

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Construction Notice Application of )**  
**Ohio Power Company for a Certificate of )**  
**Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the ) Case No. 19-1774-EL-BLN**  
**Willow Island-Mill Creek 138kV Transmission Line )**  
**Extension Project #3 )**

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 (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 (Ohio Adm.Code) 4906-6.

Staff recommends the application for automatic approval October 18, 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 October 18, 2019, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Raymond W. Strom  
Chief of Siting, Efficiency and Renewables Division  
Rates and Analysis Department  
Public Utilities Commission of Ohio  
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## OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Case Number:** 19-1774-EL-BLN  
**Project Name:** Willow Island-Mill Creek 138kV Transmission Line Extension Project #3  
**Project Location:** Washington County  
**Applicant:** Ohio Power Company  
**Application Filing Date:** September 19, 2019  
**Filing Type:** Letter of Notification  
**Inspection Date:** August 26, 2019  
**Report Date:** October 11, 2019  
**Recommended Automatic Approval Date:** October 18, 2019  
**Applicant's Waiver Requests:** none  
**Staff Assigned:** E. Morrison, F. Butt, G. Zeto

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

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

### Project Description

Ohio Power Company (Applicant) proposes to rebuild a tower structure and install a transmission line to connect an automated switch at Reno Substation with the nearby 138 kV circuit. The Applicant states that approximately 0.3 miles of single circuit 138 kV electrical transmission line would be installed to connect the new line to the existing 138 kV circuit, structure 28 would need to be rebuilt with a taller 3 pole dead-end configuration. The project area is located in Newport Township, Washington County. This project would be constructed in conjunction with AEP Ohio Transmission Company's project that was submitted to the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) in Case No. 19-1775-EL-BNR.<sup>1</sup>

The Applicant intends to commence construction of the project in the fourth quarter of 2019 and place the facility in service by November 2019. The cost of the project is estimated at \$399,125.

### Site Description

The proposed project is located along State Route 7, approximately 0.3 miles east of its intersection with County Road 47. The proposed project would be located entirely on existing AEP Ohio property and right-of-way, and that easements from any additional property owners would not be

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1. Together, the projects proposed in Case No. 19-1774-EL-BLN and Case No. 19-1775-EL-BNR are replacing the project that was originally proposed in Case No. 19-0956-EL-BNR, which has since been withdrawn.

necessary to construct and operate the facility. The proposed facility location is in a cleared area. The surrounding land use consists of industrial, commercial, residential and agricultural properties.

### **Basis of Need**

In the existing setup with the hard tap serving the substation, power cannot be restored if there is an outage between Belmont and Levee substations unless it is manually repaired. AEP Ohio must dispatch a crew to the site to manually repair the switch after an outage, which could take hours. Upgrading to an automatic switch would allow for operations to take place remotely, facilitating a timelier restoration when an outage occurs. In general, hard taps represent a reliability risk, particularly in situations where there is limited or no backup source for restoration, as in the case at Reno Substation.

The new switch addresses reliability concerns along the Willow Island-Mill Creek Transmission Line that impacts both transmission and distribution systems in the area. In its current state, any outage along the line would continue to result in the loss of distribution load served by Reno Substation because Levee Substation cannot handle the additional load. Installing the motor operated air break switch would allow the Reno Substation to be isolated and any necessary repairs to be conducted without impacting every station on the circuit. The motor operated air break switch would improve resiliency at Reno Substation.

### **Nature of Impacts**

#### *Socioeconomic Impacts*

No adverse impacts to the surrounding residences or businesses are expected. No land designated as an Agricultural District would be impacted by this project.

#### *Cultural Resources*

The Applicant completed an online review of the Ohio Historic Preservation Office online website as well as a visual inspection and shovel test. No cultural resources were identified within the footprint of this project. No impacts to cultural resources are anticipated. According to the Applicant, the project does not require further coordination with the Ohio Historical Preservation Office.

#### *Surface Waters*

No streams or wetlands are located within the vicinity of the proposed project and no stream or wetland impacts are proposed. The project would impact less than one acre of land and would not require a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit.

#### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

Due to no proposed tree clearing, no proposed in-water work, and a lack of suitable habitat, impacts to state and federal listed species are not anticipated.

### **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 application on October 18, 2019. Staff notes that its recommendation for approval of this application should not be construed as a recommendation for approval of cost recovery in any ratemaking proceeding.

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

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

**10/11/2019 12:29:54 PM**

**in**

**Case No(s). 19-1774-EL-BLN**

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