

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

In the Matter of the Expedited Construction Notice
Application of Vectren Energy Delivery of Ohio d/b/a)
CenterPoint Energy Ohio for the Line A – Howell to)
Wilberforce Pipeline Replacement and Relocation:)
Cedarville Quarry Reroute

Case No. 21-0572-GA-BNR

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 4906-6.

Staff recommends the application for automatic approval June 24, 2021, 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 June 24, 2021, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Theresa White
Executive Director
Ohio Power Siting Board

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 21-0572-GA-BNR
Project Name: Line A – Howell to Wilberforce Pipeline Replacement and Reroute: Cedarville Quarry
Project Location: Cedarville, Greene County
Applicant: Vectren Energy Delivery of Ohio d/b/a CenterPoint Energy Ohio
Application Filing Date: June 2, 2021
Filing Type: Expedited Construction Notice
Inspection Date: June 11, 2021
Report Date: June 17, 2021
Recommended Automatic Approval Date: June 24, 2021
Applicant's Waiver Requests: None
Staff Assigned: J. Stottsberry, A. Conway, R.A. Holderbaum, J. Pawley

Summary of Staff Recommendations (see discussion below):

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

Project Description and Need

Vectren Energy Delivery of Ohio d/b/a CenterPoint Energy Ohio (Applicant) proposes to relocate and replace a 1,600 feet portion of its existing 20-inch diameter natural gas transmission line with modern pipe materials rated to operate at a maximum allowable operating pressure of 500 psig. The proposed relocation and replacement project would install approximately 1,600 feet of 20-inch diameter, fusion bonded-epoxy coated, API-5L Grade X60 steel pipe. The section of pipeline to be replaced would be north of the Martin-Marietta Cedarville Quarry in Greene County. There is no street address associated with the pipeline relocation and reroute project. However, the west end of the pipeline reroute project is located at coordinates 39°44'28.13" N and 83°47'25.84" W and the east end of the project coordinates are 39°44'36.67" N and 83°47'4.73" W. The Applicant plans to install the pipe using the open cut trench method and is unlikely to use the bore method. Any segment of the pipe that would require installation via a bore method (e.g. horizontal directional drilling or conventional), that segment of pipe would use an additional abrasion-resistant overcoating on top of the fusion bonded-epoxy coating. The pipeline corridor would consist of an existing permanent 50-foot easement and an additional 25-foot temporary easement on one side of the permanent easement for a total of 75 feet for construction. After the pipeline project is complete, the retired pipe would be abandoned in place.

This project is part of a larger existing 20-inch diameter pipeline known as Line A that was installed circa 1952. This approximately 30-mile pipeline extends from its origin at the transmission interconnect facility at the Yankee Station to a meter and regulating station near Cedarville. In order to assess the integrity of its natural gas transmission pipelines, the Applicant performed an in-line inspection (ILI) procedure of Line A in August 2019. The ILI revealed material defects in Line A. To address this issue on the entire length of Line A, the Applicant has reduced pressure in the pipeline and is in process, with multiple ongoing and upcoming pipeline projects, to retrofit or replace approximately 27 miles of Line A by the end of 2022. This particular 1,600-foot segment of pipe is proposed to be rerouted and relocated approximately 200 feet north to allow for future quarry operations in the area of the existing pipe.

Staff conferred with personnel from the PUCO Service Monitoring and Enforcement Department (SMED) which administers the Gas Pipeline Safety regulatory programs in Ohio. The PUCO's SMED is aware of the ILI results and the Applicant's plans to promptly retrofit and replace much of Line A.

For this proposed project, the Applicant would begin construction in July 2021 and place the facility in service by mid-September 2021. The Applicant estimates the total cost of the project to be approximately \$573,000. The Applicant also indicates that cost associated with this project will be allocated to, recovered through, and amortized within its existing Capital Expenditure Program (CEP) rider.¹

Nature of Impacts

Socioeconomic Impacts

The relocated line would be located on properties currently associated with quarry activities. No residences or structures would need to be removed because of this project.

Agricultural Land

The proposed project is not located within or adjacent to any agricultural land. Therefore, construction and operation of the proposed line relocation is not expected to impact agricultural district land or agricultural production.

