

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application     )**  
**by American Electric Power Ohio Transmission            )**  
**Company, Inc. for the Amlin-Cole 138 kV Transmission    )** **16-1690-EL-BLN**  
**Line Project.    )**

Members of the Board:

|   |                               |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Chairman, Public Utilities Commission     | Ohio House of Representatives |
| Director, Development Services Agency     | Ohio Senate                   |
| Director, Department of Health            |                               |
| Director, Department of Agriculture       |                               |
| Director, Environmental Protection Agency |                               |
| Director, Department of Natural Resources |                               |
| Public Member                             |                               |

To the Honorable Power Siting Board:

Please review the attached Staff Report of Investigation, which has been filed in accordance with Ohio Power Siting Board (Board) rules. The accelerated certificate application in this case is subject to an automatic approval process as required by Section 4906.03 of the Ohio Revised Code.

The application will be recommended for automatic approval on November 30, 2016 unless suspended by the Board's chairperson or an administrative law judge. If suspended, the Board must render a decision on the application within 90 days from the date of suspension.

Please present any concerns you or your designee may have with this case to my office at least four business days prior to November 30, 2016, which is the automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Patrick Donlon  
Director, Rates and Analysis  
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
180 East Broad Street  
Columbus, Ohio 43215  
(614) 644-8932

## OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Case Number:** 16-1690-EL-BLN  
**Project Name:** Amlin-Cole 138 kV Transmission Line Project  
**Project Location:** Franklin County  
**Applicant:** AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc.  
**Application Filing Date:** November 1, 2016  
**Filing Type:** Expedited Letter of Notification  
**Inspection Date:** November 18, 2016  
**Report Date:** November 23, 2016  
**Recommended Automatic Approval Date:** November 30, 2016  
**Applicant's Waiver Requests:** None  
**Staff Assigned:** J. Pawley, G. Zeto

### Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Conditions

Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

### Project Description

The Applicant, AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc. (AEP Ohio Transco), states that the purpose of this project is to install a new 138 kilovolt (kV) circuit to the existing steel lattice tower structures between the existing Amlin and Cole substations. There is a vacant open arm position on the steel lattice towers that are currently supporting the Beatty-Hayden and Hayden-Hyatt 345 kV transmission lines. The total length of the proposed 138 kV conductor circuit would be approximately 10 miles. Twelve new steel pole structures would be added and one lattice tower removed for this project. The transmission line project would begin at the Cole Substation (under construction, see case number 16-1558-EL-BLN). The cost of the overall project is estimated at \$15 million. The Applicant would like to begin construction in December 2016 and place the project in service by December 2017.

### Site Description

The new 138 kV conductor circuit is proposed entirely within existing AEP Ohio Transco easements located in Franklin County. The Applicant states that no access easements, options, or other land use agreements are needed for construction of this project. The new 138 kV transmission line would be attached to structures that support the Beatty-Hayden and Hayden-Hyatt 345 kV transmission lines, and any new structures would be installed within the existing transmission line easement and on station property owned by AEP Ohio Transco. All land owners and applicable public officials have been notified about the project. Significant crossings for this project include two railroad tracks, Hayden Run Road, Roberts Road, and U.S. Route 70.

## **Basis of Need**

This new looped transmission line would support the interconnection of a large transmission customer, as well as potential future customers and AEP distribution services, and increase service reliability in northwestern Franklin County.

## **Nature of Impacts**

### *Social*

The Applicant has indicated that the new circuit would be installed via the use of a helicopter, greatly minimizing land use impacts. The Applicant has proposed to construct the entire line within existing right-of-way. Therefore, potential impacts are expected to be largely confined to line stringing and pads for the helicopter to land, and should be temporary in nature. The new transmission pole structures are needed for the transmission line to exit the Cole Substation, and to bypass the existing Hayden Substation, and would be located on station property owned by the Applicant.

Residential aesthetic impacts are expected to be similar as present conditions, as there is an existing 345 kV circuit on one side of the towers. Several residential subdivisions and commercial properties would likely experience temporary disturbances from helicopter use, access, and line stringing. The majority of land use along the transmission line is 59 percent agricultural land and 19 percent residential land within 1,000 feet of the transmission line. There are commercial and residential uses across the street from the Hayden Substation. The Applicant used the Hayden Substation location for helicopter loading and takeoff several years ago in a similar case.

The Applicant conducted Phase I cultural resources surveys for the proposed route in April and June 2016. The Applicant's cultural resources consultant concluded that no historic properties would be adversely affected by this project, and that no further cultural resource management work is considered necessary for this project, unless there are changes to the proposed route.

### *Surface Waters*

The survey corridor contains three intermittent streams. No impacts are anticipated as the streams would be crossed by construction equipment at existing bridge structures.

Eleven wetlands were identified within the project area, including nine category 1 wetlands and two category 2 wetlands. No new poles would be located in wetlands. Access roads would cross six wetlands. Staff recommends the Applicant use timber matting for any construction equipment crossings of wetlands.

The project would disturb greater than one acre of land and is located within the Big Darby watershed. As a result, coverage under the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency Big Darby Creek Watershed General Permit would be required. No other local, state, or federal permit or other authorizations are required for the project.

### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

The federal and state-listed species and/or their suitable habitat that may be found in the project area include the state and federal endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the federal threatened Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). Staff recommends that removal of any trees three inches or greater in diameter only occur from October 1 through March 31.

**Conclusion**

Staff's review of the application included consideration of the requirements listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 4906.10. Based on Staff's review, the application meets the necessary criteria for granting a certificate. Staff recommends automatic approval of this case on November 30, 2016, provided that the following conditions are satisfied.

**Conditions**

- (1) The Applicant shall adhere to seasonal cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for removal of any trees greater than or equal to three inches in diameter, unless coordination efforts with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service reflect a different course of action.
- (2) The Applicant shall use timber matting for any construction equipment crossings of wetlands.

**This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities**

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

**11/23/2016 3:16:54 PM**

**in**

**Case No(s). 16-1690-EL-BLN**

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Mr. Jason Cross on behalf of  
Siting Staff