

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application )  
of AEP Ohio Transmission Company for a Certificate )  
of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for ) Case No. 21-0265-EL-BLN  
the Adjustment to Seaman-Adams 138 kV )  
Transmission Line Rebuild 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 on August 5, 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 August 5, 2021, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Theresa White  
Executive Director  
Ohio Power Siting Board

## OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

**Case Number:** 21-0265-EL-BLN  
**Project Name:** Adjustment to Seaman-Adams 138 kV Transmission Line Rebuild Project  
**Project Location:** Adams County  
**Applicant:** AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc.  
**Application Filing Date:** May 6, 2021  
**Filing Type:** Letter of Notification  
**Inspection Date(s):** November 4, 2020  
**Report Date:** July 29, 2021  
**Recommended Automatic Approval Date:** August 5, 2021  
**Applicant's Waiver Requests:** None  
**Staff Assigned:** A. Conway

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

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

### Background

AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc. (AEP Ohio Transco or Applicant) has currently rebuilt the majority of the 32.8-mile 138 kilovolt (kV) Waverly-Adams-Seaman transmission line that was installed circa 1954. The rebuild of the Waverly-Adams-Seaman transmission line was previously approved by the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) in Case Nos. 17-0172-EL-BLN (for the 4.6 miles of Waverly to Ware Road transmission line), 17-0813-EL-BLN (for the 28.2 miles of Ware Road-Adams-Seaman transmission line) and 20-1495-EL-BGN (for the final eight-mile segment of that rebuild). In this case, Case No. 21-0265-EL-BLN, the Applicant proposes to adjust the locations of three previously approved structures from Case No. 20-1495-EL-BLN just before the circuit enters the Adams Station.

### Project Description and Need

In the OPSB Case No. 20-1495-EL-BLN, AEP Ohio Transco proposed and OPSB approved the construction of the Seaman-Adams 138 kV transmission line rebuild project in Adams County, Ohio. The route for that project begins at the existing Seaman Station, which is located near the junction of Silcott Road and State Route 247 in Scott Township, and ends at the existing Adams Station located near the junction of Inlow Avenue and Arey Road in Meigs Township, Adams County. The length of the proposed double circuit transmission line rebuild project was approximately eight miles. That project is under construction.

As AEP Ohio Transco finalized its design plans and easement negotiations for that project, it identified the need to shift a portion of the Seaman-Adams 138 kV transmission line near the Adams Station. The Applicant indicated that adjustments to the structure's locations and realignment of the previously approved centerline would be necessary to avoid conflicts with existing underground utilities and comply with a landowner request.

In this case, the Applicant proposes a project adjustment near the Adams Station. Specifically, the Applicant has requested that structure 62A shift approximately 17 feet northeast of the previously approved structure. This adjustment to structure 62A is due to the landowner's request. The Applicant has also requested that structure 63A shift approximately 54 feet west of the previously approved structure and that proposed structure 64A shift approximately 202 feet west of the previously approved structure. These proposed shifts to structures 63A and 64A are to avoid existing underground utilities. The proposed shifts are denoted in the Aerial Map Figure of Appendix A of the Application.

The Ware Road-Adams-Seaman transmission rebuild project was included in the Applicant's 2020 Long Term Forecast Report to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio, filed in Case No. 20-1501-EL-FOR.<sup>1</sup>

Upgrades to the transmission system are part of PJM Interconnection, LLC's (PJM) Regional Transmission Expansion Planning (RTEP) process.<sup>2</sup> The project was reviewed with PJM Interconnection, LLC (PJM) stakeholders at the Subregional RTEP (SR-RTEP) Western Committee on April 17, 2018 and May 21, 2018.<sup>3</sup> Transmission owners plan supplemental projects in accordance with PJM's Open Access Transmission Tariff (OATT).<sup>4</sup> That project was issued

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1. AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc., "Long-Term Forecast Report to the Public Utilities Commission of Ohio," Public Utilities Commission of Ohio Case No. 20-1501-EL-FOR, April 15, 2020.

