

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Application of American Electric
Power Ohio Transmission Company for an Amendment
to the Yager-Desert Road 138 kV Transmission Line
Rebuild Project**)
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Case No. 18-1855-EL-BTA

Members of the Board:

Chair, 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 rules. The application in this case is subject to an approval process as required by Section 4906.03 of the Ohio Revised Code.

Respectfully submitted,

Jamara S Turkenton

Tamara S. Turkenton
Director, Rates and Analysis
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Project Name: Amendment to the Yager-Desert Road 138 kV
Transmission Line Rebuild Project

Case Number: 18-1855-EL-BTA

Project Location: Harrison and Tuscarawas counties

Applicant: American Electric Power Ohio Transmission Company

Application Filing Date: January 18, 2019

Inspection Date: February 26, 2019

Report Date: March 8, 2019

Applicant's Waiver Requests: None

Staff Assigned: J. Pawley, G. Zeto

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Condition

Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

Application Description and Need

American Electric Power Ohio Transmission Company (Applicant or AEP Transco) is proposing an amendment to the Yager-Desert Road 138 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Rebuild Project, which was approved by the Ohio Power Siting Board on May 4, 2017 in Case No. 16-0535-EL-BTX. Proposed adjustments are proffered following final detailed engineering, land surveying, and property owner discussions regarding the approved route. The proposed adjustments do not involve any new property owners. The type of transmission equipment (related to transmission voltage, structure and conductor types) would not change. The Applicant states that the economic impact would not change as a result of these adjustments. The need for the facility and grid impacts associated with the facility remain the same as was approved in Case No. 16-0535-EL-BTX.

This amendment filing can be broken down into three categories of requested revisions to the approved route: engineering adjustments; a shift within the existing right-of-way; and, rerouting outside of the existing right-of-way. Construction has not begun on this project.

Engineering Adjustments

There are four proposed engineering adjustments, totaling 0.5 mile. The Applicant states that these adjustments are the result of actual field conditions and final engineering of structure locations and conductor clearances, as well as road right-of-way final surveys. The structure location shifts range from eight to 32 feet from the previously approved centerline as follows:

- Adjustment 1 involves a shift of structure 9 and is the result of final engineering of the structure as an angle structure between structures 8 and 10. The Applicant states that there

are no new environmental impacts nor are there any additional or adjoining tracts of land affected for the adjustment.

- Adjustment 2 involves a shift of structures 12 through 17 and is the result of final engineering of structures along the approved route. The structure shifts range from four to 19 feet away from the approved centerline. The Applicant states that there are no new environmental impacts nor are there any additional or adjoining tracts of land affected for the adjustment.
- Adjustment 3 involves a shift of structures 28 through 30 and is the result of final engineering of structure 28 to increase the distance between the pole and an existing driveway. The shift of structure 28 would also affect the location of structures 29 and 30 along that portion of the route. The shifts range from seven to 32 feet away from the approved centerline for approximately 900 feet. The Applicant states that there are no new environmental impacts nor are there any additional or adjoining tracts of land affected for the adjustment.
- Adjustment 4 involves a shift from the approved centerline between structures 46 and 47 due to landowner preference. The shift results in new structure locations approximately 75 feet away from the existing approved route. The Applicant states that there are no new environmental impacts nor are there any additional or adjoining tracts of land affected for the adjustment. An additional easement needed for this adjustment has been secured.

Shift within the Existing right-of-way

There is one instance of a shift of the approved route between structures 36 and 45, back to the centerline of the existing transmission line. The Applicant states that this shift is the result of landowner preference. The approved route was to be offset from the existing centerline by 25 feet in this portion of the rebuild project. Because this shift would place the route back on centerline of the existing line, no new property owners nor easements are necessary. The Applicant states that this shift would result in less tree clearing, as the right-of-way would not be expanded.

Re-routing outside the Existing right-of-way:

Reroute 1 involves placing the new line between 30 to 150 feet away from the approved route between structures 30 and 35. The Applicant states that this reroute is the result of shifting structure 30, which is an angle structure, 150 feet away from the approved location in order to avoid a natural gas line, in conjunction with property owner negotiations. The total length of the reroute is approximately 0.4 mile. The Applicant states that no additional tracts or landowners would be impacted by this reroute. Additionally, all current property owners were agreeable and signed easements for this reroute.

Reroute 2 involves a new route between structures 62 and 72. This reroute was necessitated to avoid a newly identified structure and steep terrain. The reroute would be for approximately 0.8 mile in total length. The Applicant states that no additional tracts or landowners would be impacted by this reroute.

Application Review

Social Impacts

In Staff's opinion, the proposed adjustments are not expected to significantly alter existing land uses, including agricultural land, or to increase the estimated capital costs for the project. With these adjustments, the total number of residences located within 100 feet of the route would be reduced by one. These alignment sections have been studied for the presence of archaeological and historic impacts and no significant adverse impacts on cultural resources are expected. Staff finds that the purpose of adjustments, shifts and reroutes to avoid features not known at the time of the approval, and at the request of affected property owners is reasonable. No new tracts of land would be necessary in order to perform the adjustments.

Surface Waters

The approved route right-of-way contains 36 streams, including four perennial streams, 17 intermittent streams, and 15 ephemeral streams. The approved route right-of-way contained 4,431 linear feet of streams, including 458 linear feet of perennial streams. The proposed adjusted route crosses four additional streams, including three ephemeral streams and one intermittent stream. The proposed adjusted route right-of-way contains 4,817 linear feet of streams, including 453 linear feet of perennial streams.

The approved route right-of-way contains 15 wetlands, with 5.8 total acres of wetland within the right-of-way. The proposed adjusted route eliminates two wetland crossings and adds two previously uncrossed wetlands within the right-of-way. The proposed adjusted route right-of-way contains approximately 5.8 acres of wetlands. All delineated wetlands are category 1 and category 2 wetlands.

Adherence to the conditions of the original certificate as well as implementation of the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan would minimize impacts to surface water resources that would occur as a result of the proposed adjustments.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The proposed adjustments would not result in increased impacts to listed wildlife species. Adherence to the conditions of the original certificate would minimize impacts to listed species.

Recommended Findings

Staff recommends that the Board approve the application, provided that the following condition is satisfied.

Condition:

- (1) The Applicant shall continue to adhere to all conditions of the Opinion, Order, and Certificate for the Yager-Desert Road 138 kilovolt rebuild project in Case No. 16-0535-EL-BTX, following the route as amended through this application.

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Case No(s). 18-1855-EL-BTA

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