



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Ten Franklin Square, New Britain, CT 06051

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E-Mail: siting.council@ct.gov

www.ct.gov/csc

CERTIFIED MAIL RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

March 31, 2017

Kathleen Shanley
Manager-Transmission Siting
Eversource Energy
P.O. Box 270
Hartford, CT 06141-0270

RE: **PETITION NO. 1293** - Eversource Energy petition for a declaratory ruling that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for all transmission facility asset condition maintenance improvements to comply with the updated National Electric Safety Code clearance requirements.

Dear Ms. Shanley:

At a public meeting held on March 30, 2017, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) considered and ruled that this proposal would not have a substantial adverse environmental effect, and pursuant to General Statutes § 16-50k, would not require a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need. This proposal is approved subject to the following conditions:

1. Eversource shall file with the Council a sub-petition for each site-specific transmission line maintenance activity for Council staff review that includes the following information:
 - a. The exact location and reason for the site-specific transmission line maintenance activity (ex. Replacement of wood structure damaged by woodpecker activity);
 - b. Description of the transmission line maintenance activity, including, but not limited to, site drawings and plans depicting current field conditions and access routes to areas of maintenance activities;
 - c. An impact statement relating to the potential environmental effects of construction as follows, where applicable:
 - i. Wetlands and watercourses
 - ii. Flood zones
 - iii. Department of Energy and Environmental Protection Natural Diversity Database areas;
 - iv. Vegetation management; and
 - d. A mitigation plan for any identified environmental impact, including, but not limited to best management practices, erosion and sediment controls, re-vegetation and site stabilization.
2. Eversource shall provide notice to the town(s) and abutting property owners of the proposed transmission line maintenance activity with a copy of the site-specific sub-petition indicating that comments or concerns should be submitted to the Council within 30 days of the date that the sub-petition is sent to the town(s) and abutting property owners. Proof of such notice shall be provided to the Council at the time the site-specific sub-petition is filed with the Council. If Eversource identifies field conditions that require immediate attention to replace a compromised transmission structure and Eversource submits to the Council with the site-specific sub-petition proof of notice to the town(s) and abutting property owners, and also submits written permission to proceed with the transmission line maintenance activity from the town, the 30-day comment period may be waived.

This decision is under the exclusive jurisdiction of the Council. The Council shall have discretion to request additional information, conduct field reviews, deliberate during a regular meeting, or hold a public hearing on any site-specific sub-petition that is filed. All work is to be implemented in accordance with the 2017 National Electric Safety Code, as amended, and as specified in the petition, dated March 2, 2017.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of the staff report on this petition.

Very truly yours,



Robert Stein
Chairman

RS/MAB/lm

Enclosure: Staff Report dated March 30, 2017



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Petition No. 1293

The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy Statewide – National Electrical Safety Code Transmission Line Maintenance Activities Staff Report March 30, 2017

On March 2, 2017, 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 that no Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need is required for all statewide transmission line maintenance activities to comply with the updated National Electrical Safety Code (NESC) standards, including, but not limited to, conductor clearance requirements. The NESC is the authoritative code for ensuring the continued practical safeguarding of persons and utility facilities during the installation, operation and maintenance of electric power and communications utility systems, including substations, overhead lines and underground lines.

The NESC is updated and published every five years to keep the code up-to-date with changes in the industry and technology. Specifically, in August 2016, the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE) Standards Association published the 2017 (100th Anniversary Edition) NESC. Changes in the 2017 NESC include, but are not limited to, revised requirements for substation impenetrable fences, consideration of Aeolian vibration for conductors, changes to accommodate new industry ratings and revisions to align the code with changes made to Occupational Safety and Health Administration rules.

Standards for the design of transmission line structures have changed over the years since electric transmission lines were originally constructed. These changes frequently result in necessary height increases of replacement transmission line structures to comply with new standards, including, but not limited to, compliance with NESC conductor clearance requirements. This requires utilities to evaluate installation of a replacement transmission line structure in accordance with all of the new applicable codes and standards. Due to compromised asset conditions, transmission line structures exhibiting cracking, splitting, rot, woodpecker holes, etc. must be replaced. As a result of recent surveys, Eversource has targeted wood transmission line structures in several locations throughout the state that are in need of replacement. The replacement of compromised transmission line structures will directly enhance the resiliency and reliability of the bulk power system.

No line upgrades or reconductoring work is proposed as part of this Petition. Improvements include, but are not limited to, replacement of wood structures with weathering steel structures that are similar in appearance, a slight increase in structure height of some of the new replacement structures to comply with NESC conductor clearance requirements, installation of new foundations for the replacement structures and relocation of existing lines to the new replacement structures.

To comply with the NESC and minimize environmental impacts, Eversource plans to:

1. Conduct all work on Eversource property or within existing Eversource rights-of-way;
2. Minimize vegetation removal within the right-of-way to the extent practicable and restore temporarily disturbed areas in accordance with Eversource's September 2016 Best Management Practices Manual for Massachusetts and Connecticut (BMPs). No removal of mature trees is required;

