

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REGISTRATION FOR THE INTERNATIONAL POWER LINE PROJECT: WOODSTOCK TO HOULTON, MAINE (TRANSMISSION LINE 0155)

Public Involvement
July 26, 2017

7.0 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

A Public Involvement Program was initiated by NB Power to inform elected officials, landowners, stakeholders, and the general public about the Project. The Public Involvement Program, which followed guidance from the National Energy Board Electricity Filing Manual (NEB 2015), A Guide to Environmental Impact Assessment in New Brunswick (NBDELG 2012a), and Additional Information Requirements for Linear Facilities (NBDELG 2008), uses a multi-faceted approach so that Project information reaches as many people as possible. The approach includes maintaining a Project mailing list, distributing printed information, placing information on the NB Power website, and conducting Open Houses.

The key elements of the Public Involvement Program are presented below in Sections 7.1 and 7.2, with a summary of public involvement to date presented in Section 7.3. Future involvement initiatives to fulfill the public involvement requirements of the New Brunswick *Environmental Impact Assessment Regulation* under the *Clean Environment Act* and the "Guide to Environmental Impact Assessment in New Brunswick" (NBDELG 2012a), are summarized in Section 6.4.

7.1 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Public Involvement Program will be as follows:

- Provide information directly to stakeholders, the general public, community groups, and other interested parties on the proposed Project
- Provide information directly to elected officials and local service districts
- Address issues and concerns raised during this process
- Identify measures that will mitigate or resolve any public issues or concerns
- Identify proposed future consultation initiatives

7.2 PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM ELEMENTS

The following section describes those elements as they relate to the Project.

7.2.1 Communication Methods

The methods to be employed to communicate with elected officials, stakeholders, individuals, and affected property owners are described below:

- **Letters to Landowners** – NB Power informed potentially affected landowners of the Project in May 2016, with the goal of informing affected private land owners regarding the required field surveys for the Project.

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- **Information Package** –Information packages were used to provide all interested parties with basic information about the Project (Appendix E). The package included a cover letter addressed to the various stakeholders and fact sheets on the proposed undertaking.
- **Meetings with Stakeholders** – Information packages were sent to elected officials, and representatives of relevant key organizations or interest groups in the local area (Table 7.1). An offer to meet was also extended to each key stakeholder group.
- **Web Postings** – The NB Power website (www.nbpower.com) will serve as an electronic method for members of the public to access Project documents, view maps, and send comments.
- **Public Notice** – A paper copy of the EIA Registration document will be made available for viewing during the public review period at the following locations:
 - Town of Woodstock municipal office
 - New Brunswick Department of Environment and Local Government, Project and Approvals Branch (Fredericton)

Upon Registration, public notice will be issued in the local newspapers and the general public will be encouraged to forward comments and concerns to Project personnel.
- **Media Interviews** – In order to attract interest in the various components of the project, media interviews will be used to inform the general public.
- **Open House** – To date, one public open house has been conducted on May 3, 2017 to share information about the Project. Advertising in local newspapers and radio stations was used to notify the public of the Open House and provide them with an opportunity to learn more about the Project (Appendix E). Prior to the Open House, a mail out (e.g., information package) was also sent to stakeholders. Further open houses may be considered during the EIA review period, if required.
- **Summary Report** – A brief summary report on the public notification initiatives carried out, and the key issues raised by the public during the EIA review, will be provided to NBDELG within 60 days following registration.
- **Project Telephone Number** – A toll-free Project Information Line (1-866-754-7727) appeared on all communications and provided an easy-to-access means of contacting Project personnel without requiring computer capability, subscription to a newspaper, or attendance at an Open House.

