



Citizens Advocating Responsible Energy **CARE** **Communicator**

Volume One, Number 2

February 7, 2008

What is CARE?

The Citizens Advocating Responsible Energy (CARE) is an organization of citizens opposed to The Geauga County - 138kV Transmission Line Supply Project as it has been proposed by FirstEnergy.

Specifically, it shall be the purpose of CARE to

- (1) Oppose the construction of a new transmission line utility corridor through Thompson, Montville, and Huntsburg townships in the interest of preservation and conservation,
- (2) Advocate the use of a pre-existing civil corridor for a new transmission line, such that neither the over-land nor the Clay Street routes, as applied for by FirstEnergy, are constructed,
- (3) Create a common, unified voice through which CARE members may communicate with FirstEnergy, The Ohio Power Siting Board, the legislature and the courts,
- (4) Pool financial resources and raise money from sources outside of CARE to fund legal representation and other expenses,
- (5) Ultimately secure a resolution to FirstEnergy's needs that is satisfactory to the CARE membership.

It is important to realize that CARE does not promote the use of either one of the two proposed routes (the over-land or the Clay Street) over the other. Both routes proposed in FirstEnergy's application involve creating a new utility corridor through farms, neighborhoods, virgin woods, and residential properties. These are not acceptable places to create a new utility corridor, therefore CARE opposes the proposed project.

Opposing the project without offering alternatives is not productive; therefore CARE advocates the use of pre-existing civil corridors as sites for a new transmission line. Fortunately, there are pre-existing corridors that are suitable for a new transmission line. CARE will work to persuade the Ohio Power Siting Board that FirstEnergy should be using the available pre-existing civil corridors.

What your neighbors are saying about the proposed power line . . .

The destruction of our farmland and rural country atmosphere should be more of a consideration than the cost of the project. Our residents will not tolerate the attempt to breakup prime farmland and intrusion on their residences along the State Route 528 path as proposed. It is we the people using the power who will ultimately pay for the power and the cost involved in supplying that power. It should not be a lose, lose situation for the people of Huntsburg Township.
Huntsburg Township Trustees

*WHEREAS, the Montville Township Board of Trustees, Geauga County, Ohio believe that the proposed Geauga County 138 kV Transmission Line Supply Project, ...would have a negative impact on the residents, property owners and environment.....
THEREFORE, be it hereby resolved that the Montville Township Board of Trustees OPPOSE the CEI 138kV Transmission Line Supply Project as proposed....*
Montville Township Trustees

...voice our concern for our residents' health, safety, financial loss and displacement from their homes, ask that the proposed Clay Street and State Route 528 paths be dropped from consideration.
Thompson Township Trustees



Our new logo

Sharp-eyed persons may have noticed that the logo at the top of this page is different from that used in the first issue of the CARE Communicator. The previous version used a drawing of a metal lattice tower (below) typifying most people's idea of a power line.



One of our members pointed out that the FirstEnergy proposal states that the proposed line would be "...primarily supported on horizontal post insulators mounted on single wood poles... ." Consequently, in the interest of fairness and accuracy, CARE has revised its logo to reflect FirstEnergy's proposed construction, official maps of which call for a right-of-way easement 60 ft. wide.

JOIN US

You can help make a difference

E-mail:

jgalm@caregeauga.org

Mail:

CARE
c/o Pat Jonath, Treasurer
11975 Madison Road
Huntsburg, OH 44046

Web:

www.caregeauga.org

What Randy James is saying . . .



"...The point is a small family farm may have to deal with the economic consequences of disrupting productive fields for many years. Further, the relative impact on annual family income is much greater for small farms, than it is on larger farms."