2. PJM is the regional transmission organization charged with planning for upgrades to the regional transmission system in Ohio. Significant alterations to the transmission system located in the PJM control area are required to submit planned projects for review of system impacts.

PJM's RTEP identifies transmission system additions and improvements needed to keep electricity flowing to the millions of people throughout PJM's region. See PJM Regional Transmission Expansion Plan, <https://www.pjm.com/library/reports-notice/rtep-documents.aspx> (accessed Oct. 14, 2020).

3. PJM Interconnection, "Subregional RTEP Committee - Western," April 17, 2018, <https://pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/srrtep-w/20180417/20180417-reliability-analysis-update.ashx> (Accessed November 10, 2020).

PJM Interconnection, "Subregional RTEP Committee - Western," May 21, 2018, available at: <https://pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/srrtep-w/20180521/20180521-reliability-analysis-update.ashx> (Accessed November 10, 2020).

4. 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>.

supplemental PJM upgrade IDs s1621.2 and s1621.3, whereby the project status can be tracked on PJM's website.<sup>5</sup>

The capital cost of this eight-mile, double circuit segment of the transmission line rebuild project which was approved in OPSB Case No. 20-1495-EL-BLN is estimated to be \$19,800,000.<sup>6</sup> The cost associated with the proposed location adjustments to structures 62A, 63A, and 64A as requested in this project (i.e., Case No. 21-0265-EL-BLN) are included in that capital cost.

The Applicant proposes to begin construction of the pole location adjustments in October 2021 and place the facility in service in December 2021.

### **Nature of Impacts**

The surrounding land use for the Ware Road-Seaman transmission line rebuild project as approved in Case Nos. 17-0813-EL-BLN and 20-1495-EL-BLN is a mix of pastures, fields, agricultural areas, old field, hay field, early successional deciduous forest, and dispersed rural residential land uses. No schools, parks, nature preserves, or wildlife management areas are located within 1,000 feet of the centerline of the project. According to the Applicant, there currently are 36 residences within 1,000 feet and four occupied residence within 100 feet of the centerline of the Ware Road – Seaman transmission line rebuild project.

The Applicant would gain access to the current transmission line, to rebuild it, through easements and its proposed construction access roads included in the application.

Tree clearing for 20-1495-EL-BLN was already initiated, no additional tree clearing is needed with the pole location adjustments. The Applicant conducted environmental surveys for the proposed shift and no delineated features were identified along the proposed alignment. Therefore, no additional ecological impacts are anticipated. The Applicant has acquired all the easement necessary for the proposed alignment. Staff has reviewed these environmental and cultural resource studies as part of its evaluation of the overall project proposed in Case No. 20-1495-EL-BLN. To ensure that the same standards are adhered to in this proposed adjustment, Staff recommends that the Applicant continue to adhere to all conditions adopted in the associated Ware Road-Seaman transmission line rebuild project as approved in Case Nos. 17-0813-EL-BLN and 20-1495-EL-BLN.

### **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 provided that the following conditions are satisfied. 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.

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5. PJM Interconnection, "Transmission Construction Status," <https://pjm.com/planning/project-construction.aspx>. (Accessed July 13, 2021).

6. The Applicant further broke down that project cost estimate into \$1M for engineering, \$14M for construction/labor, \$600,000 for right-of-way acquisition, and \$4.2M for material. The Applicant indicates that all of the cost of this transmission line project would be included in the Applicant's formula rate (i.e., the annual transmission revenue applicable under PJM's Open Access Transmission Tariff, Attachment H-20) and would be assessed on all transmission customers within the AEP Zone.

## **Conditions**

- (1) The Applicant shall continue to adhere to all conditions adopted in the associated Ware Road-Seaman transmission line rebuild project as approved in Case Nos. 17-0813-EL-BLN and 20-1495-EL-BLN.
- (2) 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.

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

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on**

**7/29/2021 2:44:49 PM**

**in**

**Case No(s). 21-0265-EL-BLN**

Summary: Staff Report of Investigation electronically filed by Mr. Jason Cross on behalf of Staff of OPSB