

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Application of AEP Ohio)
Transmission Company for an Amendment to the)
Dennison-Yager (Reroute 3) 138 kV Transmission Line) **Case No. 19-1435-EL-BTA**
Rebuild 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 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,



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

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Project Name: Amendment to the Dennison-Yager (Reroute 3) 138 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project
Case Number: 19-1435-EL-BTA
Project Location: Tuscarawas County
Applicant: AEP Ohio Transmission Company
Application Filing Date: July 12, 2019
Inspection Date: February 26, 2019
Report Date: September 20, 2019
Applicant's Waiver Requests: None
Staff Assigned: J. Pawley, A. Holderbaum

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

Application: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Approval with Condition

Waiver: ☐ Approval ☐ Disapproval ☒ Not Applicable

Application Description and Need

AEP Ohio Transmission Company (Applicant or AEP Transco) is proposing an amendment to the Dennison-Yager 138 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Rebuild Project, which was approved by the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) on May 4, 2017, in Case No. 16-0534-EL-BTX and as amended in Case No. 18-1856-EL-BTA, approved by the OPSB on August 15, 2019. After extensive field review and discussion with Staff, this portion (referred to as Reroute 3) was withdrawn from the 18-1856-EL-BTA amendment request on May 17, 2019 for further evaluation, engineering survey work and rerouting. The Applicant submitted the revised Reroute 3 in the current case for the Board's consideration.

The type of transmission equipment would not change from the originally approved application. 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. 16-0534-EL-BTX and 18-1856-EL-BTA. This proposed reroute encompasses the revised alignment for 29 structures, three of which were installed in August 2018, prior to filing the amendment request in Case No. 18-1856-EL-BTA. Construction on the overall Dennison-Yager rebuild project began in March of 2017 and has since been halted in the area of this reroute.

The Applicant states that their proposed reroute is necessary due to engineering and environmental constraints that it has discovered. In order to avoid routing the transmission line over a steep rock ledge as well as through a platted subdivision, structure locations 29D, 30 and 31 needed to be revised. Construction of these structures in their revised locations already occurred, in August 2018. The Applicant also discovered that an injection well application had been filed with ODNR

near the certificated centerline. Further, the Applicant found that shifting structure locations 51 through 57 south of the certificated centerline would reduce impacts to an existing wetland complex. The proposed reroute seeks to avoid the injection well, clear the steep rock ledge, avoid the platted residential subdivision, and reduce wetland impacts.

The total length of the proposed adjustment is 2.2 miles and includes structure locations 29 through 57. Structure locations 29D, 30, and 31 were shifted from 24 to 245 feet west of the certificated centerline. These are the three structures that were already installed by the Applicant at the revised locations in August 2018. Structure locations 32 and 33 are proposed to be relocated an average of approximately 400 feet northwest of the certificated route. Proposed structure locations 34 through 50 generally parallel the centerline of the approved route on the northern edge of the right-of-way, approximately 150 feet north. After routing past the injection well pad location, the reroute shifts to the south of the approved centerline for structures 51 through 57 by an average of 60 feet. According to the Applicant, all landowners along the reroute are agreeable to the realignment.

Application Review

Social Impacts

Staff finds that 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 number of residential structures identified within 100 feet of the right-of-way range from 15 for the approved route to two for the amended route, including a drop in single-family residences within the 100-foot right-of-way from nine for the approved route to zero for the amended route.

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 the reroutes to avoid a new platted subdivision and injection well pad not known at the time of the approval of 16-0534-EL-BTX, and at the request of affected property owners is reasonable.

Surface Waters

The certificated route identified 21 streams within the route's survey corridor. Thirteen of the streams would be crossed, including seven perennial streams, four intermittent streams, and two ephemeral streams. The certificated route right-of-way contained 2,886 linear feet of stream crossings, including 2,547 linear feet of perennial streams. The proposed adjustments to the route add one additional stream crossing but reduce the linear feet of stream crossings by a total of 91 linear feet.

The certificated route had 44 wetlands within the route's survey corridor. Thirty of the wetlands would be crossed by the certificated route with 9.14 total acres of wetland within the right-of-way. The Applicant anticipated 12 structures being placed in wetlands along the approved route. The proposed adjusted route identified one additional wetland within the route's survey corridor, however, the proposed adjusted route reduces the total acres of wetland within the approved route right-of-way to 6.19 acres and crosses five fewer wetlands for a total of 25 wetland crossings. The adjusted route would result in one additional structure being placed within a wetland for a total of 13 structures. These wetland areas already contain existing structures. Construction matting would be used for access to the structure locations. No permanent fill would be placed in wetlands. The

only excavation in wetlands that would occur would be as a result of boring individual holes for the 13 structures. 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 could 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

The Applicant began construction under the certificate approved in case 16-0534-EL-BTX in 2017. During construction, the Applicant determined that certain sections of the certificated route needed to be adjusted. The current amendment application deals with one of those sections. Also, during construction of the overall route, a small segment of the currently proposed amended route was installed outside of the certificated project area. Construction was at that time halted. Staff notes that AEP Ohio Transco has had other instances of constructing outside the Board certificated project area in the recent past as noted in the Opinion and Order for Case No. 19-0972-EL-BTA.

While Staff recommends that the Board approve the amended certificate upon satisfaction of the following condition, Staff also recommends that the Board continue to give further consideration to AEP Ohio Transco's construction practices pursuant to R.C. 4906.97-4906.99.

Condition:

- (1) The Applicant shall continue to adhere to all conditions of the Certificates issued in case nos. 16-0534-EL-BTX and 18-1856-EL-BTA as amended through this application.

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