

**PENNSYLVANIA
PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSION
Harrisburg, PA 17120**

Public Meeting held August 24, 2023

Commissioners Present:

Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, Chairman
Stephen M. DeFrank, Vice Chairman
Ralph V. Yanora
Kathryn L. Zerfuss
John F. Coleman, Jr.

Letter of Notification of Mid-Atlantic Interstate
Transmission, LLC for approval to construct the
Mansfield – Niles Valley 115 kV Transmission
Line bypass in Middlebury Township, Tioga
County, Pennsylvania

Docket Number:
A-2023-3041099

ORDER

BY THE COMMISSION:

On June 2, 2023, Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission, LLC (MAIT), Utility Code 1117780, filed a Letter of Notification pursuant to 52 Pa. Code § 57.72(d)(1)(i) & (vi) of the Pennsylvania Public Utility Commission's (Commission) transmission line siting regulation. For the reasons expressed in this Order, the Letter of Notification is approved.

Copies of the Letter of Notification were served in accordance with Section 57.72(d)(3) and 57.74(b) & (c), 52 Pa. Code §§ 57.72(d)(3), 57.74(b) & (c), on the PA Department of Transportation, PA Department of Environmental Protection, PA Historical and Museum Commission, Tioga County Commissioners, Middlebury Township, *et al.* No protests were filed. No hearings were held.

MAIT requests approval to construct the Mansfield – Niles Valley 115 kV Transmission Line bypass in Middlebury Township, Tioga County, Pennsylvania. The line to be constructed will extend from proposed tap structure #85A on the Mansfield – Niles Valley 115 kV Transmission Line through the proposed switch structure and to the Niles Valley – Wellsboro 115 kV Transmission Line and will total approximately 0.01 miles in length. Application ¶8.

MAIT states that construction of the Mansfield – Niles Valley 115 kV Transmission Line Bypass is needed to provide redundancy and increase reliability for load served radially from the Niles Valley 115 kV Substation. MAIT states that Niles Valley Substation is a network transmission substation and directly serves approximately 289 Pennsylvania Electric Company (Penelec), Utility Code 110400, customers and Wellsboro Electric Company (WECO), Utility Code 111200, which serves approximately 6,381 customers. MAIT states that currently there is no alternate source for the Niles Valley Substation and that WECO is the sole customer served by the Niles Valley – Wellsboro 115 kV Transmission Line. Finally, MAIT states that under a breaker failure or breaker maintenance condition electric service to WECO would be out for the duration of the maintenance or repair period. Application ¶¶17 and 19.

MAIT submits that to address this issue the Transmission Line Bypass Project will install a single motor operated switch that may be used connect the Mansfield – Niles Valley line to the Niles Valley – Wellsboro 115 kV line, bypassing the Niles Valley

Substation. MAIT also submits if a failure of any line terminal equipment occurs, or when maintenance needs to occur, the transmission line serving WECO can be transferred to the alternate feed preventing a long duration outage. MAIT further states that the Transmission Line Bypass Project was presented at the PJM Interconnection, LLC Regional Transmission Expansion Planning committee meeting in February 2022 and September 2022 and assigned supplemental project number s2835. Application ¶¶15-16 and 20.

MAIT states that it considered two alternative solutions, constructing a ring-bus at the Niles Valley Substation and constructing a new 115 kV transmission line to Niles Valley Substation. MAIT also states that both alternatives were cost prohibitive, and that neither could be completed prior to the next maintenance cycle. Application ¶15.

MAIT avers that it will install a total of two new structures to facilitate the transmission line bypass and that the new structures are approximately 48 feet-in-height and 61 feet-in-height. MAIT further avers that existing nearby transmission structures range from approximately 48 feet-in-height to 56 feet-in-height. MAIT also avers that the Transmission Line Bypass Project has been designed and will be built within the existing 175-foot-wide right-of-way of the Mansfield – Niles Valley and Niles Valley – Wellsboro 115 kV transmission lines. Finally, MAIT avers that the existing easement agreement allows for the installation of the proposed structures and that MAIT is coordinating with the landowner for temporary access to support construction. Application ¶¶7 and 10.

MAIT asserts that the Transmission Line Bypass Project will be designed, constructed, operated and maintained in a manner that meets or surpasses all applicable MAIT and National Electrical Safety Code minimum standards and all applicable legal requirements. Application ¶12.

MAIT states that the total estimated cost for the Transmission Line Bypass Project is approximately \$665,000 and will be paid for by MAIT. Construction of the project is anticipated to commence around October 2, 2023, with a proposed in-service date of around October 12, 2023. Application ¶¶27-28.

Section 57.72 authorizes the abbreviated Letter of Notification siting application process in lieu of an application for the following:

- (i) An HV line which is proposed to be located entirely on an existing transmission line right-of-way, so long as the size, character, design, or configuration of the proposed HV line does not substantially alter the right-of-way.
- (ii) An HV line which is proposed to be located entirely within a public road.
- (ii) An HV line which is proposed to be located entirely within applicant's existing transmission line right-of-way and the property of the sole customer to be served by the line, so long as the size, character, design, or configuration of the proposed HV line does not substantially alter the right-of-way.
- (iii) A line for which the voltage is proposed to be increased above its present levels so long as the size, character, design, or configuration of the proposed HV line does not substantially alter the right-of-way.
- (v) An HV line which is to be reconductored or reconstructed so long as the size, character, design or configuration of the proposed HV line does not substantially alter the right-of-way.

- (vi) An HV line having a proposed route of 2 miles or less.

52 Pa. Code § 57.72(d).

We agree with MAIT that the formal MAIT Letter of Notification and manner in which it was filed conforms to the requirements of 52 Pa. Code § 57.72(d)(1)(i) & (vi) because the Mansfield – Niles Valley Transmission Line Bypass Project will be constructed in a manner such that it does not substantially alter the existing right-of-way and because the section of line to be constructed is less than two miles in length. Moreover, the Commission has reviewed the filing and does not find it to be inconsistent with the applicable law or Commission policy regarding transmission line siting and, therefore, to be in the public interest.


We also note that our approval of the Letter of Notification does not address the issues of accounting treatment, and cost recovery; **THEREFORE,**

IT IS ORDERED:

1. That the Letter of Notification of Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission, LLC for approval to construct the Mansfield – Niles Valley 115 kV Transmission Line bypass in Middlebury Township, Tioga County, Pennsylvania, is hereby approved.
2. That upon completion of the subject project, Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission, LLC shall file the final project cost with the Commission.

3. That upon completion of Ordering Paragraph 2, this proceeding at Docket No. A-2023-3041099 be closed.

BY THE COMMISSION,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rosemary Chiavetta". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rosemary Chiavetta
Secretary

ORDER ADOPTED: August 24, 2023

ORDER ENTERED: August 24, 2023