



Upper Delaware Council

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UDC Hails NYRI Decision to Drop Power Line Application

NARROWSBURG – The Upper Delaware Council (UDC) hails the April 3rd decision by New York Regional Interconnect, Inc. (NYRI) to withdraw its application to construct a High-Voltage, Direct-Current transmission line on a 190-mile path through eight New York State counties between Marcy and Rock Tavern, NY.

NYRI counsel verbally withdrew their Article VII application for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need mid-day through the 15th day of evidentiary hearings before the New York State Public Service Commission (PSC) in Albany.

The surprising action followed a March 31 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) ruling that denied NYRI's request for a re-hearing on the question of cost allocation voting procedures by the New York Independent System Operator.

NYRI Attorney Len Singer advised PSC Administrative Law Judges Jeffrey Stockholm and Michelle Phillips on Friday that the private company's investors felt that the order jeopardized NYRI's ability to recover the costs of transmissions upgrades, thereby creating too great of a financial risk.

Judge Stockholm instructed NYRI to submit a letter of Article VII withdrawal notification by Monday, April 6, to the PSC Secretary, with copies to all of the Interested Parties in this case. NYRI must also make clear in that correspondence whether they intend to re-apply to the PSC or seek certification from FERC for this project at a future date.

If no objections are raised to NYRI's decision by Monday, April 13, the case will be officially closed.

Working together to conserve the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River

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“This has been a long and exhausting fight since NYRI filed its original application on May 31, 2006, but the UDC has been steadfast in its position that this proposed power line did not belong in the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River corridor,” said UDC Executive Director William E. Douglass.

The NYRI application proposed to site mostly 10-story-tall overhead transmission towers between converter stations in Oneida and Orange Counties on a nominated route that largely paralleled the Millennium Gas Pipeline in this region from Deposit to Cuddebackville. It actually represented the second generation of a proposal made in October 2003 by NYRI predecessor, the Canadian firm Pegasus Power Systems, Inc., to transport upstate electricity to metropolitan markets downstate. Pegasus proposed to use the railroad rights-of-way alongside the Upper Delaware River for its route.

The *River Management Plan for the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River* (1986) states that new, major electric lines are an “incompatible use” and present a “clear and direct threat” to the river corridor.

In addition to believing that NYRI would have violated the National Wild and Scenic Rivers Act, the UDC was concerned about the company’s potential use of eminent domain to acquire private property for this line, its impacts on the local environment, loss of property values, and detrimental effects on tourism.

The UDC participated actively with the Communities Against Regional Interconnect (CARI) coalition of county governments and non-profit organizations since its inception, utilized the resources of a \$50,000 state grant secured by Senator John J. Bonacic in 2006 to study and review the impacts of NYRI on the river valley, and vigilantly monitored all NYRI proceedings on a daily basis.

Working in partnership with the National Park Service since 1988, the UDC is the non-profit organization responsible for coordinated implementation of the River Management Plan. Voting members are the two states (New York and Pennsylvania) and 13 towns and townships that border on the Upper Delaware River. The Delaware River Basin Commission is a non-voting member. For more information, stop by the office at 211 Bridge St. in Narrowsburg, call (845) 252-3022, or visit www.upperdelawarecouncil.org.

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