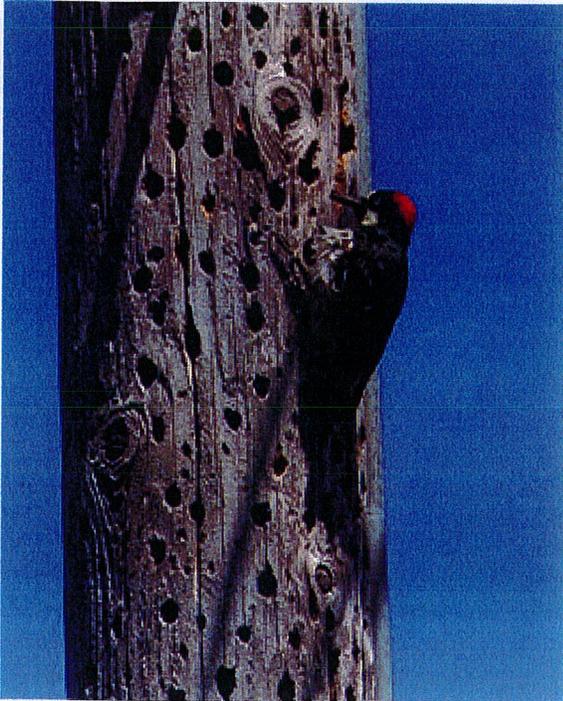
3. Locate replacement structures out of wetland areas, to the extent possible, except where new foundations for replacement transmission line structures are already located in wetland areas. No permanent wetland impacts are expected;
4. Install one-for-one replacements of transmission line structures located within 15 feet of the existing transmission line structures;
5. Increase heights of replacement transmission line structures no more than 10 feet, when necessary;
6. Employ erosion and sediment controls in accordance with the *2002 Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control* and Eversource BMPs;
7. Use existing access, where possible, retain work pads in upland areas unless the property owner requests removal, and remove matting from wetland areas after construction; and
8. Restore disturbed/exposed areas upon completion of construction with topsoil, landscaping or seed.

The statewide transmission line maintenance activities will not have substantial adverse environmental effects. There would be no impacts to cultural resources. Visual impacts would be limited to slight differences in the appearance and height of the replacement transmission line structures. There would also be no substantial changes to electric and magnetic field levels or noise levels at all points along the right-of-way property lines.

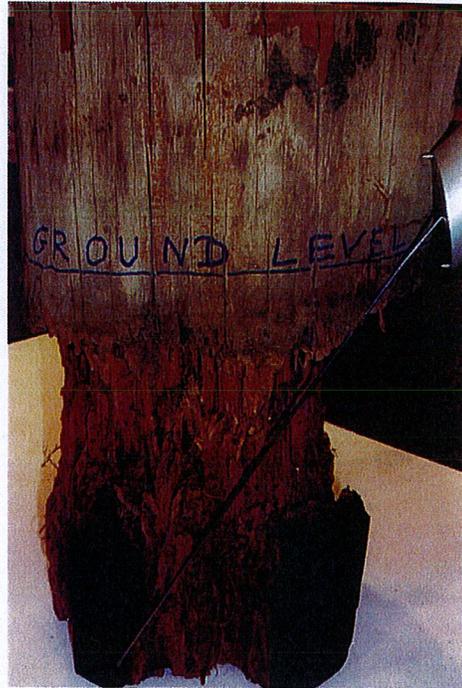
Consistent with Council Petition Nos. 1000 and 1073, Connecticut Light and Power Company and the United Illuminating Company declaratory rulings that no Certificate is required for all transmission remediation activities pursuant to the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) facility ratings recommendation to industry, and consistent with Council Petition No. 1157, Eversource Energy and the United Illuminating Company joint declaratory ruling that no Certificate is required for all transmission substation remediation activities to comply with the NERC Reliability Standards for Critical Infrastructure Protection, staff recommends the following process for submission, evaluation and approval of statewide transmission line maintenance activities to comply with the updated NESC standards:

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 - a. The exact location and reason for the site-specific transmission line maintenance activity (ex. Replacement of wood structure damaged by woodpecker activity);
 - b. Description of the transmission line maintenance activity, including, but not limited to, site drawings and plans depicting current field conditions and access routes to areas of maintenance activities;
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 - iv. Vegetation management; and
 - d. A mitigation plan for any identified environmental impacts, including, but not limited to, best management practices, erosion and sediment controls, re-vegetation and site stabilization.
2. Eversource shall provide notice to the town(s) and abutting property owners of the proposed transmission line maintenance activity with a copy of the site-specific sub-petition indicating that comments or concerns should be submitted to the Council within 30 days of the date that the sub-petition is sent to the town(s) and abutting property owners. Proof of such notice shall be provided to the Council at the time the site-specific sub-petition is filed with the Council. If Eversource identifies field conditions that require immediate attention to replace a compromised transmission structure and Eversource submits to the Council with the site-specific sub-petition proof of notice to

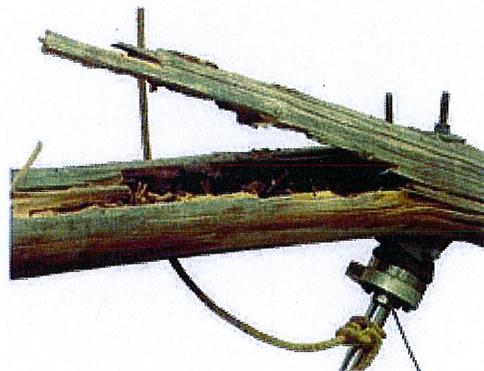
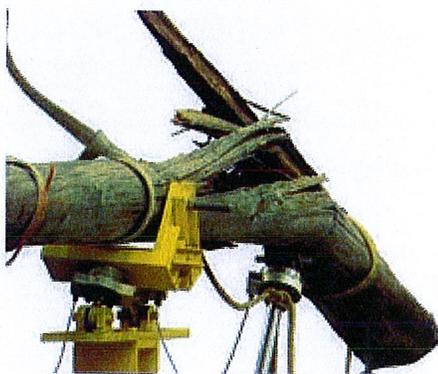
the town(s) and abutting property owners, and also submits written permission to proceed with the transmission line maintenance activity from the town, the 30-day comment period may be waived.



Woodpecker damage



Wood rot



Wood cracking and splitting