Table 7.1 List of Key Groups, Stakeholders and Organizations Contacted to Date

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>NB Department of Environment and Local Government Marysville Place P. O. Box 6000 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1</p> | <p>NB Department of Environment and Local Government – Woodstock Local Services P. O. Box 5001 Woodstock, NB E7M 5C6</p> |
| <p>New Brunswick Department of Energy and Resource Development Hugh John Flemming Forestry Centre P.O. Box 6000</p> | <p>Aboriginal Affairs Secretariat, Province of New Brunswick Kings Place Room: 237, King Tower Floor:</p> |

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Table 7.1 List of Key Groups, Stakeholders and Organizations Contacted to Date

| | |
|--|---|
| Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1 Tel: (506) 453-3826 | P. O. Box 6000 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1 Tel.: (506) 462-5177 |
| New Brunswick Department of Tourism, Heritage and Culture Marysville Place P.O. Box 6000 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1 Tel: (506) 453-3115 | New Brunswick Department of Agriculture, Aquaculture and Fisheries Agricultural Research Station (Experimental Farm) P.O. Box 6000 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1 Tel: (506) 453-2666 |
| New Brunswick Highway Corporation 440 King Street, Suite 503 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H8 Tel: (506) 453-2315 | Brun-Way Highway Operations Inc. 1754 Route 640 Hanwell, NB E3C 2B2 Tel: (506) 474-7752 |
| New Brunswick Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Kings Place, P.O. Box 6000 Fredericton, NB E3B 5H1 Tel: (506) 453-3939 | Town of Woodstock Town Hall 824 main Street Woodstock, NB E7M 2E8 Tel: (506) 325-4600 Email: townhall@townhall.woodstock.nb.ca |
| New Brunswick Club VTT/ATV Federation and Local Clubs 1925 Hanwell Road, Unit C Hanwell, NB E3C 1M4 Tel: (506) 472-5130 Email: info@nbatving.com | New Brunswick Federation of Snowmobile Clubs and Local Clubs 147-B Houlton Road Woodstock, NB E7M 1Y4 Tel: (506) 325-2625 E-mail: info@nbfsc.com |
| NB Outfitters Association Inc. President: Mike Roy P.O. Box 451 Bathurst, NB E2A 3Z4 Tel: (506) 548-5157 | Atlantic Salmon Federation P.O. Box 5200 St. Andrews, NB E5B 3S8 Tel: (506) 529-4581 Email: savesalmon@asf.ca |
| Bird Studies Canada (Atlantic Program) P.O. Box 6227, 17 Waterfowl Lane Sackville, NB E4L 1G6 Tel: (506) 364-5047 Email: bsc_atlantic@birdscanada.org | New Brunswick Botany Club Jim Goltz marph@nbnnet.nb.ca |
| Conservation Council of New Brunswick 180 St. John St. Fredericton, NB E3B 4A9 Tel: (506) 458-8747 | Western Valley Regional Commission 3143 Main Street, Unit 2 Centreville, NB E7K 3E8 |

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Table 7.1 List of Key Groups, Stakeholders and Organizations Contacted to Date

| | |
|--|--|
| Email: info@conservationcouncil.ca | Tel: (506) 276-3610 Email: info@rsc12.ca |
| Nature NB (NB Federation of Naturalists) 924 Prospect St., Suite 110 Fredericton, NB E3B 2T9 Tel: (506) 459-4209 Email: nbfn@nb.aibn.com | Agriculture Alliance of New Brunswick 259 Brunswick Street Fredericton, NB E3B 1G8 Tel: (506) 452-8101 Email: alliance@fermeNBfarm.ca |
| Canadian Christmas Tree Associations c/o Adam Stone Florenceville, NB E7L 4J6 Tel: (506) 392-5952 Email: adam@hilltopventures.com | NB Trappers & Fur Harvesters Federation – Tobique Regional Council c/o Frank Hathaway 3044 Route 385 Riley Brook, NB E7J 3C3 Tel: (506) 356-2068 Email: hbcamps@explornet.com |
| Meduxnekeag River Association President: Stephen Wilson 109 regent Street, Union 10 Woodstock, NB E7M 2N6 Tel: (506) 328-8227 Email: meduxnekeag@nb.aibn.com | The Nature Trust of New Brunswick 404 Queen Street, 3 rd Floor PO Box 603, Station A Fredericton, NB E3B 5A6 Tel: (506) 457-2173 Email: naturetrust@ntnb.org |
| Provincial MLA Stewart Fairgrieve (Progressive Conservative) Constituency Office: Carleton 107 Connell Street Woodstock, NB E7M 1K7 Tel: (506) 325-4418 Email: Stewart.Fairgrieve@gnb.ca | Federal MP Thomas J. Harvey (Liberal) Tobique - Mactaquac 9160 Main Street Florenceville, NB E3N 3G4 Tel: 1(800) 671-6160 Email: tj.harvey@parl.gc.ca |

The general public will be encouraged to forward comments and concerns to Project personnel.

