

Susquehanna-Roseland Power Line Takes Major Step Forward

National Park Service Agrees with PPL, PSE&G on Route

PPL Electric Utilities

The National Park Service selection of the route preferred by Public Service Electric and Gas Co. and [PPL Electric Utilities Corp.](#) – a route already approved by utility regulators – is a major step forward for the [Susquehanna-Roseland project](#), a regional power line that will have significant benefits for millions of electricity users.

PPL Electric Utilities and PSE&G are building the transmission line to improve electric service in the Northeast. It will prevent overloads on other power lines. The park service selection of the utilities' route as the NPS Preferred Alternative, part of the ongoing Environmental Impact Statement process, is a significant milestone for the project.

"We commend the National Park Service for its very thorough review, and for concluding that our proposed route provides the most appropriate balance of meeting society's energy needs while minimizing impacts to federal lands," said Gregory N. Dudkin, president of PPL Electric Utilities, and Ralph LaRossa, president and chief operating officer of PSE&G, in a joint statement.

The utility executives pledged to continue to work closely with the park service to finalize details of a major land purchase that will benefit the public and the environment. The companies also pledged to work tirelessly to avoid and minimize impacts of the project wherever possible.

Mitigation is a routine part of the environmental impact review process when there are impacts on federal lands from power lines or other infrastructure improvements needed by society. Mitigation typically is required by federal agencies for impacts that cannot be avoided.

Under the mitigation package proposed by PPL Electric Utilities and PSE&G, thousands of acres of land would be purchased or preserved. The total value of the package will depend on the final assessment of impacts by the park service, but the utilities' current estimate is that the cost would be \$30 million to \$40 million.

These acquisitions would protect scenic vistas for hikers on the Appalachian Trail and could significantly expand National Park Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service land holdings.

In addition, the mitigation package could potentially bridge gaps between existing federal and state lands. This would create a half-million-acre swath of contiguous publicly owned or preserved natural lands for recreation and wildlife preservation.

The mitigation package would have a lasting benefit for National Park Service and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service lands, for conservation and wildlife interests, and for the people who visit these areas now and in the future. To advise and assist in executing the land transactions, the utilities are working with a number of national, regional and local organizations.

The Susquehanna-Roseland power line is being built to maintain the reliability of the electric grid for millions of people in the Northeast. In addition, it is estimated that the project will save consumers more than \$200 million per year by relieving congestion on the power grid, which will reduce electric bills for some customers.

The Susquehanna-Roseland power line will run from Berwick, Pa., to Roseland, N.J. The independent regional power grid operator, PJM Interconnection, ordered the new line to prevent violations of national standards for the operation of the nation's electric power grid. PJM recently reconfirmed the need for the line.

The utilities' chosen route has already been approved by both the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission and the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities. About 95 percent of this 145-mile route would follow the path of an existing 85-year-old power line that must be replaced because it is approaching the end of its useful life and is undersized for today's electricity demands. Following an existing power line route will help reduce the project's overall impact on people and the environment.

The route crosses about four miles of the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, the Middle Delaware National Scenic and Recreational River, and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail on the path of an existing power line. The utilities already have an existing property easement through the park service units.

The Susquehanna-Roseland project does not require significant widening of the existing right of way: The current utility corridor through National Park Service lands is four miles long, with cleared widths of up to 200 feet. The only additional right of way and clearing needed by the utilities is 50 additional feet of right of way for 0.7 miles in Pennsylvania where the existing corridor is now 100 feet wide.

The Obama administration selected the Susquehanna-Roseland line as one of seven transmission lines nationwide for fast-track treatment by the administration's Rapid Response Team for Transmission. The team is expected to streamline the review and permitting of transmission line projects to increase reliability and save consumers money by modernizing the grid, while ensuring careful federal review. The project will create about 2,000 jobs during its three-year construction period.

The National Park Service expects to issue a Record of Decision on the Susquehanna-Roseland project by Oct. 1. The utilities are planning to have the power line in service in time to meet peak summer electricity demand in 2015.

PPL Electric Utilities, a subsidiary of PPL Corporation (NYSE: PPL), provides electric delivery services to about 1.4 million customers in Pennsylvania and has consistently ranked among the best companies for customer service in the United States. More information is available at www.pplelectric.com.

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