

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Construction Notice Application by)
American Transmission Systems, Incorporated for a)
Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public) Case No. 20-0135-EL-BNR
Need for the Ottawa-West Fremont 138 kV)
Transmission Line Switch Replacement 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 October 16, 2020, 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 16, 2020, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Theresa White
Executive Director
Ohio Power Siting Board

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 20-0135-EL-BNR
Project Name: Ottawa-West Fremont 138 kV Transmission
Line Switch Replacement Project
Project Location: Sandusky County
Applicant: American Transmission Systems, Incorporated
Application Filing Date: August 11, 2020
Filing Type: Expedited Construction Notice
Inspection Date: August 28, 2020
Report Date: October 9, 2020
**Recommended Automatic
Approval Date:** October 16, 2020
Applicant's Waiver Requests: none
Staff Assigned: J. O'Dell and J. Cross

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

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

Project Description and Need

American Transmission Systems, Incorporated (ATSI or Applicant) plans to replace and relocate two inoperable switches on the Ottawa-West Fremont 138 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line. The transmission line would be reconfigured to operate within its original design. Additionally, a switch and tap to the Kelsey Hayes Substation would be installed.

The project would update the switching equipment on the transmission system. The existing switches are over 50 years old and they are now obsolete. During 2019, maintenance checks determined that the switches were unable to function. These switches are no longer manufactured and replacement parts are not available. Additionally, the existing switches are not consistent with the Applicant's current engineering standards.

On March 25, 2019 and May 20, 2019, the project's need and solution were presented and reviewed with PJM Interconnection, LLC (PJM) stakeholders at the Subregional Regional Transmission Expansion Plan (RTEP) Committee.^{1, 2} Transmission owners plan supplemental

1. PJM Interconnection, "Subregional RTEP Committee - Western," March 25, 2019, ATSI Supplemental Projects, Need No. (ATSI-2019-054), <https://pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/srtepw/20190325/20190325-atsi-supplementals.ashx> (Accessed October 6, 2020).

2. PJM Interconnection, "Subregional RTEP Committee - Western," May 20, 2019, ATSI Supplemental Upgrades, Need No. (ATSI-2019-054), available at: <https://pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/srtepw/20190520/20190520-atsi-supplementals.ashx> (Accessed October 6, 2020).

projects in accordance with PJM's Open Access Transmission Tariff, Attachment M-3 process. The project was issued supplemental PJM upgrade ID s2068, whereby the project status can be tracked on PJM's website.³

The transmission facilities were not included in the Applicant's most recent Long-Term Forecast Report (LTFR) filing. The project was delayed at the time of the LTFR filing and then subsequently re-initiated. The cost of the overall project is estimated at \$ 1,012,700.⁴

Nature of Impacts

Land Use

The project would be located in Rice Township, Sandusky County, Ohio. Land use in proximity to the project consists of agricultural, light industrial and low density rural residential uses.

Cultural Resources

ATSI conducted a cultural resource survey to ascertain potential impacts to historic properties and archaeological sites. The survey determined that adverse impacts to historic properties and archaeological sites are not expected. Staff concurs with the survey results.

Ecological Impacts

Tree clearing would not be required for the project and all construction activities would be primarily confined to maintained right-of-way. Adequate access is available from adjacent roads and a nearby parking lot.

Impacts to state and federal listed species are not anticipated, due to no proposed in-water work and a lack of suitable habitats. The Applicant reviewed Federal Emergency Management Agency flood insurance maps and determined that the project does not encroach on any regulated flood plains.

Conclusion

Staff's review of the application included consideration of the requirements listed in Ohio Revised Code Section 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 16, 2020. 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.

3. PJM Interconnection, "Transmission Construction Status," <https://pjm.com/planning/project-construction.aspx>. (Accessed October 6, 2020).

A Supplemental Project is defined in the PJM Operating Agreement as a transmission expansion or enhancement that is not required for compliance with the following PJM criteria: system reliability, operational performance or economic criteria, pursuant to a determination by the Office of the Interconnection and is not a state public policy project pursuant to Operating Agreement, Schedule 6, section 1.5.9(a)(ii). See also, PJM Manual 14B: PJM Region Transmission Planning Process, Revision 46, effective August 28, 2019, available at: <https://www.pjm.com/-/media/documents/manuals/m14b.ashx>.

4. Applicant indicates that the entire project cost, approximately \$1,012,700, will be included in the Applicant's formula rate (i.e. the annual transmission revenue applicable under PJM Open Access Transmission Tariff, Attachment H-21) and would be assessed on all transmission customers within ATSI.

Conditions:

- (1) The certificate authority provided in this case shall not exempt the facility from any other applicable and lawful local, state, or federal rules or regulations nor be used to affect the exercise of discretion of any other local, state, or federal permitting or licensing authority with regard to areas subject to their supervision or control.
- (2) Prior to the commencement of construction activities in areas that require permits or authorizations by federal or state laws and regulations, the Applicant shall obtain and comply with such permits or authorizations. The Applicant shall provide copies of permits and authorizations, including all supporting documentation, on the case docket prior to commencement of construction.

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). 20-0135-EL-BNR

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