

ENF

Environmental Notification Form

For Office Use Only Executive Office of Environmental Affairs
EOEA No.: 13421
MEPA Analyst: Rick Bouré
Phone: 617-626-1130

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: Proposed New Electric Line and Substation Upgrade		
Street: Railroad Right-of-Way		
Municipality: Haverhill	Watershed: Merrimack	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: N/A – linear project, varied coordinates	Latitude: N/A – linear project, Longitude: varied coordinates	
Estimated commencement date: 2/2005	Estimated completion date: 7/2005	
Approximate cost: 1.6 million	Status of project design: 100 %complete	
Proponent: Massachusetts Electric Company		
Street: 1101 Turnpike Street		
Municipality: North Andover	State: MA	Zip Code: 01845
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this ENF May Be Obtained: Jessica Dominguez		
Firm/Agency: Earth Tech, Inc.	Street: 196 Baker Ave.	
Municipality: Concord	State: MA	Zip Code: 01742
Phone: (978) 371-4241	Fax: (978) 371-2468	E-mail: jessica.dominguez@earthtech.com

- Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
 Yes No
- Has this project been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. _____) No
- Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before?
 Yes (EOEA No. _____) No
- Is this an Expanded ENF (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) requesting:
- a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8)) Yes No
 - a Special Review Procedure? (see 301 CMR 11.09) Yes No
 - a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No
 - a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11) Yes No

Identify any financial assistance or land transfer from an agency of the Commonwealth, including the agency name and the amount of funding or land area (in acres): **N/A**

Are you requesting coordinated review with any other federal, state, regional, or local agency?
 Yes (Specify _____) No

List Local or Federal Permits and Approvals: **Notice of Intent filed with the Haverhill Conservation Commission. Army Corp of Engineers Category II PGP application will be filed.**

Which ENF or EIR review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03):

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Land | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rare Species | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Wetlands, Waterways, & Tidelands |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input type="checkbox"/> Wastewater | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Air | <input type="checkbox"/> Solid & Hazardous Waste |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACEC | <input type="checkbox"/> Regulations | <input type="checkbox"/> Historical & Archaeological Resources |

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total	State Permits & Approvals
LAND				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Order of Conditions <input type="checkbox"/> Superseding Order of Conditions <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Chapter 91 License <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 401 Water Quality Certification <input type="checkbox"/> MHD or MDC Access Permit <input type="checkbox"/> Water Management Act Permit <input type="checkbox"/> New Source Approval <input type="checkbox"/> DEP or MWRA Sewer Connection/ Extension Permit <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Permits <i>(including Legislative Approvals) – Specify:</i>
Total site acreage	N/A – 1.8 mile right-of-way			
New acres of land altered <i>vegetation trimming/clearing, new pole placement and substation expansion</i>		1.1		
Acres of impervious area	0	0.01	0.01	
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		12,000		
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		18,300 (riverfront area)		
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		0		
STRUCTURES				
Gross square footage substation and pole structures	12,100	7,300	19,400	
Number of housing units	0	0	0	
Maximum height (in feet) poles	60	10	70	
TRANSPORTATION				
Vehicle trips per day	0	0	0	
Parking spaces	0	0	0	
WATER/WASTEWATER				
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	0	0	0	
GPD water withdrawal	0	0	0	
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	0	0	0	
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0	0	0	

CONSERVATION LAND: Will the project involve the conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97?

- Yes (Specify _____) No

Will it involve the release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction?

Yes (Specify _____) No

RARE SPECIES: Does the project site include Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities?

Yes (Specify **Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Shortnose Sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*), and Atlantic Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*)**) No

HISTORICAL /ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Does the project site include any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Letter of Inquiry sent to Mass Historical – See Attachment C

The project is located in an established right-of-way (ROW) with existing electrical and rail structures.

No impacts are anticipated.

Yes (Specify _____) No

If yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources?

Yes (Specify _____) No

AREAS OF CRITICAL ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERN: Is the project in or adjacent to an Area of Critical Environmental Concern?

Yes (Specify _____) No

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The project description should include (a) a description of the project site, (b) a description of both on-site and off-site alternatives and the impacts associated with each alternative, and (c) potential on-site and off-site mitigation measures for each alternative (*You may attach one additional page, if necessary.*)

The current project, as proposed by the Massachusetts Electric Company (MECo), will take place within an existing electric transmission right-of-way (ROW) adjacent to railroad tracks. The North Haverhill Substation is in a residential area that has been developed since the substation was built. The activities proposed in this filing coincide with the upgrades to the electrical transmission and distribution system in the Merrimack Valley. These upgrades are intended to help increase supply and reliability of service to residents in North Haverhill. This project includes the following three components:

- Installation of a second 23-kilovolt (kV) electric line (three conductors and a neutral wire) from the Bradford Substation (South Elm Street) to the North Haverhill Substation (Bennington Street). Also, partial reconstruction of the existing 23-kV line along the same route, between Bradford Substation and Winter Street.
- Expansion and improvements to the North Haverhill Substation,
- Reconstruction and reconductoring of the existing Merrimack River crossing, north of the Bradford Substation.

