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# THE NORTHERN PASS PROJECT PERMITTING AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

## NEW HAMPSHIRE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE: CERTIFICATE OF SITE AND FACILITY

The Northern Pass project, a transmission line proposed in New Hampshire, requires certain federal and state permits before construction can begin. A state Certificate of Site and Facility from the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) is required for siting energy facilities in New Hampshire, such as natural gas pipelines, certain electric power generating plants, and high-voltage transmission lines, including Northern Pass. All required state permits (e.g., wetlands, water quality), are reviewed during the SEC application process and incorporated into the site certificate.

The following flow chart provides the general steps to obtain a Certificate of Site and Facility from the SEC:

### STEPS

1

#### PRE-APPLICATION PUBLIC INFORMATION SESSIONS

At least 30 days prior to filing an application, an applicant must hold a public information session in each county in which its project will be located, for the purposes of presenting information on the project and providing an opportunity for comments and questions from the public.

2

#### APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE FILED WITH SEC

An application for a Certificate of Site and Facility that addresses the specific requirements of *RSA 162-H* is filed with the New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (SEC). The SEC consists of:

- Commissioner of Department of Cultural Resources or Director of Division of Historic Resources
- Commissioner of Department of Environmental Services (DES)
- Commissioner of Department of Resources and Economic Development (DRED)
- Commissioner of Department of Transportation
- Three Public Utilities Commissioners
- Two Public Members

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#### APPLICATION FORWARDED TO STATE AGENCIES

The application for Certificate of Site and Facility includes information to satisfy the application requirements of state agencies having permitting or other regulatory authority.

4

#### SEC DETERMINES COMPLETENESS OF APPLICATION (60 DAYS)

Within 60 days of filing the application, the SEC reviews the application and determines whether to accept the application as "administratively complete."

5

**POST-APPLICATION PUBLIC  
INFORMATION SESSIONS  
(45 DAYS)**

Within 45 days of acceptance of the application, the applicant must hold another public information session in each county in which its project will be located.

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**PUBLIC HEARINGS IN EACH  
COUNTY (90 DAYS)**

Within 90 days of acceptance of the application, the SEC and state agencies hold at least one joint public hearing in each county in which the proposed project is to be located.

7

**PERMITTING AGENCIES  
REPORT PROGRESS TO SEC  
(150 DAYS)**

Within 150 days of the application's acceptance, state agencies having permitting or other regulatory authority report the progress of their review to the SEC, outlining draft permit conditions and specifying additional data requirements necessary to make a final decision.

8

**PERMITTING AGENCIES  
SUBMIT FINAL DECISION  
TO SEC (240 DAYS)**

No later than 240 days after the application's acceptance, all participating state agencies having permitting or other regulatory authority submit a final decision to the SEC on the parts of the application that relate to their permitting or other regulatory authority.

9

**ADJUDICATIVE HEARINGS**

The SEC holds adjudicative hearings to consider and weigh evidence. The applicant has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that a Certificate should be issued. Witnesses submit testimony under oath and are subject to cross-examination. Persons seeking to intervene must file a petition that demonstrates that the "petitioner's rights, duties, privileges, immunities or other substantial interest might be affected by the proceeding."

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**SEC ISSUES DECISION  
(365 DAYS)**

Within 365 days of the application's acceptance, the SEC issues its decision on the application. The SEC may temporarily extend the time frame if it is in the public interest to do so.

For detailed information on the state permitting and public participation process, visit the SEC website at [www.nhsec.nh.gov/](http://www.nhsec.nh.gov/).



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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