Target: Power Corridors (Delaware River Valley)

Target: Protection of our National Parks

In a project known as the Susquehanna to Roseland Transmission Line, PSE&G and PP&L are proposing to expand their transmission powerline right-of-way across the Delaware River, through the Wild and Scenic Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area and across the Appalachian Trail. The proposed powerlines include towers twice as tall as the tree line. The Susquehanna to Roseland Transmission Line will negatively impact Visitor Experience in such historic and scenic areas as the New Jersey section of the Appalachian Trail, the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and the view sheds in the Pocono Mountains, the New Jersey Highlands and the Upper Delaware River. The views seen from throughout the Park, along the River and the Appalachian Trail are priceless.

Background

During the summer of 2009, Rock the Earth friend and supporting artist, Tim Carbone of the outstanding Americana rock band Railroad Earth, told us about another proposed energy corridor that would impact three of America's most special places – the New Jersey Highlands, the Wild and Scenic Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, and the world renowned Appalachian National Scenic Trail.

The New Jersey Highlands are part of the great sweep of the Appalachians that shadows the East Coast from Maine to Georgia. The region contains nearly 860,000 acres of forested ridges, rolling farmlands, diverse recreation, abundant wildlife and historic treasures. The proposed powerlines include towers twice as tall as the tree line and two and a half times the size of powerlines currently existing in the area. For an excellent video about the issue, GO HERE.

In addition, the proposed project will undermine a Maine-to-Maryland regional greenhouse gas initiative to reduce carbon emissions and increase energy efficiency and renewable energy development, since the powerlines will carry electricity generated by outdated, highly polluting coal-fired power plants in Pennslvania, Ohio, and West Virginia.

Update

In the Spring of 2010, the National Park Service (NPS) prepared an Environmental Impact Statement documenting the effect that the powerlines will have on natural

resources and Visitor Experience. In March 2010, Rock the Earth filed formal comments in a letter to the NPS, and also was a signatory on additional formal comments filed by Eastern Environmental Law Center (EELC), a nonprofit public interest environmental law firm representing several New-Jersey environmental watchdog groups. (See links below.)

In November 2011, NPS released a Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) analysing the impacts of proposed project, as well as alternatives, and acknowledged that the "no-action" alternative is the "environementally preferred alternative." In January 2012, NPS held public hearings and solicited comments on the DEIS. Rock the Earth, both individually and as part of a larger coalition of environmental groups, submitted formal comment letters to NPS. The NPS issued a Final Environmental Impact Statement in July, 2012, noting that human and ecological impacts of the project to exceed $89 million. On October 1, 2012, despite the findings in the July FEIS, the NPS issued a Record of Decision authorizing the project to move forward.

On October 15, 2012, Rock the Earth and a coalition of conservation groups in Pennsylvania and New Jersey sued the National Park Service in the D.C. Federal District Court, over the NPS's authorization allowing the powerline project to move forward. The lawsuit was filed by Earthjustice and the Eastern Environmental Law Center on behalf of the Appalachian Mountain Club, Appalachian Trail Conservancy, Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, New Jersey Highlands Coalition, New York–New Jersey Trail Conference, National Parks Conservation Association, Rock the Earth, Sierra Club, and Stop the Lines.

On December 6, 2012, attorneys on behalf of the coalition filed a Motion for Preliminary Injuction calling for an immediate cessation of construction activities as said activities will cause immediate and irreparable harm to the parks.

Links

Motion & Memorandum in Support of Preliminary Injunction, dated December 6, 2012

Complaint in Federal District Court (D.C. Circuit), dated October 15, 2012

July 2012 Final Environmental Impact Statement

Rock the Earth Comments to Draft Environmental Impact Statement - January 31, 2012

Eastern Environmental Law Center/Earthjustice Comments to Draft Environmental Impact Statement (Rock the Earth signatory) - January 31, 2012

Rock the Earth Scoping Comments -- Comment Letter of March 10, 2010 to National Park Service

Eastern Environmental Law Center Comments (Rock the Earth signatory) -- Comment Letter of March 12, 2010 to NPS

Delaware Riverkeeper

Oppose the Towers

Stop the Lines