7.2.2 Issues Tracking and Reporting

A major effort of the Public Involvement Program is to track, synthesize, and present comments to the applicable regulatory agencies. NB Power will maintain a database that is used to track issues and concerns raised during the public involvement process. The database will provide Project staff with the ability to conduct queries, print specific reports, and review the status of all issues, concerns, or commitments.

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Issues or concerns raised by, or commitments made to, affected landowners and stakeholders will be entered into the database and monitored regularly during Project meetings until appropriate actions have been taken to address them. During any meetings, outstanding items will be reviewed and updates provided to the Project Team. Upon completion of each outstanding item, the necessary information will be forwarded to administrative support personnel in order to identify the item as “complete”.

NB Power will provide a report to the NBDELG within 60 days of registering the Project under the EIA Regulation, in order to summarize the results of the public engagement program, including activities conducted, key issues raised, and how they were or will be addressed, as applicable.

7.3 RESULTS OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM TO DATE

Based on the methods described above, NB Power was able to inform and identify potential issues and concerns associated with the Project. The following summarizes the results of the public involvement activities.

7.3.1 Meeting with Town Officials

A meeting was held with elected Officials one hour before the Open House on May 3, 2017 to inform the Mayor and Councillors of the Project and provide them with the opportunity to ask questions prior to the Open House. Several questions were asked by participants, and answered by NB Power representatives. These are summarized in Table 7.2.

7.3.2 Open House

NB Power hosted an Open House on May 3, 2017, from 5:00 pm until 8:00 pm, at the AYR Motor Center in Woodstock. This Open House was arranged to provide information directly to property owners and stakeholders, to discuss their comments and concerns, and to receive input from them on the Project. The Open House was advertised in the Bugle-Observer newspaper on April 26, 2017 and April 28, 2017 (Appendix E). A bilingual NB Power representative greeted the public and asked them to sign-in. A series of information displays about various aspects of the Project, were set up at the Open House. Each display station was staffed by project representatives, including representation from Houlton Water Company, to provide specific information about the Project, and to answer questions. Right-of-Way Agents were also available to speak with landowners regarding land issues. An Exit Questionnaire was prepared to further elicit comments on the Project and attendees were encouraged to fill one out. In addition to the displays, a number of documents were made available. These documents included: The NEB Landowner Guide (NEB 2016) and the Guide to Environmental Impact Assessments in NB (April 2012).

Approximately thirty-five people attended the Open House. Not everyone who attended the session signed the sign-in sheet. Specific details on how concerns and issues were addressed are provided below in Table 7.2.

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Table 7.2 Summary of Key Comments Heard and Addressed During the May 3, 2017 Open House

| General Topic of Interest | Details of Concern (s) | Response |
|---|---|---|
| Houlton Water Company (HW) and US Related Questions | Will there be a long-term agreement between NB Power and HW? | NB Power and Houlton Water Company have signed an Interconnection Facilities Agreement to move forward with the Project. The agreement ensures that the project costs are adequately backstopped against Houlton Water Company defaulting or terminating service. Once the line is constructed, commissioned, and placed into service, the following agreements will be entered into: Network Operating Agreement, Transmission Service Agreement and Power Purchase Agreement. |
| | How is HW being supplied by NB Power today? | The energy is currently provided by the Emera Maine transmission system. |
| | What are the fees HW will pay for the power? | Fee for Transmission is separate from fees for energy HW will pay for both |
| | Will the construction of this line allow for further opportunities to buy or sell energy to/from New England? | The sole purpose of this line it to provide power to Houlton Water Company and will be designed as such. |
| | How big of an area does HW service? | Approximately 6000 customers are serviced by Houlton Water Company |
| | Does Donald Trump know about this Project? | The Project received funding approval from the Maine Public Utilities Commission in December 2016. An application for a Presidential Permit was submitted to the US Department of Energy on January 2017. |
| | Are we selling power at a cheaper rate to HW customers than NB Power customers? | No |
| | Can other customers in Maine and/or New England be provided with energy from NB Power from this new line? | No |

