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July 8, 2008

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Alan R. Schriber  
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
180 East Broad St.  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Mr. Schriber,

On behalf of the Maple Country Chapter of the National Wild Turkey Federation, I would like to state our objection to the Geauga County 138kV Transmission Line Project, PUCO case number 07-0171-EL-BTX, as proposed by the FirstEnergy Corporation. We would urge this board to examine the current project proposals for construction and the irreversible impact it will have on the properties affected. I would further request the Board to assist in the modification of the current proposed routes toward pre-existing civil corridors.

The National Wild Turkey Federation has spent more than 3.4 million dollars, since 1985, in Ohio to provide for the trapping, transferring and reestablishment of the Wild Turkey, habitat improvement projects, tree plantings and other related programs. The Northeast portion of Geauga County has provided an invaluable resource in reestablishing the Wild Turkey populations locally. With its low housing density, agricultural properties, large tracts of forest land and available water supplies, turkey populations have flourished in this area and been able to spread to surrounding areas.

The resulting impact of the proposed construction will destroy as much as 62 acres of these woodlands, 55 acres of wetlands and disturb 58 various streams. These prime forested areas are crucial roost areas for wild turkey. The access to suitable water sources is critical to nesting hens and new poults which generally must roost/nest within 1/2 mile from a constant water source. With the constant push from development and local timber industries it is becoming difficult for local flocks to find the suitable large timber roost areas and proper nesting habitat. Therefore, I strongly urge against the proposed construction of the utility corridor through these areas. There appear to be options for utilizing existing corridors in lieu of the construction of the new. It has been proposed by some that the 'Route 11' and/or 'Rachel route bike path' should be suitable alternates with far less environmental and personal impact.

I appreciate the opportunity to voice our opposition to the current proposals for the Geauga County 138kV Transmission Line Project as proposed by FirstEnergy.

Sincerely,

Matthew J. McDermott,  
President, Maple Country Chapter of the NWTF and  
Ohio State Chapter, District Director

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