



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

September 3, 2026

Robin Zablocky, Director, Treasury Services
FirstEnergy Corporation
341 White Pond Drive
Akron, OH 44320

Subject: U.S. Department of Energy, Office of Energy Dominance Financing
Completion of Environmental Review for a Proposed Federal Loan
Guarantee to First Energy Transmission on behalf of American
Transmission Systems, Incorporated, for the Ironville-Lapier 69-kilovolt
Structure Rebuild Project in the City of Toledo, Lucas County, Ohio

Dear Mr. Wang:

The United States Department of Energy (DOE), Office of Energy Dominance Financing (EDF), may provide Federal financial assistance (i.e., a loan or loan guarantee) under Title XVII of the Energy Policy Act of 2005, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 16511 et seq.).

As noted in EDF's July 27, 2026, letter, the DOE is considering whether to issue Federal financial assistance to First Energy Transmission on behalf of American Transmission Systems, Incorporated (FET-ATSI or "the Applicant") pursuant to its authority. In its application for Federal financial assistance, FET-ATSI has identified the Ironville-Lapier 69 kilovolt (kV) Structure Rebuild Project (Ironville-Lapier Project, or Project) located in the City of Toledo, Lucas County, Ohio.

The Ironville-Lapier Project would address structural corrosion and deterioration along the co-located Bayshore-Jeep No. 2 138 kV line and the Ironville-Lapier 69 kV line. The Project spans approximately 1.6 miles, in addition to roughly 3 acres on the north side of the Maumee River and 14 acres on the south side of the Maumee River to accommodate access routes, pull pads, and staging areas. The Project involves removing five (5) double-circuit lattice towers and six (6) wood poles and replacing them with steel structures to maintain capacity and reduce the risk of structural failure. The existing river-crossing towers (Structures 52 and 53) would be relocated farther from the Maumee River and adjacent railroad tracks and replaced with concrete-anchored tubular steel lattice towers approximately 327 and 302 feet tall, respectively. Two (2) additional structures (Structure 50A and Structure 54A) would be installed near the Lapier Substation to support the updated line termination. On-site work is scheduled to begin in September 2026. The targeted in-service date is December 2026, with Project completion expected by April 2027.

EDF conducted the environmental reviews and consultations required by the applicable and relevant environmental statutes and Executive Orders (EOs) associated with its proposed Federal financial support, including:

1. Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act (16 U.S.C. § 1536)
2. Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (54 U.S.C. § 306108)
 - a. EO 13175, Consultation and Coordination With Indian Tribal Governments
3. EO 11988 on Floodplain Management and 10 CFR 1022, Floodplains

Summary of Applicable and Relevant Environmental Reviews

Section 7, Endangered Species Act

On August 4, 2026, EDF obtained an official species list (Project Code 2026-0127065) from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which identified six species as occurring or potentially occurring in the Project area: the endangered Indiana bat, the endangered northern long-eared bat, the threatened rufa red knot, the nonessential experimental population of the whooping crane, the proposed threatened monarch butterfly, and the threatened eastern prairie fringed orchid. No designated critical habitat was identified in the Project area.

EDF reached “no effect” determinations for all species. EDF’s determinations for the two bat species are supported by the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Range-wide Determination Key, the absence of known hibernacula in the Project vicinity, and that no suitable or potentially suitable trees would be cleared. Furthermore, to ensure complete protection against incidental impacts, any unexpected clearing of trees greater than or equal to three inches in diameter is legally bound by the Ohio Power Siting Board to occur within USFWS approved seasonal restriction windows. The determinations for the remaining species were based on the absence of suitable habitat within the Project footprint, which consists of developed industrial corridors lacking the shoreline or mudflat habitat used by migrating rufa red knots, the wetland and marsh complexes used by whooping cranes for roosting or stopover habitat, and the mesic prairie, sedge meadow, or wet grassy habitat necessary to support the eastern prairie fringed orchid.

