

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Construction Notice Application by)
AEP Ohio Transmission Company for a Certificate of)
Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for) Case No. 19-0971-EL-BNR
Adjustment #2 to the Heppner-Rhodes 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 Ohio Revised Code (R.C.) 4906.03 and Ohio Administrative Code 4906-6.

Staff recommends the application for automatic approval on June 11, 2019, unless suspended by the Board, an administrative law judge, or the chairperson or executive director of the Board for good cause shown. 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 June 11, 2019, which is the automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



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OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 19-0971-EL-BNR
Project Name: Adjustment #2 to the Heppner-Rhodes Project
Project Location: Jackson County
Applicant: AEP Ohio Transmission Company
Application Filing Date: May 20, 2019
Filing Type: Expedited Construction Notice
Inspection Date: May 31, 2019
Report Date: June 4, 2019
Recommended Automatic Approval Date: June 11, 2019
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

AEP Ohio Transmission Company (Applicant) proposes to shift one structure of the previously approved Heppner-Rhodes 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission line (see Case No. 17-0807-EL-BLN) and Heppner-Rhodes Adjustment #1 (Case No. 18-0872-EL-BLN) approximately 90 feet north of the existing centerline. The project is located in Coal Township, Jackson County. The shifted structure would still be located on AEP Ohio Transco property, so no additional easements, options, or land use agreements would be necessary to construct the structure. The new structure location is directly east of the Heppner Substation, which is presently under construction (Case No. 17-0806-EL-BLN).

The project involves the installation of an additional steel dead end pole structure. The cost associated with this adjustment is estimated to be approximately \$120,000. The Applicant states that construction on the Heppner-Rhodes transmission line began in the fall of 2018. The in-service date is projected to be October 2019.

Basis of Need

This structure shift is necessary to properly align the new transmission line with infrastructure within the Heppner Substation and to provide adequate clearance above substation equipment. The Heppner Substation is presently under construction in conjunction with the 138 kV Heppner-Rhodes transmission line. This structure shift would allow the Heppner-Rhodes

transmission line to enter the Heppner Substation at the appropriate angle and would avoid installation of additional structures inside the substation.

The adjustment is being made to the originally approved project which was included in the Applicant's most recent Long-Term Forecast Report filing in Case No. 18-1501-EL-FOR and was submitted to PJM as a supplemental project. PJM assigned the project upgrade ID No. s1342. The construction status of the transmission project can be tracked on PJM's website.^{1, 2}

Nature of Impacts

Socioeconomic

The Applicant indicates that no land within the newly proposed transmission line right-of-way is registered as agricultural district land with Jackson County, and the project site does not contain any active agricultural row crop land. No occupied residences are located within 100 feet of the proposed right-of-way for this structure, and no wildlife management areas or nature preserve lands are located within 1,000 feet of the proposed right-of-way. Land use in the vicinity of the project consists of pasture and rural residential structures.

Cultural Resources

The Applicant's cultural resources consultant performed a literature review and Phase I cultural resource management investigation (for archaeology and history/architecture) for the original Heppner-Rhodes transmission line project in September 2017. The Applicant's consultant completed an addendum cultural resources management investigation in April and May 2018 to encompass route revisions along the project. The Applicant's consultant determined that this project would not involve or impact any significant cultural resources or landmarks, and that no further cultural resource management work was considered to be necessary. The findings were submitted to the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO). The OHPO responded to the consultant in concurrence that this project would not affect historic properties.

Surface Waters

The survey corridor contains two ephemeral streams. No structures would be located in streams. No in-water work is planned, and no permanent impacts are anticipated. The project would not cross a 100-year floodplain. No new wetlands were delineated and no wetland fill is proposed for this modification.

Further details about how surface water resources would be protected from indirect construction stormwater impacts using erosion and sedimentation controls would be outlined in the Applicant's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan submitted as part of the required National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit.

Threatened and Endangered Species

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

1. AEP Ohio Transmission Company, "Long-Term Forecast Report to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio," Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Case No. 18-1501-EL-FOR, May 31, 2018.

2. PJM Interconnection, "Transmission Construction Status," accessed May 23, 2019, <http://pjm.com/planning/rtep-upgrades-status/construct-status.aspx>.

Conclusion

Staff's review of the application included consideration of the requirements listed in R.C. 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 June 11, 2019, provided that the following condition is satisfied.

Condition:

1. The Applicant shall adhere to all conditions of the Letter of Notifications for the Heppner-Rhodes transmission line project in case numbers 17-0807-EL-BLN and 18-0872-EL-BLN as modified by this application.

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on

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in

Case No(s). 19-0971-EL-BNR

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