibly be buried in the Connecticut River to points south, similar to the Hudson River HVDC proposal, and not create another boarder crossing and additional National security issues, or burden on our Boarder Patrol. Illegal traffic over our boarder is a local concern and a growing Nation wide problem that does not need to be exasperated by another 150 ft wide corridor right into the good old USA.

The Poore Family Foundation believes our Nation and the North Country of NH would be better served by approving the Hudson River Express project and reinstate the “spur-line” that could supply lower New England’s future energy needs, thus enabling NE based green energy projects: the ones proposed, under construction and to be developed. The proposed international transmission corridor planned for NH will under-sell any competition and eliminate any NE Based green energy projects for decades to come, and become more reliant on imported energy, contrary to our National policy. The proposed project will directly affect the orderly development of our regional electrical infrastructure and our Nation’s energy independence.

Therefore: the Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservancy respectfully requests the DOE to deny Northern Pass LLC’s Presidential permit, doc. # 2010-28811, as written.

COMMENT:

There is no need for this power in NH. NH already export our excess, so why should we be expected to take the brunt of this project before we even get a chance to learn about it? Its not like there is some kind of National electrical emergency and the people down in Boston and Connecticut are having their electric power shut off, and they are cold and freezing. If the applicant or DOE want to know what that’s like, come live up here in the North Country for a few winters. Knowing my fellow NH and Vermont residents, and how they band together under adversity, if there was an actual National emergency for electricity, or for that matter any emergency, the people of the North Country would be out in force, cutting and clearing the ROWs themselves with their own equipment long before any emergency presidential declaration would be signed. The Towns have regional municipal agreements

for just such town wide and regional emergencies. I say this from the perspective of a State of NH assigned and duly appointed Emergency Management Director for the Town of Columbia for the past 22 years and the regional Citizens Emergency Response Team (CERT) coordinator, a Homeland Security funded program. www.columbianh.org

The proposed project will directly affect the orderly development of our regional electrical infrastructure of our Nations energy independence.

CONCLUSION

The Poore Family Foundation for North Country Conservancy respectfully requests that the DOE order a comprehensive study about the significance of the Poore Family Homestead District in relation to historic and cultural tourism and the inestimable damage the sight and sounds of the Northern Pass HVDC corridor will have on it and the environment.

If additional clarification or information is needed please feel free to contact in writing.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: March 19, 2011

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