

4.3 STUDY AREA AND 345-kV ROUTE OPTIONS

The initial step in the route selection and evaluation process was to define the study area based on the identified need for the Project. In this case, transmission upgrades are needed to reinforce the Springfield area transmission system. In selecting the study area, WMECO took into consideration that the shortest routes between the substation interconnections would also typically minimize environmental disruption, social disruption and costs. As a result of the analysis of transmission alternatives described in Sections 3.2 through 3.6, a study area was selected based on the requirement to connect the substations of North Bloomfield, Connecticut and Ludlow, Massachusetts with an intermediate connection at Agawam, Massachusetts. The study area shown in Figure 4-3 was selected to encompass these substations with a focus on the use of existing transmission line corridors.

Figure 4-3: Study Area Boundaries