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Table 7.2 Summary of Key Comments Heard and Addressed During the May 3, 2017 Open House

| General Topic of Interest | Details of Concern (s) | Response |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| NB System Modifications | Are you doing any modifications to the existing line (Line 0038)? | No. The existing transmission line (Line 0038) will simply be tapped by the new proposed line. |
| | Will this project negatively impact Woodstock with respect to growth and infrastructure? | This Project will improve reliability for the Woodstock area. |
| | Does this Project impact Woodstock area in anyway (reliability, capacity, Arthur storm, etc.)? | This Project will improve reliability for the Woodstock area with the addition of a second transformer at Woodstock Terminal |
| | Any marketing opportunity for the Woodstock area as a result of this Project? | Depends |
| Specifications of Transmission Line | Will the line be aboveground or underground? | The transmission line proposed will be aboveground. |
| | How wide is transmission line RoW? | The RoW required for the transmission line is a maximum of 30 m. |
| | What is the span length between structures? | The average span between structures will be 150 m to 200 m |
| | Aliant questioned the clearance between facilities (distribution and cables) | No concerns for clearance nor any need to bury existing telecom cables. |
| | What will the structures look like? | Three types of the structures will be used |
| | What is the footprint of the structures? | 0.6 m per pole |
| | Where is the power coming from? | The power will come from the NB Power grid. |
| Cost of Project | Who is paying for the Project? | The Project will be primarily funded by Houlton Water Company. |
| Routing of Line | Is the RoW located next to the gravel pit and the walking trail? | Yes. The RoW is adjacent to the walking trail and the gravel pit. |

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| General Topic of Interest | Details of Concern (s) | Response |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| | Any agricultural land impacted by the RoW? | There is no agricultural land impacted by the RoW. The line is located mostly within the NB Highway Corporation RoW and a small portion of private land. |
| Power Rates | How will this Project impact my rates? | There will be no rate impacts seen by NB customers, as the project is being primarily funded by Houlton Water Company |
| | Is there an existing line coming out of the Jacksonville substation site or will this be a new line? | Line is not out of Jacksonville substation (Woodstock Terminal). Tapping existing Line 0038 in Woodstock south. |
| Vegetation Management | Can NB Power commit to "No spray"? | <p>NB Power works to limit the impact of vegetation around high voltage transmission lines.</p> <p>This work includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manually pruning tree branches adjacent to rights-of-way • Manually cutting or mechanically mowing trees in the rights-of-way • Manually or mechanically applying herbicide when required to control dense hardwood regeneration to manage overall growth. <p>NB Power's integrated vegetation management program follows all regulatory requirements for both cutting of vegetation and for herbicide application.</p> <p>The goal of the program is to create rights-of-way with lower-growing shrubs that don't interfere with power lines.</p> |
| Approvals and Permits | What permits will be required? | Two key approvals are required prior to construction: EIA Certificate of Determination from DELG and Permit from NEB. |

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Table 7.2 Summary of Key Comments Heard and Addressed During the May 3, 2017 Open House

| General Topic of Interest | Details of Concern (s) | Response |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| | Will there be more meetings and are they required for approvals? | Meetings will be scheduled, as required, to address concerns and issues. |
| | How wide is DTI RoW? | The RoW width varies the entire length of the highway corridor. Plans are registered in registry system, showing the existing widths and location of the highway RoW in any given area along Route 95. |
| NB Trail System | Will Project impact NB Trail? | No. The Project is not expected to impact the NB Trail. During construction, access may be temporarily restricted and signage posted for public safety. |
| | Will NB Trail be able to use ROW as trail or relocate portion of trail? | No. ROW is under easement. Need permission from landowner and NB Power |

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During the Open House, there were also several questions raised by Stakeholders and Landowners regarding the alignment of the Transmission Line (Table 7.3). Members of the Project Team committed to reviewing these locations to see if their questions could be addressed. The following table provides a summary of these questions, NB Powers responses and the status of each one.

