

STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION

CASE 12-T-0502 - Proceeding on Motion to Examine Alternating
Current Transmission Upgrades.

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
OF SIGNIFICANCE

(Issued April 22, 2013)

NOTICE is hereby given that an environmental impact statement will not be prepared in connection with the establishment of procedures that will be used to evaluate alternating current (AC) transmission facility upgrade proposals needed to relieve congestion on the State's electric transmission system. This is based on the Commission's determination, pursuant to Part 617 of the implementing regulations pertaining to Article 8 of the State Environmental Quality Review Act of the Environmental Conservation Law, that such action will not have a significant effect on the environment. The action contemplated is an "unlisted action" as defined in 6 NYCRR Section 617.2.

The address of the Public Service Commission, the lead agency for purposes of environmental quality review of this action, is 3 Empire State Plaza, Albany, New York 12223-1350. For further information contact Christina Palmero at (518) 486-2653.

(SIGNED)

JEFFREY C. COHEN
Acting Secretary

**STATE OF NEW YORK
PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

**CASE 12-T-0502 - Proceeding on Motion to Examine Alternating Current
Transmission Upgrades.**

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT FORM

Prepared By:

THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SERVICE

**Dated: Albany, New York
April 15, 2013**

**State Environmental Quality Review
Short Environmental Assessment Form**

Introduction

An environmental assessment is an evaluation of the known or potential environmental consequences of a proposed action. Such an assessment also determines whether additional relevant information about such impacts is needed. Environmental assessments help involved and interested agencies identify their concerns about the action and provide guidance to the lead agency in making its determination of significance. This document provides the substantive information solicited by Appendix C of 6 NYCRR §617.20, part of the regulations promulgated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation pursuant to the State Environmental Quality Review Act ("SEQRA"), Article 8 of the New York Environmental Conservation Law.

An Environmental Assessment Form ("EAF") provides an organized approach to identifying the information needed by the lead agency to make its determination of significance. A properly completed EAF describes a proposed action, its location, its purpose and its potential impacts on the environment. The EAF is the first step in the environmental impact review process and leads to either a positive declaration (requiring further analysis of the environmental impacts) or a negative declaration (requiring no further action) of potentially significant adverse environmental impact(s).

Part 1 - PROJECT INFORMATION

1. Applicant / Sponsor:

New York Public Service Commission
Three Empire State Plaza
Albany, New York 12223

2. Name of Action:

Public Service Commission order establishing procedures for the evaluation of alternating current (AC) transmission facilities under Article VII of the Public Service Law.

3&4. Location of Action:

New York State

5. The proposed action is new.

6. Description of Action:

A proceeding has been instituted by the Commission to identify alternating current (AC) transmission upgrades needed to relieve constraints on the State's electric transmission system. In the order instituting the proceeding, the Commission asked for "Statements of Intent" from developers and transmission owners that identify transmission upgrades that will increase transfer capacity through congested transmission corridors, which includes the Central East and UPNY/SENY interfaces within the Mohawk Valley Region, the Capital Region, and the lower Hudson Valley region in New York State. Following review of the Statements of Intent, the Commission decided to establish procedures under Article VII of the Public Service Law that would allow for a combined evaluation of AC project proposals.

7-9. The action does not include direct approval for the siting or construction of any facilities, therefore a consideration of site-specific amounts of land affected, compliance with existing zoning or other restrictions, and present land uses in the vicinity are inapplicable to this evaluation.

10-12. The action does not involve any permit approval, permit modification or funding, now or ultimately from any other governmental agency.

Part II - IMPACT ASSESSMENT

A. The action does not exceed any Type I threshold in 6 NYCRR §617.4.

B. There are no other "involved agencies" (state or local agencies with permitting or regulatory authority) regarding the action therefore "coordinated review" as provided for unlisted actions in 6 NYCRR §617.6 is inapplicable.

C. Potential for Adverse Effects:

The establishment of procedures governing the future Article VII review of multiple AC transmission proposals is an "unlisted action" as defined in 6 NYCRR §617.2. The described action is not likely to cause any direct environmental effects because the action alone does not involve physical activities that might have impacts on the environment.

1. Impact to Air

The action will not result in any direct air impacts or the inducement of any air impacts. It is expected that future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential air impacts of the proposals that are submitted and will balance such impacts against other factors.

2. Impact to Water

The action will not result in any direct water impacts or the inducement of any water impacts. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential water impacts of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

3. Impact to Land

The action will not result in any direct impacts to land or the inducement of any impacts to land. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential land impacts of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

4. Impact on Plants and Animals

The action will not result in any direct impacts on plants and animals or the inducement of any impacts on plants and animals. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts on plants and animals of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

5. Impact on Agricultural Land Resources

The action will not result in any direct impacts on agricultural land resources or the inducement of any impacts on agricultural land resources. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts on agricultural land resources of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

6. Impact on Aesthetic Resources

The action will not result in any direct impacts on aesthetic resources or the inducement of any impacts on aesthetic resources. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts on aesthetic resources of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

7. Impact on Historic and Archeological Resources

The action will not result in any direct impacts on historic and archeological resources or the inducement of any impacts on historic and archeological resources. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts of the proposals that are submitted on historic and archeological resources, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

8. Impact on Open Space and Recreation

The action will not result in any direct impacts on open space and recreation or the inducement of any impacts on open space and recreation. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts of the proposals that are submitted on open space and recreation, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

9. Impact on Transportation

The action will not result in any direct transportation impacts or the inducement of any transportation impacts. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts of the proposals that are submitted on transportation, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

10. Impact on Energy

The action will not result in any direct energy impacts or the inducement of any energy impacts. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts on energy of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

11. Noise and Odor Impact

The action will not result in any direct noise and odor impacts or the inducement of any noise and odor impacts. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential noise and odor impacts of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

12. Impact on Public Health

The action will not result in any direct impacts on public health or the inducement of any impacts on public health. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential public health impacts of the proposals that are submitted, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

13. Impact on Growth and Character of Community or Neighborhood

The action will not result in any direct impacts on the growth and character of a community or neighborhood or the inducement of any impacts on the growth and character of a community or neighborhood. As noted above, future implementation of the Article VII process will identify the potential impacts on growth and character of impacted communities or neighborhoods, and will balance such impacts against other factors.

- D. The action does not include approval for the siting or construction of any facilities; therefore, a consideration of potential site-specific impacts on the environmental characteristics that caused the establishment of a critical environmental area (CEA) is inapplicable to this evaluation.
- E. There is not likely to be significant public interest related to potential environmental impacts related to the action because it is limited to the adoption of procedures governing future Article VII applications.

DETERMINATION OF SIGNIFICANCE

The action will not result in one or more large and important impacts that may have a significant adverse effect on the environment, therefore a Negative Declaration will be prepared.

New York Public Service Commission

Name of Lead Agency

April 15, 2013

Date

Christina Palmero

Print or Type Name of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency

Chief, Office of Energy

Efficiency and the Environment

Title of Responsible Officer

/s/

Signature of Responsible Officer in Lead Agency
Signature of Preparer (if different from responsible officer)