

**New Jersey Highlands Coalition – New Jersey Sierra Club
Environment New Jersey – New Jersey Environmental Federation**

Press Release

For Immediate Release:
May 20, 2009

Contact: **Julia Somers**, Executive Director, NJ Highlands Coalition
973-588-7190 (office), 973-525-2768 (cell)
Jeff Tittel, Director, New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club
609-646-7612 (office), 609-558-9100 (cell)
Dave Pringle, New Jersey Environmental Federation
732-996-4288 (cell)
Dena Mottola Jaborska, Environment New Jersey
609-392-5151 (office), 609-540-6609 (cell)

PSE&G's Changes to Susquehanna Roseland Power Line Fail to Address Real Impacts on the Environment

Impacts to water and air quality from coal mining remain unaddressed by PSE&G. Company's mitigation plans address few of the power line's true environmental impacts.

Board of Public Utilities and environmental groups will need to start from scratch to review project's full impact.

Highlands Region, NJ: Yesterday, PSE&G, the state's largest utility, released a plan to revise its controversial Susquehanna-Roseland power line project. The project, if approved, will pipe more coal-fired power into New Jersey through the New Jersey Highlands via massive power line upgrades through some of the state's most pristine ecological lands.

While the company veiled its changes as environmentally responsible, leading environmental groups, including the New Jersey Highlands Coalition, the Sierra Club, Environment New Jersey and the New Jersey Environmental Federation, noted that the company's changes fail to address the true environmental impacts of the proposed power line.

PSE&G claims that the project will bring minimal environmental impacts to New Jersey. But the company has failed to address the groups' concerns that a transmission line importing power from coal country in Pennsylvania with 200 foot towers will despoil Green Acres open space lands, pump dirty coal-fired energy from Pennsylvania into New Jersey, and will impact precious state parks and recreational sites purchased and maintained with public funds.

PSE&G's revised plan fails to address the considerable impacts on the environment that the new Susquehanna-Roseland line will engender. These impacts include water quality impacts from air pollutants such as nitrous oxide and mercury, ecologically devastating coal mining, and increased global warming pollution in New Jersey.

In addition, the state's environmental groups contend that the plan does not follow the Highlands Regional Master Plan's direction to: (1) demonstrate first and foremost that a project attempts to avoid environmental harm where possible, (2) minimize impacts and (3) mitigate only as a last resort. Mitigation for considerable impacts on State Parks and recreational areas, wetlands, stream crossings, groundwater recharge areas, new 200 foot tall towers, and numerous other impacts simply cannot be achieved through the approach PSE&G has presented.

Jeff Tittel, Director of the New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club explained, "You can't mitigate a bullet wound with a band-aid." **He continued,** "The PSE&G project is a leap backwards in addressing modern day energy issues, especially since New Jersey has already demonstrated leadership by incorporating local, renewable generation, energy efficiency and a focus on advanced energy transmission solutions like smart-grid technology."

"PSE&G can make this project less bad, but they can never make it good. New Jersey's water supplies and air quality will continue to be threatened as long as we continue to import dirty coal energy along power lines like the Susquehanna-Roseland line, undermining New Jersey Energy Master Plan." **explained Dave Pringle of the New Jersey Environmental Federation.** "Mitigating a project that isn't needed in the first place is like Santa giving out coal for Christmas wrapped neatly with a bow. It's still coal! PSE&G should do all of us and itself a favor, abandon this project, and focus on the initiatives they're doing that are a win for the environment and the economy -- wind, solar, weatherization, and the like."

Last fall, Governor Corzine released a 10-year energy master plan for the state of New Jersey. By 2020, the governor committed to reduce state-wide energy demand 20%, cut global warming pollution by 20%, and meet 30% of the state's electricity needs with clean, renewable sources such as wind and solar. This summer, the governor's administration is expected to finalize plans to cut the state's global warming pollution by at least 80% by 2050 -- virtually eliminating fossil-generated electricity.

