



## OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Case Number:** 14-0591-EL-BLN  
**Project Name:** Carroll County Energy 345 kV Interconnection  
**Project Location:** Carroll County, Ohio  
**Applicant:** Carroll County Energy, LLC  
**Application Filing Date:** April 17, 2014  
**Filing Type:** **Expedited** Letter of Notification  
**Inspection Date:** April 30, 2014  
**Report Date:** May 6, 2014  
**Automatic Approval Date:** May 16, 2014  
**Applicant's Waiver Requests:** none  
**Staff Assigned:** D. Rostofer, J. O'Dell

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

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

### Project Description

Carroll County Energy, LLC (CCE) proposes to construct a 0.45 mile 345 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission line that would connect the proposed CCE Generation Facility<sup>1</sup> to the American Electric Power Company (AEP) Tidd to Canton Central 345 kV electric transmission line. The project would include 1) the bifurcation of the AEP Tidd to Canton Central 345 kV electric transmission line into the Tidd to CCE Segment and the Canton to CCE Segment; 2) adding two cut-in structures within AEP right-of-way; 3) adding six new single-phase monopole transition structures within the AEP right-of-way; 4) connecting both the Tidd to CCE Segment and the Canton to CCE Segment to the new transition structures within the AEP right-of-way; 5) adding four new double-circuit steel monopole structures within the CCE right-of-way; and 6) extending the Tidd to CCE Segment and the Canton to CCE Segment from the transition structures within the AEP right-of-way to the CCE switchyard via double-circuit steel monopole structures. Construction is expected to begin in February 2015, and the line is scheduled to be in-service June 2016.

### Site Description

The project is located approximately three miles north of Carrollton, entirely within Washington Township, Carroll County, Ohio. The route would extend from the AEP Tidd to Canton Central 345 kV electric transmission line right-of-way 0.45-miles east across SR 9 (Kensington Road NE) to the CCE switchyard. CCE has secured an option agreement to construct the project. Land

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<sup>1</sup> The CCE Generation Facility was certificated by the OPSB on April 28, 2014 (Case No. 13-1752-EL-BGN).

use along the route and surrounding properties is primarily agricultural. Staff recommends that CCE be required to coordinate all traffic related issues with the appropriate entities to ensure that traffic will be maintained along public roadways and private drives during construction.

## **Need**

The CCE Generation Facility will generate energy to meet regional demand and must be connected to the transmission grid in order to provide that energy to market. The PJM Interconnection System Impact Study completed for the generation facility in October 2013 (2013 CCE SIS) confirmed that a 345 kV line extension is necessary to loop the generation facility into the grid.

## **Nature of Impacts**

### *Social*

A Phase I archaeological investigation identified three cultural finds, none of which possessed significant archaeological value. The Applicant would avoid all archaeological resources during construction.

A Historic Architecture Survey was also conducted. No landmarks or historic structures are located within the study area of this project and the project would not significantly influence the overall viewscape of historical structures within five miles of the project area.

### *Surface Waters*

The electric transmission line right-of-way contains four primary headwater streams. No pole structures would be located within the 100-year flood zones of these streams. The right-of-way also contains three wetlands. None of these wetlands were scored as high quality wetlands (Category 2/3 or Category 3). All wetlands would be clearly staked prior to the commencement of any clearing in order to minimize incidental vehicle impacts. Stream and wetland impacts would be avoided by accessing pole locations from either side of the streams and/or wetlands, where practicable. No ponds are located within the project right-of-way, and the project will not traverse any conservation areas, scenic rivers, or recreation lands.

Staff recommends that CCE be required to develop a construction access plan, which will be incorporated into a final Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The access plan should consider location of streams, wetlands, wooded areas, and sensitive plant species, as identified by the Ohio Division of Wildlife and explain how impacts to all sensitive resources would be avoided or minimized during construction, operation, and maintenance of the facility.

CCE would utilize best management practices (BMPs) to minimize impacts to surface waters. Appropriate BMPs would be outlined in the SWPPP, and a copy would be provided to Staff. The Applicant plans to submit a Notice of Intent for coverage under the Ohio EPA General National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit. Coverage under the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Nationwide Permit 18 is not required. However, CCE would discuss this project in the USACE Pre-construction Notification for the generation facility.

### *Threatened and Endangered Species*

The federal and state endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and its suitable habitat may be found in the project area. In order to reduce or avoid impacts to the Indiana bat, CCE has committed to adherence to seasonal tree cutting dates of October 1 to March 31 for the clearing of trees that exhibit suitable Indiana bat summer habitat.

### **Conclusion**

With the following conditions, the construction of this project should pose only minimal negative social and ecological impacts. Staff recommends automatic approval of this case on May 16, 2014.

### **Conditions**

1. Prior to construction, the Applicant shall obtain all applicable permits and authorizations as required by federal and state entities for any activities where such permit or authorization is required;
2. The Applicant shall conduct a pre-construction conference(s) prior to the start of any project work (including any vegetation clearing), which the Staff shall attend, to discuss how environmental concerns will be satisfactorily addressed;
3. At least 30 days before the pre-construction conference, the Applicant shall submit to the Staff, for review and approval, a project construction access plan. This plan shall include all laydown areas, residential and environmentally sensitive area access points (walk in locations only), and any locations where vegetation clearing is required. The plan shall consider the location of residential fencing, private structures, streams, wetlands, wooded areas, conservation easement areas, and park lands;
4. The Applicant shall not conduct mechanized clearing within 25 feet of any stream channel, and;
5. The Applicant shall coordinate all traffic related issues with the appropriate entities to ensure that traffic will be maintained along public roadways and private drives during construction.

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

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

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**Case No(s). 14-0591-EL-BLN**

Summary: Report of investigation electronically filed by Mr. Adam S Bargar on behalf of Staff of OPSB