Cultural Resources

The Applicant's cultural resources consultant requested a Section 106 review from the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) for the entire Vectren replacement project, for which this replacement project constitutes 1,600 feet. Initial feedback from the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) was that a large number of potential historical sites may be present along the overall project area. The Applicant states that the OHPO did not specifically separate this 1,600-foot relocation out for its overall recommendation, and also states in the application that due to the fact that this section of relocation is on a quarry property, the presence of historical and /or

1. According to the Applicant's PUCO Tariff for Gas Service, Sheet No. 32, on file with the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio:

The CEP Rider is subject to reconciliation or adjustment annually, including but not limited to, increases or refunds. Such reconciliation or adjustment shall be limited to: (1) the twelve-month period of expenditures upon which the rates were calculated, if determined to be unlawful, unreasonable, or imprudent by the Commission in the docket those rates were approved or the Supreme Court of Ohio; (2) the Commission's orders in Case No. 18-47-AU-COI or any case ordered by the Commission to address tax reform changes.

archaeological sites likely do not exist. However, Staff observed during field review that there is a cemetery located on or near the neighboring quarry property. Because the application (Attachment F) provides correspondence and recommendations from OHPO for the entire Vectren replacement, Staff recommends that construction of this project not commence until such time that the Applicant provides clarification for the OPSB record from OHPO that this 1,600-foot relocation project is not subject to the overall OHPO recommendation that additional field work is required to ensure no adverse impacts to cultural resources as discussed in Attachment F.

Surface Waters

No wetlands or streams were identified along the project corridor. The project area was previously cleared and graded by the Martin-Marietta Quarry. No impacts to surface waters would occur.

The Applicant would submit a Notice of Intent for coverage under the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Stormwater General Permit. Staff does not anticipate issues with the Applicant's procurement of this permit coverage. As part of this permit, erosion control measures including silt fencing and other best management practices would be used where appropriate to minimize runoff impacts. The project would not overlap with any 100-year floodplain areas.

Threatened and Endangered Species

One of the missions of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) is to “conserve and improve the fish and wildlife resources and their habitats and promote their use and appreciation by the public so that these resources continue to enhance the quality of life for all Ohioans.” In carrying out this mission, the ODNR considers the “status of native wildlife species [to be] very important” and therefore lists wildlife species needing protection.² In addition to endangered species, those species classified as “threatened” are considered during OPSB project planning and approval because these species are those “whose survival in Ohio is not in immediate jeopardy, but to which a threat exists. Continued or increased stress will result in it becoming endangered.”³

The project area is within the range of state and federally endangered Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), the federally threatened northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), the state endangered little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*), and the state endangered tricolored bat (*Perimyotis subflavus*). As tree roosting species in the summer months, the habitat of these species would be impacted by the project. In order to avoid impacts to these listed bat species, the ODNR and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) recommend seasonal tree cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for all trees that are three inches or greater in diameter. Tree clearing would not be required for this project. During the winter months, bats hibernate in caves and abandoned mines, also known as hibernacula. The proposed project is not expected to impact any bat hibernacula. No impacts to these species are anticipated.

The project is within range of the following listed bird species: the state endangered lark sparrow (*Chondestes grammacus*), the state endangered upland sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*), the state endangered northern harrier (*Circus hudsonis*), and the state threatened least bittern (*Ixobrychus*

2. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Wildlife, “Ohio’s Listed Species,” Publication 5356 (R0520), <https://ohiodnr.gov/static/documents/wildlife/state-listed-species/Ohio's%20Listed%20Species%20pub356.pdf>, accessed June 3, 2021.

3. Id.

exilis). Due to lack of suitable habitat within the project area, no impacts to these species are anticipated.

The project is within range of the state endangered and federally threatened eastern massasauga (*Sistrurus catenatus*), the state threatened Kirtland's snake (*Clonophis kirtlandii*), and the state threatened spotted turtle (*Clemmys guttata*). Due to lack of suitable habitat within the project area, no impacts to these species are anticipated.

Five listed mussel species, the state and federally endangered clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*), the state and federally endangered rayed bean (*Villosa fabalis*), the state and federally endangered snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*) the state threatened black sandshell (*Ligumia recta*), and the state threatened fanwsfoot (*Truncilla donaciformis*) as well as a listed fish species, the state threatened tongue-tied minnow (*Exoglossum laurae*), were identified to have a range within the project area. No in water work is proposed for this project. No impacts to these species are 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 approval of this application subject to the following conditions. 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.

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.
- (3) Staff recommends that construction of this project not commence until such time that the Applicant coordinate with the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) and clarify that this 1,600-foot relocation project is not subject to the overall replacement project OHPO recommendation that additional field work is required to ensure no adverse impacts to cultural resources as discussed in Attachment F of the application. This additional correspondence shall be filed in the case docket.
- (4) The Applicant shall ensure all necessary erosion control measures are implemented during construction with special attention given to areas of the project that exceed 12 percent slope.

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

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Case No(s). 21-0572-GA-BNR

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Mr. Andrew S Conway on behalf of Staff of OPSB