"This new power line flies in the face of all the progress we have made. If we allow PSE&G to pipe Pennsylvania coal power into New Jersey, we'll take a dangerous step in the wrong direction," **said Dena Mottola Jaborska, Executive Director of Environment New Jersey.** "This will undermine all of the governor's commitments to curb energy demand and fight global warming, and it will mean even more pollution in New Jersey. PSE&G's plan does nothing to mitigate the public health impacts, the economic impacts, or the sea level rise that more coal will bring to our state," **concluded Jaborska.**

PSE&G has repeatedly claimed that the project must continue without delay. Yet the deadline for PSE&G to submit testimony to the state has long since passed. And now, facing pressure, PSE&G has submitted revisions to their initial proposal.

These revisions will require state agencies and non-profit environmental groups, all of whom have already spent considerable time, energy and resources, to go back to the drawing board and start all over again to review the new proposal.

The changes presented by PSE&G, while failing to mitigate the true environmental impacts of its new power line, will force the state and non-profit groups to dedicate a significant amount of precious resources to review moderate changes to, and further delay a decision on an already flawed project.

"It is clear that this project has nothing to do with grid reliability, because PSE&G is intentionally delaying their own proceedings by presenting mitigation plans and changes to their initial site designs that should have been submitted by PSE&G when they began these Board of Public Utility proceedings in January," **explained Julia M. Somers, Executive Director of the New Jersey Highlands Coalition.** "The mitigation plans present a considerable burden on the BPU staff and our lawyers who now need to review almost the entire project from scratch."

BACKGROUND:

PSE&G began the proceedings in front of the Board of Public Utilities in January of 2009 presenting testimony from witnesses on the design of the project, its need and construction related impacts. At that time, PSE&G had already received the report of the New Jersey Highlands Council prepared in December of 2008, highlighting the numerous inconsistencies between PSE&G's proposal and the goals and purposes of the Highlands Act. PSE&G was already informed of the problem areas of the project and could have presented additional testimony to the BPU in March 2009. The changes they have put forward this late in the proceedings will require the BPU and intervening parties to have an additional opportunity to adequately review their proposed revisions.

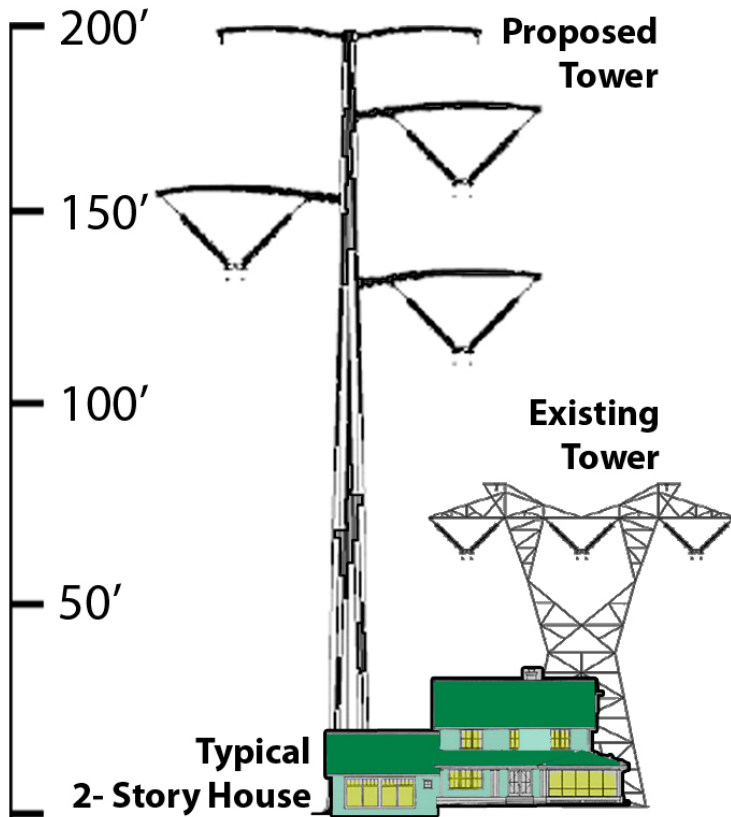


Illustration is an example of one proposed tower design that will be used by PSE&G for the Susquehanna-Roseland power line.

The New Jersey Highlands Coalition, New Jersey Chapter of the Sierra Club, New Jersey Environmental Federation and Environment New Jersey remain actively involved in opposing PSE&G's Susquehanna-Roseland line and will be presenting their case to the Board of Public Utilities in the pending proceedings.

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