



Legal Department

American Electric Power
1 Riverside Plaza
Columbus, OH 43215-2373
AEP.com

August 25, 2022

Ms. Tanowa Troupe, Secretary
Ohio Power Siting Board
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, Ohio 43215-3793

Hector Garcia
Senior Counsel –
Regulatory Services
(614) 716-3410 (P)
hgarcia1@aep.com

**RE: In the Matter of the Letter of Notification of AEP Ohio Transmission
Company for the Hillsboro-Millbrook Park 138 kV Circuit Rebuild
Adjustment Project
Case No. 22-0010-EL-BLN**

Dear Ms. Troupe:

In satisfaction of Condition (3) of the Staff Report for the project listed above, AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc. (“the Company”) submits this notice and attachment to inform you of the coordination with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (“ODNR”) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (“USFWS”) in regards to tree clearing prior to October 1st. Coordination with USFWS and ODNR has been completed. Accordingly, the Company plans to begin limited tree clearing per ODNR requirements noted below between April 1st and September 30th. A copy of the relevant emails and letter is attached hereto.

As described in the attached communications with ODNR and USFWS, the Company conducted summer mist net surveys for federally and state listed bats between June 7th and July 8th 2022. One long-eared bat was captured during the survey and a 5-mile buffer was placed around the capture site. Based on the results of the mist net survey, the Company requested to conduct tree clearing activities beyond 5 miles of the northern long-eared bat capture site without seasonal restriction. Furthermore, after additional consultation with ODNR and USFWS, it was determined that limited summer tree clearing activities would be acceptable within 5 miles of the capture site subject to certain conditions.

On July 18th 2022, the USFWS responded to the Company’s mist net survey results stating, “Tree clearing on the project site at any time of the year is unlikely to result in adverse impacts to Indiana bats and will not result in any unauthorized incidental take of northern long-eared bats.”

On July 25th 2022, the ODNR Division of Wildlife (“DOW”) sent a response email stating, “Limited summer tree cutting inside this buffer, as outlined in the DOW guidance for Bat Surveys and Tree clearing (May 2022), may be acceptable after further consultation with DOW.”

Further consultation with ODNR was initiated on August 11th ODNR informed the Company that the agency did not have any objections to the Company proceeding with tree clearing under the following conditions:

- to the clearing of underbrush or shrub/scrub is limited to under 3” diameter at breast height (“DBH”) and does not require removal of larger trees (i.e., >5” DBH) in the process.
- For those larger (>5” DBH) trees, it is appropriate to identify those with characteristics (e.g., exfoliating bark, cracks, and crevices) considered suitable for roosting northern long-eared bats. Photo documentation, size, species, and general map(s) of the potential roost trees (“PRTs”) are sufficient deliverables to DOW to move to the next steps.
- Emergence counts and immediate felling of a maximum 20 PRTs is acceptable following sign off from DOW. The agency is willing to accept emergence counts on several if tightly packed.
- ODNR is willing to have a follow up call to go over PRTs/photos and discuss their criteria/ on PRT qualification.

Subsequent to the August 11th conference call, and consistent with the discussion during the conference call, the Company submitted a request to ODNR for their concurrence that in-season tree clearing of 19 PRTs following negative emergence counts was acceptable. The agency provided this concurrence on August 23rd 2022.

The Company will supplement this information on this docket if additional documentation is provided by ODNR or USFWS or if further consultation with either agency is necessary.

If you have any questions regarding this information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Hector Garcia

Hector Garcia (0084517), Counsel of Record
Counsel for AEP Ohio Transmission Company, Inc.

cc: John Jones, Counsel OPSB Staff
Jon Pawley, OPSB Staff

From: Eileen.Wyza@dnr.ohio.gov <Eileen.Wyza@dnr.ohio.gov>

Sent: Wednesday, August 24, 2022 8:04 AM

To: Valerie Clarkston <VClarkston@envsi.com>

Cc: Allison R Wheaton <arwheaton@aep.com>; Jeremy Alberts <JAlberts@envsi.com>

Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL] #22-023 - AEP's Hillsboro to Millbrook Park Rebuild Project - Summer Mist Net Survey Report

This is an **EXTERNAL** email. **STOP. THINK** before you CLICK links or OPEN attachments. If suspicious please click the '**Report to Incidents**' button in Outlook or forward to incidents@aep.com from a mobile device.

Hi Valarie,

Thank you for your patience. Emergence surveys of these 19 trees is acceptable for the DOW. Please follow the protocol below and report results of the emergence counts to me after the surveys are completed (email is just fine):

- Surveyor(s) should be positioned to see the entire tree, silhouetted against the sky if possible.
- Complete the surveys on nights where the wind is less than 10 mph, temperatures are at least 50°F, and it's not raining.
- Begin the survey 30 minutes before sunset. Sunset tables can be found online.
- Watch the entire tree for bats to emerge. Do not shine a light on the tree or bats—just watch for movement and silhouettes in the sky.

- An hour after sunset, or when the sky is too dark to see bats, you can conclude the survey. If no bats are documented, cut the tree the day following the emergence count survey. If bats are documented, wait to cut the tree until October 1-March 31 or consult with DOW for further guidance.

Thank you!

Eileen Wyza

Wildlife Biologist

Ohio Division of Wildlife

Phone: 614-265-6764

Email: Eileen.Wyza@dnr.ohio.gov

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8/25/2022 11:13:13 AM

in

Case No(s). 22-0010-EL-BLN

Summary: Notice Letter of Notification, Hillboro-Millbrook Compliance of Condition
3. electronically filed by Hector Garcia-Santana on behalf of AEP Ohio
Transmission Company, Inc.