These determinations are further supported by prior Applicant coordination with the USFWS (Project Code 2024-0079293). In that prior coordination, USFWS indicated its agreement that, due to the Project’s type, size, and location, no adverse effects to Federally listed species, proposed species, or designated critical habitat were anticipated.

EDF determined that the Project is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed threatened monarch butterfly. This determination is based on the heavily disturbed nature of the Project footprint, a lack of preferred open prairie or milkweed host plant communities, and the design of the Project to avoid all surrounding aquatic and wetland resources. Furthermore, a USFWS final listing decision for this proposed species remains a "long-term action" under the current [Unified Agenda of Regulatory and Deregulatory Actions](#), making formal conference consultation unnecessary at this time.

Section 106, National Historic Preservation Act and EO 13175

In accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, EDF formally initiated consultation with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on July 30, 2026. On August 28, 2026, the SHPO concurred with EDF's finding that no eligible historic properties would be adversely affected by the Project.

On July 30, 2026, EDF identified and contacted 19 Federally recognized Native American Indian Tribes (Tribes) that may have an interest in the Project area and invited them to consult on historic properties of religious or cultural significance: the Delaware Nation; Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma; Forest County Potawatomi Community; Hannahville Indian Community; Grand Traverse Band of Ottawa and Chippewa Indians; Little Traverse Bay Bands of Odawa Indians; Match-e-be-nash-she-wish Band of Pottawatomi Indians; Miami Tribe of Oklahoma; Nottawaseppi Huron Band of the Potawatomi; Ottawa Tribe of Oklahoma; Peoria Tribe of Indians of Oklahoma; Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians; Prairie Band Potawatomi Nation; Redrefe (Red Cliff/Red Lake Band); Sac and Fox Nation of Missouri in Kansas and Nebraska; Sac and Fox Nation, Oklahoma; Seneca-Cayuga Nation; Shawnee Tribe; and Wyandotte Nation.

On September 2, 2026, the Shawnee Tribe's Tribal Historic Preservation Department concurred that no known historic properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places would be adversely affected by the Project and requested immediate notification in the event of an inadvertent discovery of archaeological materials or human remains. No other Tribes provided comments.

E.O. 11988, Floodplain Management, and 10 CFR 1022, Floodplains

A portion of the Project footprint is located within the 100-year floodplain of the Maumee River and its associated tributaries. On August 3, 2026, EDF issued a public Notice of Floodplain Action and published an accompanying Floodplain Assessment, initiating a required 15-day public comment period through August 19, 2026, to allow public review and input regarding potential floodplain impacts. Public notification and agency review of floodplain impacts were also provided through state and local processes. Under Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) Case No. 25-0558-EL-BNR, the Staff Report of Investigation filed on October 15, 2025, formally disclosed the Project's location within the 100-year floodplain and established a public objection window prior to automatic certification on October 22, 2025.

EDF concluded that the Project is engineered to minimize harm to and within the regulatory floodplain and will not affect base flood elevations. The line will aerially span the Maumee River, require no new permanent access roads in the regulatory floodway, and utilize temporary timber matting to protect wet soils during construction. Furthermore, the Project has complied with all relevant Federal, state, and local standards, including obtaining a USACE Section 10 river permit, a USACE Section 404 Nationwide Permit 57 for minimal permanent wetland impacts (<0.1 acre at Structure 52), a City of Toledo floodplain permit (FP-2026-00142), and an Ohio EPA general stormwater permit (SWP-2026-00089).

Conclusion

EDF notes that FET-ATSI is responsible for obtaining permits, approvals, and/or authorizations required for the construction and/or operation of the Project.

With this letter, EDF confirms that it has completed the environmental reviews and consultations required by the applicable and relevant environmental statutes and EOs associated with its proposed Federal financial support.

Respectfully,

Christina Gomer
Environmental Project Manager
Office of Energy Dominance Financing

cc: Denis O'Meara, EDF Utilities Vertical Lead
Todd Stribley, EDF Environmental Programs Director
Jorge Casana, EDF Deal Lead
David Frederick, First Energy Corporation, Director of Environmental