

Note:
This summary was last updated on
June 22, 2020
For current information, follow this link:
[PSC Docket Case #9636](#)

BGE Five Forks to Maryland/Pennsylvania Border Reliability Project (Harford County) PSC Case Number 9636

Note:
This summary is based on information
provided in the CPCN Application
dated **January, 2020** which is subject
to change and has not yet been fully
reviewed by PPRP

CPCN Timeline

CPCN Application filed on February 21 2020, 2019

Applicant's Direct Testimony: April 22, 2020

Public Hearing Dates: August 10, 2020

PSC's Evidentiary Hearing: September 15, 2020

Project Location:

The transmission Project is located in northern Harford County, Maryland. The Project area extends from the Five Forks Substation to the Maryland/Pennsylvania border, as shown in Figure 1.

Project Overview:

BGE filed for a CPCN for the Five Forks Project to replace the existing double-circuit, 115 kV overhead transmission line and its associated lattice structures with new weathering steel monopole towers. The portion of line to be replaced extends 1.89 miles and was placed into service approximately 100 years ago. The Project will be constructed within the existing right-of-way (ROW).

Project components include:

- Replacement of 40 lattice structures with 12 steel poles;
- Replacement pole height will range from 80-115 ft. with base diameter of approximately 50 inches tapering to 30 inches;
- Replacement of all existing conductors; and
- Temporary 35-foot construction easement from Whiteford Road to the Project ROW.

Site Description

All construction will take place within the existing ROW for the transmission line. The existing ROW encompasses approximately 23 acres and crosses Broad Creek and one of its tributaries as well as two roads (Whiteford Rd. at approximately the midpoint of the Project) and Archer Rd. (at the northern portion of the line). Most of the land within the transmission ROW is used for agricultural purposes or abuts low-density rural-residential properties, except in the vicinity of streams/environmental features where forested areas will remain. The new steel weathering poles will be aligned with the centerline between the two existing tower lines.

Impact Assessment Highlights

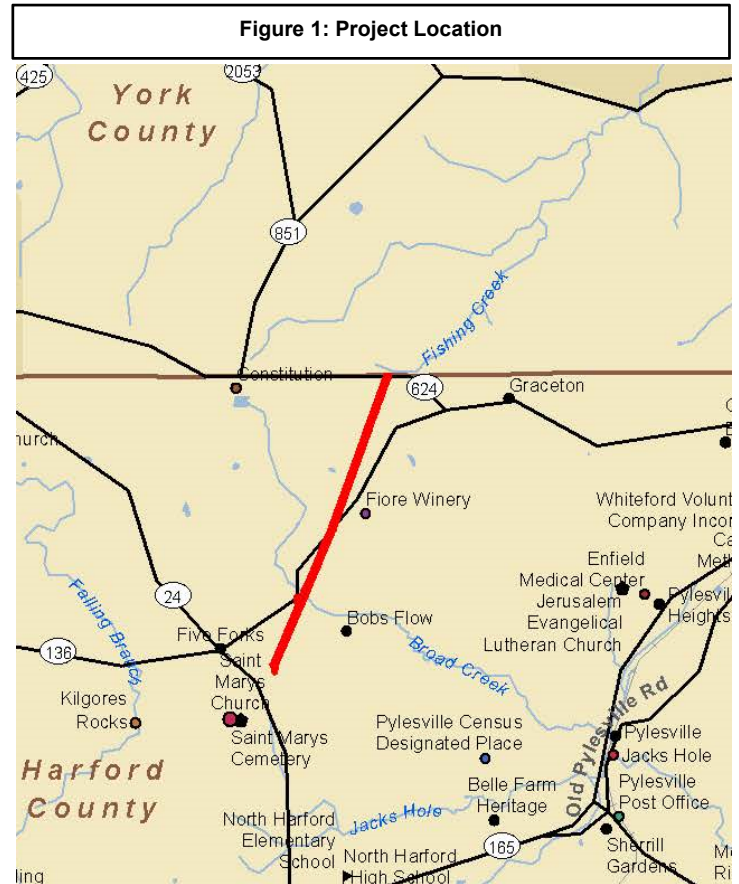
Air Quality

- Site preparation and vehicle movement will generate fugitive dust emissions.
- Internal combustion engines will release NO_x carbon monoxide, and other combustion products.
- Construction worker travel to the site will result in vehicle emissions.

