

February 15, 2011

Mr. Anthony J. Como  
Director, Permitting and Siting  
Office of Electricity Delivery and Energy Reliability  
U.S. Department of Energy  
1000 Independence Avenue SW  
Washington, D.C. 20585

Re: Northern Pass Transmission, LLC  
Docket No. PP-371  
Addendum to Application

Dear Mr. Como:

On October 14, 2010, Northern Pass Transmission LLC (“Northern Pass”) submitted an Application for a Presidential Permit to construct a 1,200 MW high voltage direct current (“HVDC”) transmission line (the “Application”) from the Des Cantons substation in Québec, to Franklin, New Hampshire (the “Project”). By this letter, Northern Pass updates and supplements its Application in several respects:

1. Northern Pass identifies a preferred border crossing in Pittsburg, New Hampshire, along with two possible alternatives. This information was not available to Northern Pass at the time of the October filing. Northern Pass also identifies the potential environmental impacts in New Hampshire associated with the preferred route and the alternatives.
2. Northern Pass provides an update concerning what will become its preferred route through Concord, New Hampshire, if the Federal Aviation Administration provides certain approvals sought by Northern Pass.
3. Northern Pass provides information concerning a name change for its counterparty on the Transmission Service Agreement that was described in the Application.
4. Northern Pass identifies a portion of the Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge, within an existing power line easement, that it did not previously identify as impacted by the preferred route of the Project.

5. Northern Pass identifies farmland that would be impacted by the preferred route of the Project that Northern Pass did not previously identify as subject to Federal Grassland Reserve Program easements.
6. Northern Pass provides an update on the status of the system power flow studies that are underway pursuant to Department of Energy (“DOE”) and ISO-New England requirements.

## **1. Border Crossing**

In Section 2.3 of the Application, Northern Pass explained that the precise location of the border crossing had not been determined. Northern Pass is now in a position to identify the preferred border crossing location and two alternatives to connect the northernmost portion of the line with the previously described portions of the Project. As previously explained, there are no existing transmission lines in the northernmost portion of New Hampshire, and therefore the proposed border crossing and both the preferred and alternative routes involve development of a new right-of-way (“ROW”).

As shown on Exhibit G, the preferred route of the Project would cross the United States/Canada border at a point approximately .6 mile north of the New Hampshire/Vermont border traversing portions of the Towns of Pittsburgh and Clarksville, New Hampshire, and going southeast to where it joins the line depicted on Exhibit C of the Application in Stewartstown.

Two border crossing alternatives have also been identified. The First Alternative, which is located entirely in Pittsburg, begins roughly .9 miles north of and is slightly longer (.1 mile) than the preferred route. However, it goes down the center of a valley, making it much more visible in the surrounding area.

The Second Alternative crosses the United States/Canada border approximately 4.2 miles north of the preferred route and is 4.1 miles longer. This alternative bifurcates the J. Amey and Washburn Family Forest conservation easements to the east and the Connecticut Lakes to the west. This is the reason why this is the less favored alternative route. In addition, this alternative would come within .5 mile of the Pittsburg-Clarksville Bridge, a covered bridge eligible for National Register of Historic Places (“NRHP”) listing.

Exhibit I is a map showing the latitude and longitude of the preferred and alternative border crossings.

In the discussion that follows, Northern Pass identifies the known environmental impacts of the preferred route and the two alternatives it has considered for the northernmost portion of the Project adjacent to the border crossing.

### *Wetlands, Floodplains and Water Resources*

The avoidance and minimization of impacts to rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, floodplains and wetlands crossed by the Project was a critical objective in Northern Pass’s selection of the new

ROW route through Pittsburg and Clarksville at the northern New Hampshire terminus of the Project. The preferred route and the First Alternative would span the Connecticut River, a Designated River, American Heritage River, and Fourth Order or Greater Stream subject to the New Hampshire Comprehensive Shoreland Protection Act (“CSPA”); as well as at least three other perennial streams, including Pond Brook and Faureau Brook. The preferred route would also span Hall’s Stream, which is on the U.S. side of the international border in this location, and is subject to the CSPA. The Second Alternative, which is the longest of the three, would have the greatest number of stream crossings. This alternative would also span the Connecticut River, Hall’s Stream, Indian Stream, and at least seven other perennial streams.

