Power line proposed for White Mountains

Campaign launched to stop Northern Pass power line

This spring, Environment New Hampshire launched our campaign to protect the White Mountains from the Northern Pass, a proposed power line that would cut through White Mountain National Forest and stretch 180 miles down the backbone of our state.

“We can’t allow powerful utility companies like PSNH to destroy the wild character of White Mountain National Forest by building a massive power line through our public lands,” said Jessica O’Hare, advocate with Environment New Hampshire.

10-story towers through the Whites

Northern Pass stands to be one of the largest electric transmission projects in New Hampshire history, and would fundamentally change the character of New Hampshire’s landscape.

The project, as proposed, will bring 1,100 towers—each one taller than a 10-story building—along a 180 mile path through New Hampshire and the Whites. The towers would cross over the Appalachian Trail, scarring our most famed hiking areas and fragmenting ecosystems.

The project hit roadblocks

Although PSNH continues to lobby for Northern Pass, recent events have made the project’s future more uncertain. In March, the state Legislature passed a bill making it more difficult for PSNH to acquire private lands for the project. Already, landowners are taking a stand by refusing to sell their land to the utilities. This leaves PSNH with an unusable patchwork of property.

Environment New Hampshire is calling on Gov. John Lynch to tell PSNH to pull the plug on this Northern Pass proposal. He has the chance to send a strong message to the utilities that they must think twice before messing with New Hampshire’s landscape.

Our staff are planning a media campaign to expose the enormous public relations mistake of destroying pieces of the Whites, which will help pressure PSNH to retract its proposal. Furthermore, this summer our canvassers will fan out in communities across the state to educate Granite Staters about the threat to the Whites, and build an outcry against Northern Pass.

more online

PSNH plans to bring 1,100 towers like these through New Hampshire and the White Mountains. We are working to block this massive power line proposal.

Environment New Hampshire Advocate
Jessica O’Hare

Visit our website to find out how to help keep the White Mountains protected: www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org
For my staff and me, summer means one thing: It's time for the canvass.

In the coming months, our outreach staff will go door to door in communities across the state, talking to people face to face about the threats facing the places they love—and getting them involved to make a difference.

It's the voices of concerned citizens like you that make all our victories possible. In Concord and in Washington, D.C., polluters' dollars talk pretty loudly. But our leaders still listen when hundreds of thousands of citizens like you demand protections for the White Mountains, or speak out for limits to the carbon pollution that threatens our health and fuels global warming.

Your support makes the difference. So if your doorbell rings this summer, I do hope you'll answer—and say hi to our folks for me!

Sincerely,

Jessica O'Hare
Advocate

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**Recent action**

**Every N.H. county impacted by severe weather in 2011**

After a year that saw many parts of New Hampshire hit by severe storms and record flooding, a new Environment New Hampshire Research & Policy Center report documents how global warming could make certain extreme weather events even more common or severe in the future.

The report found that federally declared weather-related disasters affected all 10 New Hampshire counties in 2011. This includes Hurricane Irene, which cut off power to more than 160,000 Granite Staters and caused the Saco River, the Connecticut and other waterways to overflow their banks.

“Millions of Granite Staters have lived through extreme weather that has caused extremely big problems for New Hampshire’s economy and our public safety,” said Jessica O’Hare, Environment New Hampshire's advocate. “Given that global warming will likely fuel even more extreme weather, we need to cut dangerous carbon pollution now.”

**How to build a better, greener America**

American families could cut global warming pollution from their homes by 30 percent and save about $450 every year on their heating bills by 2030 if we invest in energy efficiency today. These findings were included in “Building a Better America,” a report released on March 8 by Environment New Hampshire Research & Policy Center staff.

In December, the Obama administration announced the Better Buildings Challenge, which includes 60 chief executives, mayors, university presidents and labor leaders. The leaders committed to invest nearly $2 billion in energy-efficiency projects to upgrade the performance of office, industrial, municipal, hospital, university, community college and school buildings. The administration also announced a $2 billion commitment to energy upgrades of federal buildings using long-term energy savings to pay for up-front costs, at no cost to taxpayers.

