



Department of Energy
Washington, DC 20585

September 4, 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 Mid-Atlantic
Interstate Transmission, Johnstown-Seward 230 kV Transmission Line
Rebuild Project, Westmoreland, Indiana, and Cambria Counties,
Pennsylvania

Dear Ms. Zablocky:

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 28, 2026, letter, the DOE is considering whether to issue Federal financial assistance to First Energy Transmission on behalf of Mid-Atlantic Interstate Transmission, Inc. (FET-MAIT, or the Applicant) pursuant to its authority. In its application for Federal financial assistance, FET-MAIT has identified the Johnstown-Seward 230 kilovolt (kV) Transmission Line Rebuild Project (the Project), located in Westmoreland, Indiana, and Cambria Counties, Pennsylvania

The Project would replace 59 of the existing 61 transmission structures along approximately 7 miles of the existing Johnstown-Seward 230 kV transmission line. The transmission structure immediately adjacent to the Seward Substation, Structure #61, would remain. Existing Structure #26 would be removed and not replaced. The 59 new structures to be installed are comprised of the following: two (2) steel monopole delta strain/dead-end structures, three (3) steel H-frame strain/dead-end structures, 46 steel H-frame suspension structures, three (3) steel pole angle structures, two (2) steel three-pole strain/dead-end structures, three (3) steel pole angle structures with davit arms. Approximately 10 acres of tree removal would occur within the 84-acre total disturbance area.

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 July 23, 2026, EDF obtained an official species list (Project Code 2026-0103184) from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), which identified five species as occurring or potentially occurring in the Project area: the endangered Indiana bat, the endangered northern long-eared bat, the proposed endangered tricolored bat, the proposed endangered eastern hellbender, and the proposed threatened monarch butterfly. No designated critical habitat was identified in the Project area.

EDF reached a “not likely to adversely affect” determination for both endangered bat species. EDF’s determinations are supported by the Northeast Indiana Bat Determination Key (DKey) and Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Range-wide DKey, which incorporated Project-specific conservation measures, including seasonal restrictions on tree removal and targeted herbicide application, as applicable. These determinations are further supported by the Applicant’s prior technical assistance and coordination with the USFWS (Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory Project Code: PNDI-781762).

EDF determined that the Project is not likely to jeopardize the continued existence of the proposed endangered tricolored bat, the proposed endangered eastern hellbender, or the proposed threatened monarch butterfly. These determinations are based on the Northern Long-eared Bat and Tricolored Bat Range-wide DKey and Northeastern Species DKey; bat tree removal and herbicide measures described previously; implementation of rigorous erosion and sedimentation control measures in accordance with Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) regulations to prevent any water quality degradation or sedimentation of potential eastern hellbender habitats; and a lack of monarch butterfly preferred open prairie or milkweed host plant communities. Furthermore, a USFWS final listing decisions for each of the 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 Pennsylvania State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) on July 29, 2026. On August 27, 2026, the SHPO concurred with EDF’s finding that no eligible historic properties would be adversely affected by the Project.

On July 29, 2026, EDF identified and contacted six 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, the Delaware Tribe of Indians, the Eastern Shawnee Tribe of Oklahoma, the Osage Nation, the Seneca Nation of Indians, and the Shawnee Tribe. No 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 Conemaugh 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. MAIT officially served copies of the Letter of Notification upon all state agencies, federal agencies, county agencies, municipalities, and landowners on June 4, 2026, in accordance with 52 Pa. Code § 57.72(d)(3).

Furthermore, the Project's floodplain and wetland crossings are covered under Pennsylvania State Programmatic General Permit 6 (PASPGP-6) issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Pittsburgh District, and Pennsylvania Chapter 105 General Permits. Temporary erosion and sedimentation controls would be installed and maintained in accordance with PADEP and county conservation district regulations until work areas are fully restored and stabilized.

EDF concluded that the Project is engineered to minimize harm to and within the regulatory floodplain and will not affect base flood elevations.

Conclusion

EDF notes that FET-MAIT 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