

DOCKET NO. 118A - The Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police, Amended Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for construction, operation, and maintenance of telecommunications facilities in the Towns of North Canaan, Norfolk, and Litchfield, Connecticut. : Connecticut Siting Council : September 9, 1992

ORIGINAL

OPINION

On July 20, 1992, the Department of Public Safety, Division of State Police (State Police), applied to the Connecticut Siting Council (Council), in accordance with provisions of Connecticut General Statute (CGS) section 16-501(d), for an Amendment of the Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for the construction of telecommunications towers in the Towns of North Canaan, Litchfield, and Norfolk, Connecticut, to extend the construction deadline from February 5, 1993 to February 5, 1996.

Pursuant to the Connecticut Environmental Policy Act (CEPA), the State Police needed to draft an environmental impact statement and receive approval from the State Office of Policy and Management (OPM) prior to receiving bonded funding to start construction of the Connecticut Telecommunications System. The State Police received OPM approval in meeting CEPA requirements on March 24, 1992. Although the State Police have fulfilled all obligations, they now have less than six months to prepare development and management plans, and finish constructing these facilities. This time constraint will jeopardize efforts to update needed telecommunications equipment and improve public safety communication within the State.

Based on the information contained in the record for the Amendment application, we find that the effect associated with extending the deadline to construct, operate, and maintain telecommunications towers in the Towns of North Canaan, Litchfield, and Norfolk, Connecticut, including effects on the natural environment; ecological integrity and balance; public health and safety; scenic, historic, and recreational values; forests and parks; air and water purity; and fish and wildlife are not disproportionate either alone or cumulatively with other effects when compared to need, are not in conflict with the policies of the State concerning such effects, and are not sufficient reason to deny the proposed amendment for these facilities. Therefore, we will issue an Amended Certificate to the State Police to extend the construction deadline to February 5, 1996, or within three years after the completion of any appeals to this decision for the construction, operation, and maintenance of the telecommunications towers in the Towns of North Canaan, Litchfield, and Norfolk, Connecticut.