



Who is The Northern Pass?

The Northern Pass is a transmission project that has been proposed by NH-based entity Northern Pass Transmission, LLC in partnership with PSNH's parent company Northeast Utilities, NSTAR and Hydro Quebec to bring reliable, competitively priced, clean energy (mainly hydropower) from Quebec to New Hampshire and New England. Northern Pass Transmission, LLC will pay for the construction of The Northern Pass transmission line at no cost to New Hampshire customers.

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Landowner Newsletter

Welcome to the first issue of the Northern Pass Landowner newsletter. This newsletter is a bi-monthly publication designed to keep you up-to-date on the proposed Northern Pass project and what it means to you and your community. If you have questions or would like more information, don't hesitate to call or e-mail your designated landowner outreach specialist (see sidebar). We are here to give you the facts, answer your questions, and work with you as the proposed project moves forward.

State of the Project

The Northern Pass is currently in the early phase of a two to three year federal and state permitting process. During the permitting process, public input is not only welcomed, it is encouraged. The environmental review process under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) provides an opportunity for you to be involved in the Federal agency decision making process. Currently, the US Department of Energy (DOE) is accepting comments on the proposed project relating to environmental impact. Visit <http://www.northernpass.us/get-involved> for more information on how you can get involved in this process.

Locally, Northern Pass representatives are actively working with New Hampshire residents and officials on the preliminary engineering and design of the proposed transmission line, as well as alternatives to the route originally proposed. In response to public comments, we are re-evaluating routing options in those areas where new rights-of-way were proposed. We expect to amend the DOE permit application in the coming months to propose a new route in the northern most part of the state and in the vicinity of the Concord Airport.

For the most recent information on the state of The Northern Pass, please visit <http://www.northernpass.us/project-journal/>.

Maintaining and Caring for Rights-of-Way Vegetation

As proposed, The Northern Pass will follow PSNH's current vegetation management practice using mechanical (mowing) and manual (hand-cutting) means. PSNH mows vegetation as part of the routine cyclical maintenance of its lines. Vegetation management is regularly scheduled for PSNH's 730 miles of transmission rights-of-way—from careful pruning or removal of trees near power lines to keeping large power line corridors (such as rights-of-way proposed to be used for The Northern Pass) clear of interfering trees and other vegetation that could lead to a potential safety or reliability problem.

Here's how PSNH manages vegetation along the right-of-way on your property:

- Vegetation management is performed using mechanical mowing machines to cut tall growing vegetation.
- Every three to four years, ground vegetation is mowed or hand-cut, and specialized equipment is used to remove dead or weakened limbs from trees growing along the right-of-way. [\(continued on page 2\)](#)

Expansion as an Option: Benefits of Right-of-Way Expansion

In certain sections of the Northern Pass route along the existing right-of-way, expanding that right-of-way may minimize construction work and/or lower the height of the structures proposed to be installed on your property.

The height and location of structures for the proposed transmission line and related construction activities to install them will depend on many factors, including the terrain and width of the existing right-of-way, and the number and locations of the existing power structures already located there. As a landowner with an existing PSNH right-of-way, you are invited to work with the Northern Pass team as they prepare preliminary designs for the proposed project on your property. In some locations, allowing for a modestly wider right-of-way may help to reduce construction activity on the property, allowing for the project to proceed without having to first relocate the existing line and then return at a later time to install the proposed Northern Pass line. A wider right-of-way may also allow for the use of a lower height structure.

Expanding the right-of-way, however, must be a collaborative decision involving multiple landowners along specific portions of the existing rights-of-way proposed to be used for The Northern Pass project. If you have been identified as a landowner along the route where expansion is an option, we will be glad to show you the design and discuss options.

If you want to learn more about this option, contact The Northern Pass landowner outreach specialist for your community (listed on page one), or call us at 1-800-286-7305.

What are people in your communities saying?

Visit mynewhampshire.com to find out.

What is an Easement? Why is it needed?

Electric transmission lines are primarily located within easements on land that is owned by homeowners and businesses like you. An easement is a permanent property right that you, or a previous owner of your property, granted to a utility company. The easement allows for the use of a portion of your land as a right-of-way to access, construct, operate, and maintain transmission facilities. It is not a sale or acquisition of your property. As the landowner, you still own and pay taxes on the easement portion of your property, and you may continue to use the land for some purposes.

Here's how the easement process works:

If your property already has an existing PSNH right-of-way that has been proposed to be used for the Northern Pass transmission line, the deed to your property may reference PSNH's rights granted under the original easement. If an easement is not referenced in your current deed, check with your county's Registry of Deeds to obtain a copy of the original easement on your property. Typically, an easement deed grants PSNH the rights to construct, operate, and maintain lines for the transmission of electric power, and as the owner of those rights, PSNH may transfer or allow the exercise of those rights by others for the same use or purpose.

If you have an existing easement on your property, you can continue to use the easement portion of your property for some personal use as long as it does not interfere with PSNH's use of the right-of-way for transmission purposes. Certain activities such as landscaping, farming or other agricultural uses, recreation, and limited storage, can usually co-exist amicably with transmission facilities within an easement. Fences and some other man-made structures may also be permissible with the prior written consent of the utility.

For more details on easements, rights-of-way, and other landowner information, visit <http://northernpass.us> and click on the Community tab, then Landowners. If you have any questions regarding the use of an easement, contact your landowner outreach representative (listed on page one of this newsletter) or call 1-800-286-7305.

(continued from page 1, Vegetation)

On occasion, an entire larger tree may need to be removed if it threatens the safe operation of the electrical system. Small, leaning trees that grow near the power lines may also be removed if they pose a risk of contacting the overhead lines.

- The shrubland habitat of a right-of-way is essential for the survival of numerous species of birds, small animals, and insects. Vegetation management practices strive to preserve native shrubs, forbs, ferns, and grasses that provide shelter and nourishment to many threatened or endangered creatures.
- Information is kept for each right-of-way that indicates wetlands, invasive plants and special habitats or protected species, as well as mowing/trimming cycles, permitted property access points, and any customer/landowner requests.

To learn more about PSNH's vegetation management practices, visit www.psnh.com, then click on About PSNH and Community or call 1-800-362-7764.



Regular mowing maintains powerline rights-of-way in a diverse mixture of dense shrubs, young trees, wild flowers and grasses that provide unique cover and foraging opportunities to wildlife. This type of habitat is becoming increasingly uncommon in New Hampshire and it supports wildlife such as eastern towhees, prairie warblers, black racer and hog-nosed snakes, and New England cottontail rabbits - species whose populations have declined dramatically in New Hampshire over the last 40 years due to habitat loss.