As noted in the Application, new state stream-crossing rules will apply to all streams and rivers that must be crossed by equipment. Floodplain laws and regulations also will apply in some locations. The state stream-crossing and floodplains laws would also apply along portions of the alternate routes. The Second Alternative spans the large floodplains of the Connecticut River, Indian Stream, and Hall’s Stream, while relatively smaller floodplains are spanned by the preferred route and the First Alternative.

Based on National Wetland Inventory (NWI) data, approximately 0.12 miles of wetlands would be traversed by the Project’s preferred route in Pittsburg and Clarksville. The First and Second Alternatives would cross approximately 0.04 and 0.26 miles of wetlands, respectively. As Northern Pass has previously acknowledged, the NWI maps may underestimate the quantity of forested wetlands, which are the most common wetland type in New Hampshire. Northern Pass anticipates that DOE will undertake a more detailed analysis of floodplain and wetland impacts will occur during its review of the Project under the National Environmental Policy Act (“NEPA”). Coordination with New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (“DES”), the Army Corps of Engineers (“the Corps”), and the Federal Emergency Management Agency (“FEMA”) will take place during the permitting process as well. FEMA review will likely focus on any required fill for permanent access roads within the floodplains, if required.

#### *Critical Wildlife Habitat*

Neither the preferred route nor the alternative routes would cross land that the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (“USFWS”) has designated as critical habitat for any endangered species. There currently is no designated critical habitat for any species in New Hampshire.

#### *Threatened or Endangered Wildlife or Plant Life*

The USFWS New England Field Office database lists the federal threatened Canada lynx for all towns in Coos County with regenerating softwoods.

In New Hampshire, the Nongame and Endangered Wildlife Program of the Fish and Game Department is the steward for the state’s non-game wildlife. The New Hampshire Natural Heritage Bureau (“NHB”) in the Division of Forests and Lands at the Department of Resources and Economic Development is responsible for identifying, tracking and protecting New Hampshire’s rare plants and exemplary natural communities. The NHB maintains a comprehensive data base of threatened and endangered species throughout New Hampshire.

The NHB database does not include any records of federal threatened or endangered species occurring within 1,000 feet of the preferred route or either of the alternative routes. The NHB database, however, includes records of state listed species occurring within 1,000 feet of the Project's preferred route and the alternative routes. One state endangered species, the northern harrier, has been recorded on open lands in Pittsburg and Clarksville along both the preferred route and the alternative routes. Tracking studies are planned to identify possible populations of the state threatened pine marten and the federal threatened Canada lynx. Additionally, the NHB database includes records that do not identify the species present at the recorded location due to the species' vulnerability to illegal collection.

Northern Pass will coordinate with the USFWS, U.S. Forest Service ("USFS"), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ("EPA"), New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game, New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, DES and scientists from research institutions and environmental organizations and others to ensure that potential impacts to threatened and endangered species and habitats have been carefully considered and avoided, minimized or mitigated.

#### *Navigable Waterway Crossing*

The Connecticut River is designated a federal navigable river in New Hampshire from the Massachusetts border north to Pittsburg. The preferred route and both of the alternatives span the Connecticut River in Pittsburg.

#### *Indian Land*

There is no federally-designated Indian land in the areas along either the preferred route or either of the alternative routes. Northern Pass will follow the guidance of the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (DHR)/State Historic Preservation Office regarding cultural resource assessments and consultations with Tribes that may have historical interests affected by this portion of the Project.

#### *Federal Lands*

Neither the preferred route nor either of the alternative routes in the northern portion of the Project in Pittsburg and Clarksville cross any federal lands.

#### *Historic and Cultural Resources*

Based on information obtained from the DHR, no historic sites that are listed on the NRHP or are eligible for listing, have been identified within a half-mile of the Project's preferred route in Pittsburg or Clarksville. However, as noted above, the Second Alternative would come within .5 mile of the Pittsburg-Clarksville Bridge, a covered bridge eligible for NRHP listing. Northern Pass anticipates that, in cooperation with DOE, it will support further research and studies for the Project and coordinate with the State Historic Preservation Office during the NEPA and federal and state permitting processes, consistent with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.

## 2. Concord Route

In its Application, Northern Pass noted that, if ISO-NE approves the proposed configuration of the 345 kV AC line and the Federal Aviation Administration authorizes the location of necessary transmission structures in the vicinity of the Concord Municipal Airport, Northern Pass would consider an alternative route that was not shown on the map that was included as Exhibit C and that would follow the existing ROW for approximately 7.7 miles in the City of Concord and the Town of Pembroke a feasible alternative route. Because this alternative follows existing ROW, if Northern Pass receives the required approvals, it will consider this the Project's preferred route. Exhibit H is a reprint of Exhibit C that has been revised to show how the preferred route would be reconfigured if Northern Pass receives the necessary approvals. Northern Pass has undertaken a preliminary analysis of the impacts of this route.