Table 7.3 Summary and Status of Key Comments Addressed Following the May 3, 2017 Open House

| Stakeholder/ Landowner | Details of Concern (s) | Response | Status |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| Meduxnekeag River Association | Concerns were raised by representatives of the Association regarding the location of the line and structures next to the Protected Natural Area (PNA) and within the wetland complex. | NB Power representatives explained that the line was located outside the PNA and within the highway easement. Although still within the wetland, NB Power noted that mitigation measures could be implemented during construction to minimize impacts. | Ongoing Meeting held on June 1, 2017 with the Association (Appendix D) |
| Nature Trust | Concerns were raised about the Appalachian Hardwood Forest in the area and the number of rare plant species associated with this type of habitat. | NB Power noted that it was aware of the Appalachian Hardwood Forest in the area and that rare plant survey had been conducted along the preferred alignment. NB Power suggested sending this data to Nature Trust for their review. | Ongoing. A meeting will be scheduled once Nature Trust has had a chance to review information. |
| Landowner #1 | Landowner #1 noted that they have written agreements with federal government and owner of proposed substation property to access their properties in order to gather fire wood for their personal use. They noted that they would like to continue using existing access. | NB Power representatives noted that they would consider this when locating the substation. A title search has been performed in part to identify any existing written agreements. Landowner #1 will not be landlocked should NB Power choose to restrict access to the substation property it will be acquiring. | Complete. There is an existing Public Access Road to the land owned by Landowner #1. |
| Landowner #2 | Concerns raised regarding the location of the RoW across three properties near the tap off point (Line 0038). | Preliminary design has been modified in an effort to address this concern. Line design realigned to minimize impact on the three properties and potential future development of the properties. | Ongoing. Easement request sent to Province for review. |
| Stakeholder #1 | Concerns raised regarding the location of the line with respect to the Woodstock Duty Free Store and Signage. Also inquired as to why he was not notified | NB Power informed him of the process, provided copies of the storyboard material and preliminary line design. Note placed on the drawing for line design to avoid blocking | Complete. No further correspondence received from Stakeholder #1. |

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Table 7.3 Summary and Status of Key Comments Addressed Following the May 3, 2017 Open House

| Stakeholder/ Landowner | Details of Concern (s) | Response | Status |
|---------------------------|--|---|--------|
| | directly of the Open House timing and location | viewscape of the Duty Free advertising sign. He did not receive the notification as he leases the land, and not on the landowner listing. | |

7.3.3 Meetings with Stakeholders

The information package sent to the various stakeholders extended an invitation to meet and discuss the Project in greater detail with NB Power personnel. To date, no meeting or additional information requests have been received from any of the stakeholders identified. NB Power will continue to work with stakeholders to address any comments or concerns that may arise during the Project.

7.3.4 Web Postings

NB Power continues to monitor comments or concerns received from the general public regarding the Project, including those received via e-mails from NB Power’s website. To date, no comments or concerns have been received by Project personnel.

7.3.5 Land Acquisition

The process for the acquisition of land rights required for the construction and operation of the transmission line is well underway. Land rights will be acquired in accordance with New Brunswick legislation and compensation will be paid to landowners based upon appraised value of the affected lands.

There are 49 properties affected by the proposed Houlton transmission line and substation. Of these properties, 10 are privately owned while 38 are owned by the Province of New Brunswick. Preliminary discussions have been held with all landowners about the Project. No significant issues or concerns have been raised regarding the Project or the land acquisition process. Once legal survey plans are finalized for the transmission line, it is expected that easement agreements will be signed by all landowners. Table 7.4 provides a summary of property-owner discussions to date.

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Table 7.4 Summary of Land Acquisition

| Property Identification (PID) | Ownership | Status of Easement Agreement |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| PID (Substation Lot) XXXXX | Private landowner #1 | |

7.4 FUTURE ENGAGEMENT

NB Power will publish a one-day notice in local newspapers informing the public that the Project had been registered with NBDELG and identify locations where the EIA registration document could be reviewed. The public will be asked to forward comments or concerns about the proposed Project to NB Power. Following the registration of this Project with the NBDELG, and during the Determination Review process, NB Power will track, respond to, and report on key issues raised by the public, First Nations, and elected officials.