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**How do you want to be remembered?**

You can be remembered as someone who cared enough to keep up the fight for a cleaner, greener, healthier future by making a bequest to Environment New Hampshire or the Environment New Hampshire Research & Policy Center.

For information, call: 1-800-841-7299, or email PlannedGiving@EnvironmentNewHampshire.org.
New Hampshire’s dependence on dirty, out-of-state energy sources like coal, oil and gas imposes economic costs, pollutes our air and water, and harms public health. Every year, New Hampshire sends $2.6 million out of state to pay for our energy needs. Our energy mix also contributes to global warming, which threatens the well-being of our people with extreme weather events and new threats to public health.

In 2005, leaders in New Hampshire joined with nine other northeastern states to take a decisive step for clean energy and against global warming and fossil fuel dependence by agreeing to limit pollution from power plants and invest in clean energy. Known as the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative, our cornerstone clean energy program took full effect in 2009, becoming the first region-wide limit on global warming pollution implemented anywhere in the United States.

More than $27 million in clean energy investments for N.H.

Two and a half years later, RGGI has largely been a success. It has achieved its goals of sparking investment in clean energy solutions in the region and demonstrating the workability of a program that limits emissions and incentivizes polluters to switch to cleaner sources of energy and invest in efficiency.

New Hampshire has issued grants to a number of small programs, including a highly successful revolving loan fund that offers an example of a self-sustaining model for financing clean energy. Over the past two and a half years, more than $27 million in clean energy investments from RGGI in New Hampshire have led to almost $95 million in energy savings and contributed $163 million in economic growth statewide. For example, thanks to a RGGI grant, the Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center in Greenfield was able to revamp its heating system and connect to a state-of-the-art central district heating system that uses wood chips harvested locally from New Hampshire forests (see sidebar).

“The RGGI grant enabled us to save resources and cut costs while also supporting a local business with sustainable fuel purchases,” said Crotched Mountain Chief Operating Officer Michael Redmond at the news conference to release the report.

Out-of-state interests on the attack

Unfortunately, RGGI is under attack in New Hampshire by out-of-state interests, spearheaded by the Koch Brothers-funded organization Americans for Prosperity. Environment New Hampshire and our allies narrowly defeated a repeal of RGGI last year when our organizing and advocacy helped secure a veto from Gov. John Lynch and the support of nine clean energy champions in the state senate. A similar repeal bill has been filed again in the New Hampshire Legislature this year. Environment New Hampshire and our allies have redoubled our efforts to defend the program.

Crotched Mountain reduced its consumption of home heating oil from 25,000 gallons per year to the equivalent of 6,000 gallons, which are now supplied by the district heat—saving money and reducing our oil dependence. They’ve also increased their patients’ quality of life because each occupant can individually control their new hot water units. There is no overheating, windows remain closed, and occupants report they are very comfortable.

Crotched Mountain Rehabilitation Center’s Chief Operating Officer Michael Redmond said, “Our residents now enjoy comfortable, regulated heat from an efficient system fueled by wood from a nearby family-run business. By switching from oil to biomass, we’ve also reduced greenhouse gas and other harmful emissions.”

New Hampshire has awarded $27 million in RGGI proceeds to clean energy programs, including support for energy efficiency job training for workers across the state.
EPA moves to finalize protections for our lakes

This spring, President Obama announced his intentions to restore Clean Water Act protections to the streams that feed our lakes, including Winnipesaukee and Sunapee.

With Congress at a standstill, the Environmental Protection Agency is moving forward on a rule to restore the Clean Water Act to fulfill its original purpose. We are pushing for a final rule that restores protections to 56 percent of New Hampshire’s streams—protections that were brought into question by a pair of misguided Supreme Court decisions.

“New Hampshire’s lakes depend on the health of the streams that feed them. Without Clean Water Act protections, the threat of increased pollution calls into question the water quality of Lake Winnipesaukee. We shouldn’t have to worry about swimming and fishing in the lakes we love,” said Jessica O’Hare, advocate for Environment New Hampshire.

We are pushing for a final rule that restores protections to 56 percent of New Hampshire’s streams.

Visit us online to take action on this issue: www.EnvironmentNewHampshire.org