



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

December 9, 2014

Mr. Tom Chapman
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
New England Field Office
70 Commercial Street, Suite 300
Concord, NH 03301

SUBJECT: Proposed Northern Pass Transmission Line Project

Dear Mr. Chapman:

This letter is to initiate informal consultation under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) for the Northern Pass Transmission Line Project.

Northern Pass Transmission, LLC (Northern Pass) applied to the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) for a Presidential permit to construct, operate, maintain, and connect an electric transmission line across the United States border with Canada. Northern Pass filed its original Presidential permit application on October 14, 2010.

In response to the Presidential permit application, on February 11, 2011 the DOE published the *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement and to Conduct Public Scoping Meetings and Notice of Floodplains and Wetlands Involvement* (the NOI) in the *Federal Register*. In the NOI DOE announced its intention to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) to assess the potential environmental impacts of issuing a Presidential permit, the federal action, to Northern Pass to construct, operate, maintain, and connect a new electric transmission line across the U.S.-Canada border in northern New Hampshire (NH).

On July 1, 2013, Northern Pass filed an amended application with the DOE which reflected several changes, including a modified northern section for the proposed project route.

DOE published an Amended Notice of Intent (amended NOI) in the *Federal Register* on September 6, 2013, reflecting changes to the Presidential permit application, per the amended application.

A detailed description of the proposed transmission line and alternatives being analyzed in the EIS is located on the EIS website at

<http://www.northernpasseis.us/library/documents/> and

[http://www.northernpasseis.us/media/documents/The%20Northern%20Pass%20EIS%20Scoping%20Report%20Alternatives%20Addendum 05 01 2014 final.pdf](http://www.northernpasseis.us/media/documents/The%20Northern%20Pass%20EIS%20Scoping%20Report%20Alternatives%20Addendum%2005%2001%202014%20final.pdf)

The following is a list of threatened and endangered species under the USFWS jurisdiction, which are potentially located in the project area:

1. Canada lynx (*Lynx canadensis*)
2. Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*)
3. Northern Long-eared Bat (proposed to list as endangered)
4. Karner Blue Butterfly (*Lycaeides melissa samuelis*)
1. Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*)-delisted but protected under the Federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act

We ask that you review and approve the above list of potentially affected species, or provide a list of additional species that might be affected and any concerns relative to impacts of the Proposed Action on federally listed species.

Please feel free to contact me directly at any time at Brian.Mills@hq.DOE.gov, by phone at (202) 586-8267, or by fax at (202) 586-8008. We look forward to working with your office on this project.

Very truly yours,



Brian Mills
NEPA Document Manager
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Office of Electricity Delivery and
Energy Reliability