Limited Project Status – The 23-kV line portion of the project is proposed as a limited project per 310 CMR 10.53 (3)(d). Although this project qualifies as a limited project, with the Haverhill Conservation Commission’s consent, all applicable performance standards will be met to the extent practicable.

Proposed Actions

Second 23kV Supply Line – The proposed 2404 Line will be constructed adjacent to the existing 2379 Line from the Bradford Substation to the North Haverhill Substation. The route is approximately 1.8 miles in length. In most locations, new poles will be typically placed 12 feet from the existing line. In some cases poles will be placed further away from the existing line to provide clearance from active or potentially active railroad tracks. Reconfiguration of the existing line to accommodate the construction of the new line will require replacement of some of the existing poles and conductors.

Expansion and Improvements to the North Haverhill Substation – MECo is proposing to expand the footprint of the existing substation 30 feet to the west (approximately 2,400sf). Within the newly constructed area, MECo

is proposing to add new steel bus structures for connection of the proposed 23-kV Line. A second driveway and gate is proposed off of Bennington Street.

Reconstruction and Reconductoring of the Merrimack River Crossing – Currently, the existing 23kV line (three wires) is supported across the Merrimack River by a three pole wooden structure on either side of the river. The structures were constructed to accommodate a second 23kV circuit, but are in need of replacement. MECo is proposing to replace each structure with two double wooden pole structures in approximately the same location. At the same time MECo will also replace the existing conductor across the river and add a neutral wire to the 2379 line.

Impacts and Alternatives

Impacts will be mainly associated with soil disturbance, trimming or removal of vegetation, and placement of new wooden pole structures, guy-wires, and anchors.

Wetlands, Waterways, and Tidelands – In order to complete the proposed project; work will occur within two state-regulated resource areas (BVW and RFA) and the 100-foot buffer zone. Impacts fall into two broad categories trimming/clearing and excavations for pole work. In many cases both occur in the same area. A total area of 200 square feet of BVW will be excavated during the installation of poles 27 and 28. Of this 200 square foot alteration, all but the actual footprint of the pole will be temporary. This will require approximately 12,000 square feet of trimming/clearing in the BVW and approximately 18,300 square feet of trimming/clearing in RFA. Finally, 29,600 square feet of buffer zone will be disturbed by project related activities. It should be noted that, while much of this is new trimming/clearing, the majority of the right-of-way is already subject to vegetation management for the existing line and the railroad.

Rare Species – No direct impacts to sensitive habitats of the Bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), Shortnose Sturgeon (*Acipenser brevirostrum*), or Atlantic Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus*) are anticipated. Indirect impacts will be mitigated by limiting new clearing of vegetation and employment of sedimentation and erosion control measures.

Recently concluded studies have indicated the need to build a new 23kV sub transmission line from the Bradford Substation to the North Haverhill Substation because of the present electrical loading on the existing 2379 Line. In 1963, when permitting the existing 23kV line MECo informed both the City of Haverhill and the Department of Public Utilities (now the Department of Telecommunications and Energy) that a second line would eventually be constructed along the same route. At that time MECo obtained a license along the railroad ROW for the 2379 Line. MECo is currently in the process of obtaining a license from the railroad to allow for the second line. The 23 kV supply lines that feed the Bradford Substation emanate from the Ward Hill Substation, which is south of the Merrimack River. The existing line connects into those feed lines at the Bradford Substation, which makes a crossing of the river unavoidable. The railroad ROW is the most direct route from the existing river crossing to the North Haverhill Substation. Furthermore, the area between Bradford Substation and North Haverhill Substation is densely developed, making a route on existing streets (overhead or underground) prohibitively costly. While work is proposed within BVW and 100 feet of two rivers, the project utilizes existing crossing locations and previously maintained ROW.

Mitigation and Minimization of Impacts

Wherever possible, work within resource areas and the buffer zone will be minimized. In some cases, the configuration of the ROW and existing facilities makes total avoidance of work in resource areas impossible. In cases where work in resource areas and buffer zones is required, disturbed areas (previously cleared areas, the existing substation, and established transmission ROWs) will be utilized to minimize impacts to pristine areas. Additionally, existing access points to the ROW will be utilized to limit disturbance.

By adjusting span lengths, all but two of the structures have been placed outside of wetlands. In some cases the structures will be adjacent to wetlands. Along the proposed route selective trimming or removal of trees will be required. New poles will be spaced twelve feet from the existing line to reduce necessary clearing.

A portion of the area directly west of the substation collects stormwater runoff from up gradient properties. At the request of the Haverhill Conservation Commission Office, MECo will grade this area to maintain the same volume of stormwater storage. In addition, MECo will place riprap at the existing discharge point of the stormwater ditch to minimize erosion.