### *Wetlands, Floodplains and Water Resources*

The route through Concord and Pembroke passes through no wetlands according to NWI data, but it does cross approximately 11 streams and the Soucook River. The Soucook River is a fourth-order stream, and is therefore covered under the CSPA described above. A more detailed analysis of stream, floodplain and wetland impacts on the preferred and alternative routes will occur during the NEPA review. Coordination with DES, the Corps, and FEMA will also take place during Project permitting.

### *Critical Wildlife Habitat*

The route through Concord and Pembroke would not cross any land that the USFWS has designated as critical habitat for any endangered species. There currently is no designated critical habitat for any species in New Hampshire.

### *Threatened or Endangered Wildlife or Plant Life*

The alternative route through Concord and Pembroke is an existing 115kV line with records of state threatened and federal endangered species along the corridor. This alternative route also passes within approximately 1,000 feet of the Karner Blue National Wildlife Refuge. There are other protected species records within the pine barrens habitat in the vicinity of Concord Airport, and Northern Pass will coordinate with the USFWS, USFS, EPA, New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game, New Hampshire Department of Resources and Economic Development, DES and scientists from research institutions and environmental organizations and others to ensure that potential impacts to threatened and endangered species and habitats are carefully considered and avoided, minimized or mitigated.

### *Navigable Waterway Crossing*

The Soucook River and other streams along the alternative route in Concord and Pembroke are not designated as federal navigable rivers in New Hampshire.

*Indian Land*

There is no federally-designated Indian land along the alternative route in Concord and Pembroke. Northern Pass will follow the guidance of the New Hampshire Division of Historical Resources (DHR)/State Historic Preservation Office regarding cultural resource assessments and consultations with Tribes that may have historical interests affected by this portion of the Project.

*Federal Lands*

The southern route through Concord and Pembroke does not cross any federal lands.

**3. TSA Counterparty Name Change**

In its Application, Northern Pass explained that it had entered into a Transmission Service Agreement (“TSA”) with HQ Hydro Renewable Energy, Inc., which is an indirect, wholly-owned subsidiary of Hydro-Québec, a corporation that is wholly owned by the government of Québec. HQ Hydro Renewable Energy, Inc. has changed its name to Hydro Renewable Energy Inc. Hydro Renewable Energy Inc. will not have any ownership interest in the Project, or the Project’s real estate, operating or other assets. Northern Pass believes the name change is an immaterial change, but brings it to DOE’s attention so that the record is clear.

**4. Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge**

In its Application, Northern Pass did not identify as a resource affected by the Project the Pondicherry Wildlife Refuge, which is approximately three miles east of Whitefield, New Hampshire. Pondicherry is a division of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge administered by the USFWS, except for a small portion that is subject to state administration. The preferred route for the Project would traverse Pondicherry for a distance of approximately one mile along an existing power line ROW. When the affected land was deeded to USFWS, it was deeded subject to Public Service Company of New Hampshire’s pre-existing power line easement. Based on discussions to date with the USFWS, since the power line easement predates the USFWS acquisition of the underlying property, Northern Pass understands that no Special Use Permit will be necessary to construct the Project within the existing easement, which is what Northern Pass intends to do.

**5. Federal Grasslands Reserve**

Since filing the Application, Northern Pass has learned that certain farmland in Stewartstown, New Hampshire that would be traversed by the Project participates in the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Federal Grassland Reserve Program, which imposes certain restrictions on the use of the land. Northern Pass is exploring what the implications of this are for the Project.

**6. Power System Studies**

In its Application, Northern Pass estimated that the system power flow plots required by DOE regulations to support the request for a Presidential Permit would be complete in early 2011,

after ISO-NE completed the necessary power system studies. Those studies are underway, and Northern Pass will provide the results to DOE as soon as they are available.

We appreciate DOE's consideration of this new information concerning the Project. As additional information becomes available, Northern Pass will promptly submit it.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary Anne Sullivan".

Mary Anne Sullivan  
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555 Thirteenth Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20004  
*Counsel for Northern Pass Transmission LLC*

Attachments (3)

cc: Mr. Brian Mills (by hand and by electronic mail)  
Service List (by electronic mail)