

Clean Renewable Power



Checking in with the Landowner Outreach Specialists

Since The Northern Pass was announced, Landowner Outreach Specialists Jen Berry, Tom True, and Jim Wagner have been talking to and meeting with landowners along the proposed route, answering questions and listening to concerns. We recently had the opportunity to talk with them about their experiences.

Jen, what is the most interesting part of your job?

Jen Berry: The people are definitely the most interesting part of my job. I enjoy being able to meet with landowners where they live: seeing their homes and land, how they live and play, hearing all the different perspectives and the reasoning behind their opinions. I've heard stories about how people's ancestors arrived here and built their homes with their own two hands—it's fascinating!

Tom, the proposed route is literally in your backyard. How does that affect your work?

Tom True: Yes, I can see the line from my backyard and drive under it at least twice a day, on my way out to work and on my way back. It really is close to home. That said, I'm a lifelong advocate of hydropower, and I believe strongly in this project. I've lived here a long time and know many of the people who live near the proposed route. They have a lot of questions, but most are cordial, polite, and are willing to listen with an open mind. I feel that having this type of conversation is best for everyone. Like democracy, you get the best solution when both sides come to the table

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Landowner Newsletter

Welcome to The Northern Pass Landowner Newsletter. As the project progresses, we continue to encourage open dialogue, answer your questions, and keep you up-to-date on the status of the project. In this issue, we focus on the role of transmission and the unique and important habitat that transmission corridors provide in our state, and we further acquaint you with our landowner outreach team.

Project Update

With a goal of bringing clean, low-cost hydropower from Canada to customers in New Hampshire and the region, The Northern Pass project team continues to meet with landowners in northern New Hampshire to develop a route for the proposed new transmission line. In North Country locations where there are no existing transmission rights-of-way (ROW), representatives of the project are working successfully with property owners to purchase land or easements.

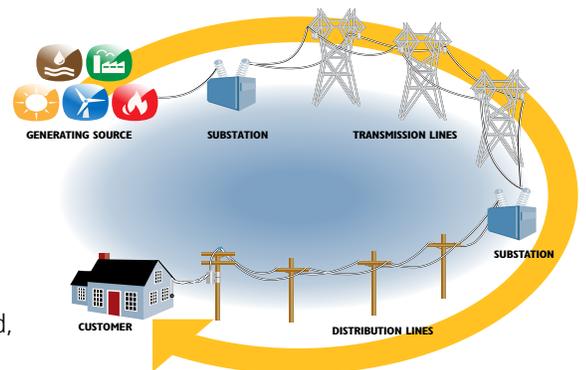
The Northern Pass project team is also making progress in the vicinity of the Concord Airport, working cooperatively with landowners to acquire easements to allow for the use of the existing ROW in that area. In addition to focusing on route development, project representatives continue to talk to and meet with all landowners who want to discuss the project and the proposed changes to existing ROW.

Please visit <http://www.northernpass.us/project-journal/> for up-to-date information on The Northern Pass.

NH Transmission: Connecting Power Sources to Customers

In the electric utility industry, transmission can be considered a long-haul trucker, moving the product over long distances to a point where it can be distributed to the consumer. Created at a power generation facility, electricity usually flows at high voltage through transmission lines to substations, which are generally located close to population centers. There, the voltage is stepped down so the electricity can be carried over distribution lines, through cities and towns, to individual customers.

PSNH's transmission system not only transports power within New Hampshire but also connects the state's generating facilities and electricity customers to the regional power grid. Being part of this power grid, managed by ISO New England, ensures that New Hampshire's customers always have access to a reliable, economic power supply.



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willing to work together, listen to each other, and compromise.

Jim, you have worked in your community (Coos County) for many years. What's the mood and outlook?

Jim Wagner: Coos County has seen its share of setbacks over the past few years, with the closing and demolition of Fraser Pulp Mill in Berlin, along with a brief shutdown and reduction in paper manufacturing capacity in Gorham. The loss of jobs came shortly after the demise of two other major employers, Wausau Paper Mills in Groveton, NH, and the Ethan Allen furniture manufacturing plant in Beecher Falls, VT.

There is good news on the horizon, however. The new federal prison in Berlin, the planned new tissue machine at the Gorham Paper and Tissue mill, and the Burgess Biopower plant—once operational are expected to bring some 450 permanent new jobs to the area. Meanwhile, the Burgess plant and The Northern Pass projects are projected to add over 1,400 construction jobs and new local tax revenue, and provide a boost to hotels, restaurants, and other area services during construction. Coos County folks have leveraged the manufacturing struggles to become stronger and more resilient. They are now a force to contend with for attracting new businesses.

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As the primary owner and operator of the transmission system in New Hampshire, PSNH works very closely with owners of new generating facilities, such as wind, biomass and other renewable sources, to bring clean energy to consumers. Since the most favorable locations for renewable energy facilities are often in remote areas, new generating facilities must connect to the transmission system to get their power to customers. PSNH works with these generators from the start of their projects, looking at where they can interconnect and what upgrades to the transmission system will be necessary to support this additional power.

The Northern Pass, a proposed transmission line, will connect existing hydroelectric generating facilities in Canada to an existing substation in Deerfield, New Hampshire. From there, 1,200 megawatts of clean, low-cost hydropower will be distributed to customers throughout New Hampshire and the region.

Transmission Line Corridors: More than Poles and Wires

What do you see when you look at a powerline right-of-way (ROW) corridor? A casual passerby may only notice poles and wires. But if you look more closely, you will discover a special environment that is steadily disappearing from the New England landscape.

“Rights-of-way are unique in promoting what is known as ‘early-successional habitat,’ which is characterized by shrubby growth and re-sprout of hardwoods that have been cut back,” says arborist Kurt Nelson. “This type of habitat is important for a variety of wildlife, especially those in decline, like the New England cottontail and many bird species.”

As New Hampshire’s landscape becomes increasingly developed in the south and dominated by mature forest in the north, the state’s shrublands and meadows have become increasingly scarce. Especially in southern portions of the state, it is the powerline corridors that often provide the best or only shrubby habitat for wildlife species that depend on the low, dense growth for food and cover.

Shrub species that thrive in full sun and would typically be choked out in full forest conditions find ideal conditions in powerline corridors. For power reliability purposes, routine mowing is done in the corridors to keep vegetation at a safe height beneath the power lines. Unlike most utilities, PSNH does not use any herbicides for ROW vegetation maintenance. Instead, selective mowing is done to preserve low-growing shrubs, such as blueberry and winterberry bushes, while cutting back higher growing hardwoods like maple and birch.

“Ask any birders where they go to see bird species in decline, like the common yellowthroats, chestnut-sided warblers, and eastern towhees, and they’ll tell you they go to the powerline ROW, because that’s where they occur,” says Matt Tarr, associate extension professor – wildlife specialist at the University of New Hampshire Cooperative Extension. Tarr is researching the role of powerline ROW as habitat in New England.

“No one habitat type supports the needs of all wildlife species,” Tarr says. “We have birds that require dense, shrubby habitat. Some require dense, mature forests. Having some of both within a landscape is critical for maintaining overall diversity of wildlife species within our landscape.”



New England cottontail