

**Petition No. 1439**  
**Eversource – Telecommunications Facility**  
**13 Morgan Road, Canton**  
**DRAFT Staff Report**  
**March 19, 2021**

On December 23, 2020, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) received a petition (Petition) from The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource) for a declaratory ruling pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed installation of a new steel pole with appurtenances at its Canton Substation at 13 Morgan Road in Canton, Connecticut.

On or about December 21, 2020, Eversource provided notice of the proposed project to the Town of Canton (Town) and state and local officials and agencies. Eversource provided notice to abutting property owners on or about December 23, 2020.

On December 28, 2020, the Council sent correspondence to the Town stating that the Council has received the Petition and invited the Town to contact the Council with any questions or comments by January 22, 2021. No comments from the Town were received.

Eversource is currently in the process of reconfiguring its communications system throughout the state that will allow an upgrade from the current analog voice radio communications system, which is obsolete, to a digital voice communications system. The new system would allow voice communications under all operating conditions including emergency and storm restoration activities as well as the remote control of distribution safety equipment.

Eversource owns the 31-acre property that is currently the location of the Canton Substation. The substation consists of a gravel-based fenced compound containing electric substation equipment and a control house. Single-family residential development is located along portions of Cherry Brook Road (to the north and west of the substation) and Morgan Road (to the northeast of the substation). Multi-unit residential development is located along Albany Turnpike to the south of the substation.

Eversource proposes the installation of a new 45-foot steel pole with an approximately 24-foot, 217 MHz omni-directional whip antenna on the top that would extend to a height of 67 feet above ground level (agl). The new pole would be installed in an existing grass area (outside the fenced substation) approximately 30 feet to the west of the existing control enclosure. Associated radio equipment and electrical power supply connections would be installed within the existing substation control house.

In the grass area, Eversource would construct a 12-foot wide by approximately 174 foot long gravel access drive from the existing access and extending north to reach the tower area. A 30-foot by 40-foot gravel parking area will be installed at the northern limits of the access drive.

Also in the grass area, a 15-foot radius (or about 707 square foot area) around the tower would be cleared of debris and flattened. The nearest wetland of man-made origin is located approximately 4 feet west<sup>1</sup> of the circular clearing area around the proposed tower. The proposed ice bridge would cross the wetland, but it would be elevated above grade and supported by posts and foundations on either side. Thus, there would be no direct wetland impacts. Erosion and sedimentation controls consisting of one row of silt fence and

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<sup>1</sup> One of the ice bridge foundations would be closer than 4 feet to the wetland, but wattles would be installed on either side of ice bridge foundation.

two rows of wattles would be installed in accordance with the *2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control* for the protection of the wetland during construction. An environmental monitor will oversee compliance with the erosion control measures.

All proposed construction activities would occur within the maintained lawn area adjacent to the existing substation. No tree clearing is proposed for the project.

The nearest Important Bird Area is Barkhamsted Block in Canton located approximately 1.0 mile north of the project location. The proposed structure would comply with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service guidelines for minimizing potential impacts to bird species.

The proposed project is located within a Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)-Natural Diversity Database buffered area. Eversource consulted with DEEP and confirmed that no known populations of Federal or State Endangered, Threatened or Special Concern Species occur on site. However, host plants for a state-listed butterfly are located near the proposed access drive. Eversource is consulting with DEEP and will include protective measures during construction to avoid impacting the host plants. With these protective measures, the project is not expected to adversely impact state-listed species.

The northern long-eared bat (NLEB) is a State of Connecticut-listed endangered and federally-listed threatened species. The NLEB's range encompasses the entire state. There are no known occupied maternity roost trees within 150 feet of the site, and there is no known NLEB hibernaculum within 0.25 mile of the site. Furthermore, with no proposed tree clearing, the project is not likely to adversely affect the NLEB.

The proposed facility is not expected to have a significant visual impact to the surrounding area. The existing substation is screened from Morgan Road and Cherry Brook Road by mixed deciduous trees and varying topography. Several wooden and steel utility poles are located within and proximate to the substation. The nearest residential property is approximately 405 feet northwest of the proposed steel pole.

The nearest publicly-accessible recreational areas are Nepaug State Forest, located approximately 0.59 mile to the west, and Mills Pond Recreational Area, located approximately 0.81 mile southeast of the site. Views of the proposed facility from either publicly-accessible recreational area are not anticipated.

No historic properties previously listed or deemed eligible for the National Register of Historic Places were identified within approximately 0.5 mile of the site.

The proposed structure would not require registration with the Federal Aviation Administration.

The facility would be located in a Federal Emergency Management Agency-designated unshaded Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard.

A Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut has certified that the structure will be structurally adequate to support the proposed loading. The maximum cumulative worst-case power density would be 5.06 percent of the applicable limit with a -10 dB off-beam adjustment.

The nearest daycare is located approximately 0.73 mile southeast of the proposed facility. The nearest school (Canton High School) is located 0.95 miles southeast of the proposed facility.

No noise would be associated with the proposed facility. Equipment would be housed within the existing substation control house building; therefore, noise levels are expected to be consistent with present day levels.

If approved, staff recommends the following condition:

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- PROPOSED STEEL POLE  
±20' EAST OF WETLAND 1
- PROPOSED ICE BRIDGE  
AND COAX CABLES  
OVER WETLAND 1
- Wetland 1
- PROPOSED 12' WIDE  
GRAVEL ACCESS DRIVE  
AND 30' X 40' GRAVEL  
PARKING AREA
- EXISTING EVERSOURCE  
60' X 20' CONTROL HOUSE
- START OF PROPOSED  
UNDERGROUND COAX  
CONDUIT SYSTEM
- WF-1-01/1-29
- EXISTING  
ACCESS DRIVE  
(NOT DEPICTED ON  
AERIAL PHOTOGRAPH)
- Inset Map  
1 inch = 75 feet

**Figure 1.** Site location.



**Figure 2.** View of existing location.





**Figure 3.** Proposed facility