The following is the text of a letter sent by Randy James, Extension Educator, Agriculture & Natural Resources, Geauga County, to the Ohio Power Siting Board. (Boldface emphasis added — Editor)

April 23, 2007

Re: Project Number 07-0171-EL-BTX

Greetings Geauga County Supply Project Team:

Recently I was invited to a meeting with Dr. Galm, Dr. Youshak and several other land owners and farmers from the Thompson, Montville and Huntsburg Township area, to discuss their concerns about a proposed new transmission line. Specifically the group was interested in the possible impacts of the new transmission line on local agriculture. At their request, I am summarizing some of the points made, for your consideration.

Agriculture in Geauga County is one of the very few growth industries in North East Ohio. According to the USDA Census of Agriculture, Geauga County had approximately 580 farms in 1974, there are just under 1000 now. In 1974 roughly 280 were full-time in that the farm operators considered farming their principle occupation, there are roughly 550 of these full-time operations today. The number is actually higher when horse farms are included. This makes Geauga County one of the fastest-growing farm counties in the state. I know of no other local industry that can boast this kind of growth in the number of new firms/farms. Because the County is rapidly increasing in farm numbers, and the available land mass is not increasing, the average number of acres per farm is decreasing. Currently the average farm size is estimated by the National Agricultural Statistics Service to be 66 acres/farm. This is the complete opposite of most other areas of the state, or country, where farm numbers are declining and the average size of each farm is increasing. **Therefore, while six or seven acres of disturbed farmland is almost trifling on huge grain farms with thousands of acres; it may easily be 10% or more of a Geauga County farm family's available acres, and 10% of their potential annual income.**

Exacerbating the problem is that the reduction in crop yield, in a field where line construction has taken place, may well go on for several years. My Ph.D. is in soils and I know that it is extremely difficult to estimate how long a reduction in crop yield, (due to soil compaction, structural damage, changes in drainage etc.), may persist. **The point is a small family farm may have to deal with the economic consequences of disrupting productive fields for many years. Further, the relative impact on annual family income is much greater for small farms, than it is on larger farms.**

With the notable exception of farming in Geauga County, northeast Ohio is an economic disaster area, losing businesses, manufacturing and people. So the question to the Supply Project Team is; can you find ways to reduce, or eliminate, negative impacts to one of the only thriving, robust, growing industries we have? **If we are truly interested in creating a "business friendly" environment, then damaging family "farm businesses" is a very poor way to start.**

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[signed]

Randall E. James, PhD

Professor and Extension Educator
Agriculture & Natural Resources

What's New

CARE to meet Feb. 7

CARE will meet at 7:30 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 7, in the Montville Community Center.

Just like old times

Starting Friday, Feb. 22, and continuing each week through Friday, Mar. 21, there again will be fish fries at the Montville Community Center on Rt. 528, just south of US Rt. 6, in Montville, serving from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. The all-you-can-eat dinner includes free dessert. For any questions feel free to call Pat at 440-636-5153.

FirstEnergy files formal proposal; OPSB names judge to conduct hearings

FirstEnergy Corp., parent company of Ohio Edison, The Illuminating Company, Toledo Edison, Penn Power, Penelec, Met-Ed, and Jersey Central Power & Light, issued a news release on January 3, 2008 titled "FirstEnergy Companies File Application For Geauga County Transmission Line" in which the power company announced that its American Transmission Systems Inc., (ATSI) transmission subsidiary, and its Cleveland Electric Illuminating Company (CEI) electric utility company have filed a complete construction application with the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB). The project – to construct a new 138-kilovolt (kV) transmission line and substation in northeast Ohio – is designed to serve parts of Geauga and Ashtabula counties.

The News-Herald has reported that Ms. Janet Stoneking, who is identified as a Public Utilities Commission of Ohio attorney examiner, has been named by the Ohio Power Siting Board as the administrative law judge to conduct hearings on the proposal. The Roundtable will list the dates and locations of these hearings as soon as the information is available.

OPSB to meet Mar. 3

The Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) has posted their next meeting on their public calendar. The next OPSB meeting will take place on Monday, March 3, 2008, at 3:30 p.m. The meeting will be held at 180 East Broad Street, 11th Floor, Room E, Columbus, OH. An agenda for the meeting has not been published.