

BEFORE THE POWER SITING BOARD OF THE STATE OF OHIO

**In the Matter of the Letter of Notification Application by)
American Transmission Systems, Inc. for a Certificate of)
Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the) Case No. 22-0053-EL-BLN
Delta-Wauseon 138 kV Transmission Line Tap to Nova)
Tube Steel 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 11, 2022, 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 objections you or your designee may have with this case to my office at least four business days prior to March 11, 2022, which is the recommended automatic approval date.

Sincerely,



Theresa White
Executive Director
Ohio Power Siting Board

OPSB STAFF REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Case Number: 22-0053-EL-BLN
Project Name: Delta-Wauseon 138 kV Transmission Line
Tap to Nova Tube Steel Substation Project
Project Location: Fulton County
Applicant: American Transmission Systems, Inc.
Application Filing Date: February 11, 2022
Filing Type: Letter of Notification
Inspection Date: February 16, 2022
Report Date: March 4, 2022
**Recommended Automatic
Approval Date:** March 11, 2022
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, Inc. (Applicant or ATSI) proposes to construct approximately 0.66-miles of 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission line. The project requires 18 new wood pole structures. The transmission line tap would extend from the Delta-Wauseon 138 kV Transmission Line to the customer-owned Nova Tube Steel Substation.

The Applicant states they have received multiple requests for service in this area due to increased economic development. The Applicant plans to network this radial line to the Delta-Wauseon 138 kV Transmission Line in a future application to the Board. This project is expected to improve reliability, resiliency, and operational flexibility to existing and future retail customers.

This project's need and solution was presented and reviewed with PJM Interconnection, LLC (PJM) stakeholders at the 'Subregional RTEP Committee – Western' on July 16, 2021, and August 16, 2021.¹ Transmission owners plan supplemental projects in accordance with PJM's Open

1. 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 Interconnection, "Subregional RTEP Committee - Western," June 15, 2021, FirstEnergy Supplemental Projects, Need No. (ATSI-2021-019), <https://pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/srtepw/2021/20210716/20210716-atsi-supplemental-projects.ashx> (Accessed March 4, 2022).

Access Transmission Tariff, Attachment M-3 process. The supplemental upgrade ID is pending assignment by PJM. The Applicant states that the project was not included in the most recent Long-Term Forecast Report (LTFR) because it was not identified at the time of the filing. The capital and total costs of this proposed transmission line project are estimated to be \$2,131,000.²

Nature of Impacts

Land Use

The project is located Delta, York Township, Fulton County, Ohio. The proposed alignment would parallel an existing railroad line that is adjacent to U. S. Highway 20A. The surrounding land use consists of agricultural and industrial uses. The Applicant is currently negotiating needed easements for the facility.

Cultural Resources

The Applicant 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 has examined and concurs with the survey results.

Ecological Impacts

Currently, the proposed transmission line route is being used for agricultural and industrial purposes. No wetlands are present and no in-water work is proposed. The Applicant coordinated its review with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and with the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Apart from bat species described below, the Applicant's assessment did not reveal any listed species or unique habitats that would likely be affected.

The responses from ODNR and USFWS indicate that the project area is within the range of the federal and state endangered Indiana Bat, the federal threatened and state endangered Northern Long-Eared Bat, the state endangered Little Brown Bat, and the state American endangered Tricolored Bat. Field and desktop assessments yielded no evidence of hibernacula suited for these bat species within the Project area and ODNR concurs with this assessment. Tree clearing is expected to be completed prior to April 1, 2022, therefore no impacts to these species are anticipated. Based on ATSI's review of online FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Mapping, the project work limits do not encroach on any regulated flood plains. Staff believes expected ecological impacts to be minimal.

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 March 11, 2022.

PJM Interconnection, "Subregional RTEP Committee - Western," July 16, 2021, FirstEnergy Supplemental Projects, Need No. (ATSI-2021-019), <https://pjm.com/-/media/committees-groups/committees/srtepw/2021/20210816/20210816-atsi-supplemental-projects.ashx> (Accessed March 4, 2022).

2. Applicant indicates that the entire cost, approximately \$2,131,000, will be included in the Applicant's formula rate (PJM Open Access Transmission Tariff, Attachment H-21) and would be assessed on all transmission customers within the ATSI zone.

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) The Applicant shall provide to Staff the PJM Interconnection supplemental upgrade ID.
- (4) The Applicant shall adhere to seasonal cutting dates of October 1 through March 31 for removal of any trees greater than or equal to three inches in diameter unless coordination efforts with the ODNR and the USFWS allows a different course of action. If coordination with these agencies allows clearing between April 1 and September 30, the Applicant shall docket proof of completed coordination on the case docket prior to clearing trees.
- (5) The Applicant shall ensure, to the maximum extent practical, that the customer contributes an amount that is appropriate under the present project.

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3/4/2022 12:58:43 PM

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Case No(s). 22-0053-EL-BLN

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