THE POTOMAC-APPALACHIAN TRANSMISSION HIGHLINE
ROUTING THE PATH PROJECT
FACT SHEET

This is a basic overview of the process for selecting the proposed route for PATH. For a comprehensive explanation of the process, please see the Line Route Evaluations (LRE) and related testimony posted on the State Proceedings page.

Routing Overview

The goal of the routing process was to evaluate potential impacts, develop alternative routes, and select the most suitable route for a 765-kilovolt (kV) transmission line between the Amos substation in Putnam County, W. Va., and the proposed Kemptown substation near Frederick, Md.

The most suitable route was defined as one that minimizes the effect on the natural and human environment while avoiding unreasonable and circuitous routes, extreme costs and non-standard design requirements.[1]

Defining the Study Area

The Routing Team generally defined the study area as the geographic region encompassing the two end-point substations and the intermediate substations that were considered during the study.

One of the major factors dictating the study area was the presence of existing transmission line "rights of way." Siting new lines parallel to existing lines is a standard practice in transmission line siting and is supported by many state regulatory authorities. The Proposed Route for PATH extensively parallels existing lines, including much of the 100-mile segment between the Welton Spring and Kemptown Substations.

Gathering Input to Develop Routes

Many sources of information were employed to develop alternative routes for PATH. Valuable sources of information included:

- Aerial photography, maps and GIS data sources
- Field inspections
- Federal, state and local agencies

After three months of planning, PATH project staff launched a public outreach effort that included 24 public open houses held in communities within the study area. Maps of the alternate routes were displayed at the meeting, as well on the project website, pathtransmission.com, for public comment.

As of May 1, 2009, nearly 3,000 public comments were received and evaluated by project staff. The comments came from a variety of sources, including:

- Electronic comments submitted through the project website
- Letters to the PATH project owners, routing team and the state commissions
- Letters and telephone calls from concerned citizens and property owners
- Comments from public open houses

1 Line Route Evaluation and Environmental Reports submitted with applications to the state utility commissions.

The top three issues of concern included aesthetics, property values/residential concerns and conservation/environmental concerns.

Selecting the Proposed Route

The PATH companies determined the proposed route after careful study, including consideration of feedback received at public open houses. In West Virginia, much of the Amos-Welton Spring Segment follows an extremely rural route and avoids populated communities and sensitive environmental habitat. Between the proposed Welton Spring and Kemptown Substations, the majority of the route closely parallels the existing Mt. Storm-Doubs 500-kV line, including overbuilding of an adjacent 138-kV line that has been in service for many years. Detailed maps and aerial photos depicting the proposed route can be viewed on the Maps page at pathtransmission.com.