

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Construction Notice Application by)
American Transmission Systems, Incorporated for a)
Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public) 16-2312-EL-BNR
Need for the Delta-Wauseon 138 kV Transmission Line)
Structure Replacement for Gerald Grain 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 March 20, 2017, 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 March 20, 2017, 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
ContactOPSB@puc.state.oh.us

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 16-2312-EL-BNR
Project Name: Delta-Wauseon 138 kV Transmission Line
Structure Replacement for Gerald Grain Project
Project Location: Fulton County
Applicant: American Transmission Systems, Incorporated
Application Filing Date: December 19, 2016
Filing Type: Construction Notice
Inspection Dates: January 13 and February 1, 2017
Report Date: March 13, 2017
**Recommended Automatic
Approval Date:** March 20, 2017
Waiver Requests: None
Staff Assigned: J. O'Dell

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Condition
Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

Project Description

American Transmission Systems, Incorporated (Applicant) proposes to replace five existing single circuit wood structures with taller wood poles. The replacement structures would be installed within 5 feet of their original locations along the present centerline. The project is needed to provide required increased conductor clearances for a new railroad loop to Gerald Grain. The estimated capital costs of the project total approximately \$334,000.

Nature of Impacts

Land Use

The project is located in York Township. The project area is surrounded by light density rural residential properties. No institutional or other sensitive land uses are present in the vicinity. The Applicant conducted a cultural resource survey to ascertain potential impacts to historical and archaeological sites. The survey determined that impacts to historical properties are not expected.

Ecological Impacts

The Applicant has consulted with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service in preparation of their application to the Board. The project is within the range of the lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), a state endangered bird. This sparrow nests in grassland habitats with scattered shrub layers, disturbed open areas, as well as patches of bare soil. If this type of habitat will be impacted, construction should be avoided in this habitat during the species' nesting period of May 1 through June 30.

With the exception of the lark sparrow, it is unlikely that the proposed project would have a significant impact on ecological resources. Additionally, ATSI has developed a construction access plan that employs best management practices near any sensitive area during construction.

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 application on March 20, 2017.

Condition

- 1) Construction in upland lark sparrow preferred nesting habitat types shall be avoided during the species' nesting period of May 1 through June 30, unless coordination efforts with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service allows a different course of action.

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Case No(s). 16-2312-EL-BNR

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Mr. Matt Butler on behalf of Staff of OPSB