Biological

- The Application indicates that the entire ROW was cleared for initial construction of the existing transmission line and has been maintained periodically since that time and that no tree clearing will be required for the project; however, areas necessary for perimeter sediment and erosion control measures will be trimmed and grubbed.

Figure 1: Project Location



Weedy herbs and shrubs dominate the vegetation within the ROW. In some locations, the ROW is used for agricultural purposes.

- The Application indicates that the ROW contains approximately 0.05 acres of streams, 0.78 acres of wetlands, and floodplain areas.
- PPRP recommends a license condition requiring enhanced sediment and stormwater plans to protect wetlands and a downstream Tier II stream segment near the area where the Project ROW crosses Broad Creek.
- The ROW intersects two forest areas, one of which is classified as FIDS habitat. PPRP recommends license conditions requiring the following in these areas:
 - Wire-zone/border zone management regime;
 - Aggressive management of invasive species; and
 - Full restoration of access roads following construction.
- The MDNR WHS identified the possible presence of one RTE species within the ROW. In lieu of a full survey for the presence of this species, the DNR WHS recommended that its presence be assumed and appropriate precautions taken in this area.

Economic and Fiscal

- The estimated cost to construct the Project is \$8.7 million and the Project is expected to create temporary construction jobs.
- Construction activities will generate a small fiscal benefit to Harford County through local income tax receipts on construction wages and indirect earnings. The State will also benefit from the collection of additional revenues from state income taxes.
- Economic impacts from operation of the Project will be insignificant.

Transportation

- The Application indicates that the Project includes at least two road crossings (Whiteford Road (MD 136) and Archer Road). After crossing Archer Road, the route reaches its terminus at the state line where the transmission line connects with another utility.
- The ROW will be accessed from temporary or existing access driveways intersecting State and county roads. Temporary traffic disruptions may occur as large equipment enters or exits roads or during the installation of conductors, shielded wires, and OPGW on the new steel monopoles. PPRP recommends a license condition to mitigate disruptions to commuter traffic by scheduling the transport of materials and equipment during off-peak hours; to comply with requirements to occupy State and county roads; and to obtain approvals, as necessary.
- No traffic impacts are expected due to operation of the Project.
- There are no airports within 8 miles of the Project. The Applicant indicates that the Project includes no new structures that would require a Notice of Proposed Construction and Alteration to the Federal Aviation Administration.

Land Use

- The ROW comprises approximately 23 acres owned in fee by BGE, including approximately 7.8 acres of cropland. No additional land will be required to complete the Project.
- Land uses adjacent to the ROW include cropland, residential, forest, and pasture.
- The Applicant states that it will coordinate construction activities within portions of the ROW that are still farmed to minimize impacts to crop yields.
- PPRP has concluded that crop production and livestock operations that are temporarily impacted by construction will resume following Project construction; thus, no permanent land use impacts within the ROW are anticipated.

Cultural and Aesthetic

- There are no National Register of Historic Places sites within one mile of the Project. There are 27 properties listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Places located within one mile of the Project. There are no Maryland Historic Trust preservation easements, archaeological resources or Heritage Areas within the Project's area of potential effect (APE). The Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) has determined that the Project will not impact historical properties.
- PPRP performed visual impact analysis of the project and concluded that, the Project's visual impact will remain essentially unchanged (although the total number of structures will be reduced from 40 to 12, the new structures will be taller).
- Whiteford Rd. and Rocks Rd. are part of the Mason & Dixon Scenic Byway. The Project will alter the viewing experience for travelers along these routes. PPRP recommends a license condition to address these impacts