



Power Lines Proposed to Travel Along the Wild and Scenic Delaware River

New York Regional Interconnect Inc. is proposing to build the New York Regional Interconnection (NYRI) to provide additional power to southeastern New York including New York City. The proposal includes a 200 mile high voltage direct current transmission line from Utica to Orange County (specifically between Edic Substation in the Town of Marcy to Rock Tavern Substation in the Town of New Windsor, NY).

According to New York Regional Interconnect studies indicate that more power is needed now and into the future to service southeastern New York. The project is intended to “transport electricity from areas where the power grid currently has a surplus of power resources to areas of the State where there is a need for new power sources.” (NYRI Press release, March 30, 2006, “New York Regional Interconnect Inc. Announces Proposed New Energy Transmission Line”). Power would be brought from other parts of the State as well as Canada to serve the perceived need.

NYRI asserts that New York State law makes provision of energy needs to this region, including the Lower Hudson Valley, Long Island and New York City, via construction and operation of new facilities local to the need unlikely.

The proposed power line will run approximately 200 miles. Approximately 73.4 miles of the “preferred” route is located within the Upper Delaware Scenic and Recreational River corridor – i.e. along the section of the River designated by Congress as Wild and Scenic.

The Wild and Scenic Rivers Act declares it the policy of the United States that rivers designated pursuant to the act along “with their immediate environment, possess outstandingly remarkable scenic, recreational, geologic, fish and wildlife, historic, cultural, or other similar values shall be preserved in free-flowing condition, and that they are their immediate environments shall be protected for the benefit and enjoyment of present and future generations.”

The River Management Plan which supported designation found that “Major Electric Lines” including “any new electric power lines, cables or conduits used for transmission of power between two points which has a design capacity of 125 kilovolts or greater and extending a distance of one mile or more in length, or of between 100 kilovolts and 125 kilovolts, extending a distance of ten miles or more in length....” are an incompatible use anywhere in the river corridor. This proposal clearly constitutes a “clear and direct threat” to the river corridor defined in the River Management Plan. “Clear and direct threat” being defined as “An instance where a new land use is proposed which is either: (1) identified on the list of new land uses which are incompatible within

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the Upper Delaware river corridor; or (2) identified as a land use which would, if developed in such a way, be counter to one or more of the principles and objectives set out in the River Management Plan and the Land and Water Use Guidelines.”

New York Public Service law requires the NYRI to receive a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the project to move forward. NYRI is currently preparing an application that will be subject to public review and comment. In addition the project will need permits and approvals from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Federal Aviation Administration.

For additional information as it emerges stay tuned to the Delaware Riverkeeper Network Website, www.delawareriverkeeper.org.