

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2017

The coming year will bring two major decisions regarding the Northern Pass project. The New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) will hold adjudicative hearings in the spring and is expected to make a final decision on the project in mid to late summer. The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) is expected to release its final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) this year, as well. With these major milestones ahead, the project will continue discussions with landowners, residents and businesses along the route to keep them aware of developments as the permitting process moves towards completion.

SEC HEARINGS TO BEGIN IN APRIL

Adjudicative hearings are the last step in the SEC approval process. During these formal legal hearings, which are similar to those you might find in a court of law, information will be presented by Northern Pass and project experts to the SEC, including data on benefits, construction procedures, environmental impact and other aspects of the project. Witnesses for the Counsel for the Public and interveners will also provide testimony at this stage.

At the conclusion of the adjudicative hearings, the SEC will decide whether to grant the project a Certificate of Site and Facility, taking into consideration the testimony received and comments from the public.

FINAL EIS EXPECTED FROM DOE

The DOE is expected to issue its final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on Northern Pass sometime in 2017. The final EIS is based on information in the draft EIS issued in July 2015 and feedback the agency received on the draft as supplemented in November 2015.

The final EIS is a public document that reflects extensive analysis and research conducted by the DOE, and includes a detailed summary of possible environmental impacts of the project along the proposed route and an analysis of a number of alternative routes. This analysis is required prior to issuing the Presidential Permit that will allow the transmission of electricity across the U.S.- Canadian border.

A GROWING NEED

Gordon van Welie, the head of the regional grid operating system, ISO New England, recently highlighted the changing nature of our electric grid. Because of the retirement of older power plants, the region's growing reliance on natural gas for generating electricity, and the lack of pipeline capacity to get natural gas to generators during cold winter days, van Welie warns of "the unavoidable conclusion" that New England needs more energy infrastructure to ensure a reliable system.

"Until large transmission lines are built to reach hydro and wind resources, and unless additional fuel infrastructure is added to



New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee members and interveners tour the proposed Northern Pass route in March 2016.

meet the ever-increasing demand for natural gas to heat homes and businesses and to generate the power that lights those homes and businesses, we see a future with challenges that may require the ISO to employ suboptimal solutions," van Welie said. Those "suboptimal solutions" include higher prices for consumers and an increase in carbon emissions.

High electricity costs are another issue elected officials seek to tackle in 2017. Incoming New Hampshire Governor Chris Sununu urged policymakers to look at all energy solutions, including adding new sources of power.

"Whatever we do we're focusing on, how is this going to drop rates for consumers, for individuals, for businesses? That has to be our primary focus, and then we'll have tangible results," Sununu said, according to the *Portsmouth Herald*. "This is an all-the-above whether we're talking about the Northern Pass, bringing in more natural gas, a better renewable energy portfolio for the state, it's all about efficiency."

Northern Pass sees 2017 as an opportunity to take an important step forward in the region's efforts to lower costs, ensure reliability and move toward a cleaner energy future.



2016: A YEAR OF PROGRESS

Last year was a landmark year for Northern Pass, during which the project reached a number of milestones that will be key in the effort to gain final approval in 2017. Some of the highlights include:

- ISO New England officially determined in July** that Northern Pass can reliably interconnect with the regional electric grid. By approving the project's I.3.9 application, ISO New England determined Northern Pass will not have a significant, adverse effect on the reliability or operating characteristics of the regional grid and its participants.
- The New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (PUC) decided in October** that Northern Pass has the technical, managerial and financial expertise to operate as a public utility, and that it is in the public good for the project to do so. Northern Pass also committed to provide \$20 million (\$2 million a year for 10 years) for programs or initiatives approved by the PUC that advance clean energy innovation, community betterment, and economic development in New Hampshire, including energy efficiency programs.
- Eversource and Hydro-Québec reached a significant agreement** that ensures Eversource customers in New Hampshire will receive a substantial supply of clean energy from the Northern Pass hydroelectric transmission project. In addition to the hundreds of million dollars to electric customers throughout New Hampshire and New England, the power purchase agreement, or PPA, will reduce price volatility for Eversource customers.
- Northern Pass announced in April** the major contractors and material suppliers who will participate in the construction of the Northern Pass transmission line once the project receives its state and federal permits. Northern Pass contractors also conducted field work along the proposed route, including soil boring tests to log soil characteristics, as well as shovel test sampling for historical artifacts, as required under the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106 process and by the SEC.

Stay Up-To-Date on Northern Pass

We have a number of ways for you to stay informed on the latest Northern Pass developments as the project moves through the permitting process. In addition to mailing this monthly newsletter to all landowners along the route and other stakeholders, we have a comprehensive website (www.northernpass.us) that includes detailed maps, view simulations, information about project benefits, environmental information and details about the project in each community along the route. Our website also includes the Northern Pass "Project Update" blog, where we post project and energy news updates regularly.

Northern Pass is committed to staying engaged with those interested in the project. We regularly post news, links, videos, and other energy information on social media, including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. As always, you can reach out to our hotline via email or phone.

-  **Project Journal:** <http://blog.northernpass.us/>
-  **Facebook:** www.facebook.com/thenorthernpass/
-  **Twitter:** <https://twitter.com/TheNorthernPass>
-  **YouTube:** www.youtube.com/user/NorthernPassUS
-  **Email:** info@northernpass.us
-  **Phone:** 1-800-286-7305



Watch a Video

Mike Collins is a North Country resident who supports Northern Pass because of the jobs it will bring to New Hampshire. "This amount of work close to home and the amount of jobs it will create in general, I think it's great." To hear more of what Collins said, go to www.northernpass.us/multimedia.

ABOUT NORTHERN PASS

Northern Pass is a 192-mile electric transmission line project that will provide New Hampshire and New England up to 1,090 megawatts of clean hydropower. This reliable and competitively-priced power will also bring a range of benefits to New Hampshire, including hundreds of millions of dollars in energy cost savings, additional tax revenue, and thousands of jobs during construction and beyond. To learn more about Northern Pass, go to www.northernpass.us. You can also email questions to info@northernpass.us or call **1-800-286-7305**.