

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application)
of American Transmission Systems, Incorporated for a)
Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public) Case No. 18-0086-EL-BLN
Need for the East Springfield-London #2 138 kV)
Transmission Line Extensions to North Titus)
Substation 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 (Ohio Adm.Code) 4906-6.

Staff recommends the application for automatic approval March 5, 2018, 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 March 5, 2018, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



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OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 18-0086-EL-BLN
Project Name: East Springfield-London #2 138 kV Transmission Line Extensions to North Titus Substation Project
Project Location: Clark County
Applicant: American Transmission Systems, Incorporated
Application Filing Date: February 2, 2018
Filing Type: Expedited Letter of Notification
Inspection Date: February 6, 2018
Report Date: February 26, 2018
Recommended Automatic Approval Date: March 5, 2018
Applicant's Waiver Requests: none
Staff Assigned: J. Pawley, J. Cross, G. Zeto

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

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

Project Description and Need

The purpose of this project is to construct two 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission line extensions totaling 1.6 miles in order to serve the proposed North Titus distribution substation to provide power to a new customer's (Silfex Inc.) manufacturing facility located in Springfield, Ohio. The Applicant states that Silfex is requesting separate lines to reduce the risk of failure during their manufacturing process if the facility were to lose power. The North Titus distribution substation would be constructed adjacent to the Silfex manufacturing facility, located in the Gateway Industrial Park. The transmission line extensions would be located on existing, new, and public 60-foot wide right-of-way. The Applicant filed supplemental information detailing the access road plans for the proposed project on February 20, 2018.

The proposed project would consist of an approximately one mile long East Springfield-North Titus 138 kV Transmission Line, and an approximately 0.6 mile long London-North Titus 138 kV Transmission Line. The proposed East Springfield-North Titus 138 kV Transmission Line Extension would begin at a tap of the existing East Springfield Transmission Line west of the proposed North Titus distribution substation. The proposed line would be located in Springfield Township and the city of Springfield and would consist of 15 new transmission structures (14 wood pole structures and one steel pole tap structure).

The proposed London-North Titus 138 kV Transmission Line Extension would begin at a tap of the existing East Springfield-London Transmission Line south of the proposed North Titus

distribution substation. This proposed line would be located in Springfield Township and the city of Springfield and would consist of eight new transmission structures (four wood pole structures, three steel structures, and one steel pole tap structure).

The capital cost of the project is estimated at \$3.5 million. The Applicant will cover the cost of the East Springfield-North Titus segment of line for the potential for future extension and service to other customers in the developing area, with the cost of the London-North Titus line and distribution substation paid by the customer. The Applicant would like to commence construction of the project in early March 2018 and place the facility in service by November 30, 2018.

Nature of Impacts

Land Use

The project is predominately located in an area with light industrial and manufacturing/warehouse uses. The proposed Springfield-North Titus Extension would traverse open field and agricultural land and continue into the Gateway Industrial Park, crossing Benjamin Drive and Titus Road. The proposed London-North Titus Extension would begin adjacent to the existing Titus 69 kV substation and continue to the north, crossing I-70 and Titus Road to the proposed North Titus distribution substation. Some tree clearing will be required for new right-of-way and to prevent trees from toppling into the proposed lines.

The surrounding land use is a mix of agricultural, light industrial, woodlots, and residential. The project is not located within any agricultural district lands. No residential structures would need to be removed to construct this project. The Applicant performed cultural resources research studies for the proposed project area and determined that no potential impacts to archaeological sites are expected from the project. Similarly, no impacts to Ohio Historic Inventory (OHI) structures or Ohio Genealogical Society (OGS) listed cemeteries are expected.

Surface Waters

The survey corridor contains one intermittent stream. No poles would be located in streams. No in-water work is planned, and no permanent impacts are anticipated.

The survey corridor contains two category 1 wetlands totaling 0.15 acres. No wetland fill is proposed. Temporary access, where necessary, would utilize construction matting to avoid impacts to surface water resources. Specifics about how wetlands and streams would be further protected from indirect construction and stormwater impacts using erosion and sedimentation controls would be outlined in the Applicant's Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The project would not cross a 100-year floodplain.

Threatened and Endangered Species

The project area is within the range of state and federal endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and the federal threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). As tree roosting species in the summer months, the habitat of these species may be impacted by the project. In order to avoid impacts to the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat, Staff recommends the Applicant adhere to seasonal tree cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for all trees three inches or greater in diameter, unless coordination efforts with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) reflects a different course of action.

The USFWS stated that if any caves or abandoned mines may be disturbed, further coordination with their office is requested to determine if fall or spring portal surveys are warranted.

Upland sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*) habitat such as dry grasslands, grazed and ungrazed pasture, hayfields and grasslands, as established through the Conservation Reserve Program, may be present in the project area. Construction must be avoided in these habitats between April 15 and July 31, unless coordination efforts with the ODNR allow a different course of action.

Due to no in-water work and a lack of suitable habitat, impacts to other 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. Subject to the following conditions, Staff recommends automatic approval of this application on March 5, 2018.

Conditions:

- (1) Prior to the commencement of construction activities in areas that require permits or authorizations by federal or state laws and regulations, including the I-70 crossing, the Applicant shall obtain and comply with such permits or authorizations. The Applicant shall provide copies of permits and authorizations, including all supporting documentation, to Staff within seven days of issuance or receipt by the Applicant.
- (2) The Applicant shall adhere to seasonal cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for removal of any trees greater than three inches in diameter, unless coordination with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) allows a different course of action.
- (3) Construction in upland sandpiper preferred nesting habitat shall be avoided during the species' nesting period of April 15 through July 31, unless coordination efforts with the ODNR allow a different course of action.
- (4) If any caves or abandoned mines may be disturbed the Applicant shall coordinate with the USFWS to determine if fall or spring portal surveys are warranted.

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2/26/2018 2:03:24 PM

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Case No(s). 18-0086-EL-BLN

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