



**Western Massachusetts
Electric**

The Northeast Utilities System



Greater Springfield
Reliability Project

November 16, 2009

**Re: Final Environmental Impact Report
Greater Springfield Reliability Project
Springfield, West Springfield, Agawam, Chicopee, Ludlow
EEA No. 14271**

Dear FEIR Recipient:

On behalf of the Western Massachusetts Electric Company (WMECO), we have submitted the enclosed Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) to the Secretary of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs for public review and comment in accordance with 301 CMR 11.07.

The Greater Springfield Reliability Project (the "Project") includes the construction of approximately 23 miles of new overhead 345-kV transmission lines to be located on double-circuit steel poles, averaging approximately 130 feet in height, along existing rights-of-way (ROWs) currently occupied by 115-kV overhead transmission lines, with some distribution lines. Along these ROWs, the existing 115-kV transmission lines will typically be removed and rebuilt. New segments of single 115-kV circuits will share the steel poles with the new 345-kV lines, and all other 115-kV circuits will be rebuilt on new steel monopole structures. Certain existing 115-kV line segments on other ROWs which intersect with the primary 345-kV/115-kV route will also be rebuilt and/or reconducted. This additional 115-kV line upgrade work is proposed to occur on three spurs, from: 1) Exit 6 Junction to a new Cadwell Switching Station; 2) East Springfield Junction to the Fairmont Switching Station, and 3) Orchard Junction to Orchard Substation. Portions of these spurs would pass through the towns of Chicopee, Ludlow and Springfield. In addition to work associated with the transmission lines, the Project includes substation/switching station improvements and an expansion at the existing Agawam Substation. Two new switching stations will be constructed, the Fairmont Switching Station in Chicopee and the Cadwell Switching Station in Springfield. Fairmont will be constructed partially within an existing overhead utility ROW on land being purchased from Holyoke Gas & Electric. Cadwell will be constructed primarily within an existing overhead utility ROW on land predominately owned by WMECO with some land being purchased from Palmer Paving Company.

Enclosed is a CD containing the complete document. The FEIR is being circulated per the requirements of 301 CMR 11.16(3), the Secretary's Certificate on the DEIR and MEPA policy regarding the distribution of electronic and paper copies of filings. The enclosed CD contains the document and all figures encoded in Adobe Acrobat format for easy viewing. If you do not have Acrobat Reader it can be downloaded free of charge from the Adobe website (www.adobe.com).



**Western Massachusetts
Electric**

The Northeast Utilities System



Greater Springfield
Reliability Project

Printed copies have been placed in the central public library of each community in which elements of the project are proposed. We will also post electronic copies of all documents on the project website (<http://www.transmission-nu.com/residential/projects/springfield/PublicInvolvement.asp>) starting on November 23, 2009.

Please note that comments on the FEIR are due to MEPA by December 23, 2009. Comments should be sent to:

Secretary Ian A. Bowles
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Attn: Holly Johnson, MEPA Unit
EEA No. 14271
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Should you still require a printed copy of the FEIR please contact me at (860) 665-6774.

Sincerely,

Robert E. Carberry
Project Manager - Transmission

cc: Holly Johnson, EOEEA, MEPA