



Department of Energy

Washington, DC 20585

July 30, 2013

Mr. Tony Tur
US Fish and Wildlife Service
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, New Hampshire 03301

**RE: United States Department of Energy, Northern Pass Transmission Line Project
NEPA Review-Data Request**

Dear Mr. Tur:

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) is currently reviewing an amended Presidential Permit Application (Docket PP-371) for the proposed Northern Pass Transmission Line Project (Project) under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Northern Pass Transmission, LLC (Applicant) proposes to construct and operate a 187-mile transmission line from the New Hampshire-Canada border, to an existing substation in Deerfield, New Hampshire. Pursuant to NEPA, DOE has taken the role of lead regulatory agency with the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the US Forest Service (USFS), and the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) as cooperating agencies. DOE, along with the cooperating agencies, are preparing a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Project.

The Project includes approximately 147 miles of proposed transmission line that will be located within an existing right-of-way (ROW) in Coos, Grafton, Belknap, Merrimack, and Rockingham counties (see attached map for details). The remaining 40 miles will be located in Coos County in northern New Hampshire and would consist of a new ROW approximately 150 feet in width.

The DEIS will analyze potential human and natural environmental consequences resulting from the construction, operation, and maintenance of the Project. In an effort to obtain the most current and accurate information to be used in the DOE's NEPA analysis of the Project, DOE is requesting any information from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) that identifies sensitive and protected biological and natural resources such as rare or threatened and endangered species, critical habitat, high quality aquatic resources and exceptional ecological communities that may occur in the vicinity of the preliminary route and existing ROW as shown on the attached map.

Per previous correspondence and meetings, DOE's contractors (SE Group and Ecology & Environment, Inc.) are currently conducting biological field surveys for the Project as a data gathering effort for the DOE's impact analysis. As such, any recommendations for field survey protocols for any sensitive and protected species and natural resources identified as occurring within or in the vicinity of the proposed Project would be appreciated, along with any special



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considerations for construction and operations of the proposed transmission line. DOE and its contractors will continue to consult further with the FWS as appropriate through the remainder of the field surveys and analyses in support of the DEIS.

DOE appreciates the FWS's support and input in regards to the Project to date. If you have any further questions regarding the amended Presidential Permit application and DOE's role in the Project, please do not hesitate to call (202-586-8267) or email (brian.mills@hq.doe.gov) me. DOE appreciates your assistance and thanks you for your attention to this request, and looks forward to working in cooperation with the FWS on this Project.

Sincerely,



Brian Mills
Senior Planning Advisor
Office of Electricity Delivery & Energy Reliability
US Department of Energy

Attachments:

Amended Proposed Project Route

Cc:

Kent Sharp, SE Group
Travis Beck, SE Group
Dan Belin, E & E