

APPLICATION OF THE UNITED ILLUMINATING :
COMPANY FOR A CERTIFICATE OF ENVIRONMENTAL : POWER FACILITY
COMPATIBILITY AND PUBLIC NEED TO REPLACE A : EVALUATION COUNCIL
PORTION OF THE EXISTING DERBY - SHELTON :
115,000 VOLT ELECTRIC TRANSMISSION LINE :

OPINION

It is the opinion of the Council that the application which is the subject of Docket No. 3 should be approved, subject to such terms, conditions and modifications as shall hereinafter be set forth in the Decision and Order, for the following reasons:

1. The record demonstrates that there is a public need for additional electrical capacity to meet the expected energy demands of the Ansonia, Derby and Shelton areas, although existing facilities are expected to be adequate through 1977. The need arises because of projected increases in demand on the electric system. This projected increase in demand requires, in the interest of public safety, an increase in the water clearance where the existing wires cross the Housatonic River. (Findings 8-15)

The substitution of tubular steel poles for the presently existing lattice steel towers, as well as the proposed reconductoring, would provide strength sufficient to support the increase in line tension necessary to raise, to more acceptable levels, the clearance between existing transmission wires and boats using the Housatonic River. (Findings 12, 13, 15, 18)

2. The Council recognizes that certain adverse effects on the environment may occur as a result of the granting of a certificate in this manner, specifically:

(a) The visual impact created by the erection of a temporary line when portions of the existing line must be removed from service during reconductoring. (Findings 19, 21, 22, 28, 43e)

(b) Effects, such as erosion, on the Housatonic River during construction operations. (Finding, 44c)

Other than (a) and (b) above, the Council finds no other specific adverse environmental effects will result from the granting of the subject application.

3. The Council is of the opinion that the possible adverse effects referred to in Paragraph two (2) of this Opinion do not constitute sufficient reason to deny the application of the United Illuminating Company. In arriving at this conclusion, the Council has carefully considered the evidence and the recommendations presented to it and is of the opinion that the benefits of re-conductoring the river-crossing portion of the Derby - Shelton line, to decrease its sag effect now and as loads increase, balanced against those adverse environmental effects referred to in Paragraph two (2) which cannot be ameliorated by the conditions and modifications set forth in the Decision and Order, will result in a needed improvement, at a reasonable cost, with little appreciable environmental effect.

It is clear that to underground the wires which are the subject of this application would greatly increase the cost of construction with little or no appreciable lessening of environmental impact. In fact, the record clearly demonstrates that undergrounding of the proposed line would probably result in a greater degree of environmental impact than that occasioned by the proposed overhead construction. (Findings, 36-41, 43, 44)

4. In accordance with the Decision and Order to be rendered in this matter, the entire length of the reconducted transmission line as well as the temporary line for which a certificate is to be issued will be located overhead. The facility as applied for by the applicant, and modified by this Council, serves the best interest of the people of the State of Connecticut, and conforms to a long-range plan for the expansion of the electric power grid

of the electric systems serving the state and interconnected utility systems, that will serve the interests of electric system economy and reliability, and for the elimination of all overhead electric transmission lines. The Council further finds that the overhead portions of the facility conform to the Federal Power Commission's "Guidelines for the Protection of Natural Historic, Scenic and Recreational Values in the Design and Location of Rights-of-Way and Transmission Facilities." (Findings, 33, 35)

5. It is the opinion of the Council that the transmission line to be constructed in accordance with the Decision and Order hereinafter rendered will not pose an undue hazard to persons or property along the area traversed by the line. (Findings, 34, 44i)
6. The Council finds that the location of the facility as proposed and as hereinafter certified will conform to applicable state and local laws and regulations. (Finding, 35)