

Kirkland, April

From: David Frost <dtscfrost@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, March 25, 2019 12:06 AM
To: Beyer, Jim R; Hinkel, Bill
Subject: Transmission line

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Dear Mr. Beyer and Mr. Hinkel,

I have been receiving email messages from NRCM on the transmission line that would traverse the Northern/Western Maine woods. I read the project is targeted to provide electrical supply to "Massachusetts." It would seem likely important to our entire regional electric grid from which we all draw.

I understand (believe) this new power source comes at a time when there are a few regional nuclear power plants that are in the process of being taken offline. I am not sure of the net balance provided by the hydroelectric production. Will it fully replace power sources we may lose as nuclear plants are decommissioned?. I can only imagine that it would be hard to fully replace their capacity. I also assume that the cost of energy would increase, and not just in Massachusetts, if we are unable to replace what we may soon lose. I think that having sufficient capacity would ultimately benefit all who draw off the same regional grid, including Mainers.

There is an argument about the environmental impact of a transmission line which cuts a narrow swath of land through the state. I certainly appreciate the Maine woods and its views. I have grown up in this state, moved away, and returned in my adult years to raise a family. We spend time in Rangely, hike Maine's mountains/trails, and fish in Maine's rivers and ponds. I fear that what is conceptually lost to those who advocate the environmental impact of affected "views" is the indirect effect of power generated through fossil fuels. Fossil fuel is presently abundant but not a long term resource. It is certainly not clean. I have seen the effects of warm winters on skiing/recreation, of mercury pollution poisoning our fresh water fish, and of the warming ocean (gulf). My favorite seafood (Maine Shrimp) is no longer available. I have already seen Lobster disappear from southern New England waters in the last 30 years, and the same could be our future. These are impacts that our current energy use and fossil fuel dependence make inevitable. I have heard that our gulf is warming faster than any other area in the world. I would ask the NRCM and other environmental groups whether this too is a resource worth protecting? The hydro-power line is just one of many needed new sources of energy that will help protect our environment in a carbon neutral manner. As we argue about wind turbines in our hills or off our shores and irrationally think that we can replace a nuclear plant with a solar farm, we are caught in a state of decision/action paralysis.

I am saddened that we are in the situation that we are, but unfortunately we can no longer wait and remain complacent. We need a diverse and ready supply of energy to meet our current and future needs. Hydropower should be considered among many other alternative projects that will help keep not just views, but all of Maine's resources available (water, ocean, air, winters, maple syrup, lobster, cod, shrimp, healthy forests and views) for our children and grandchildren. I am all for other alternatives, but please tell me what they are and what our environmental protectors feel would be acceptable tomorrow? The reality is that we need to act today, and if we are going to use power, we will need to find a better way to sustainably source it...

David Frost, a pragmatist and NRCM member.