



Cricket Valley Transmission Line  
and Re-conductoring Project

Attachment B

Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

# Cricket Valley Transmission Upgrade Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

## Introduction

The purpose of this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to detail the approach to public involvement Cricket Valley Transmission Upgrade will use to identify key stakeholders in the project area, advance public understanding of the project, encourage and collect public input, and disseminate information to the public, the surrounding communities, and other stakeholders potentially affected by construction of a transmission upgrade within an existing Con Edison right-of-way in Southern Dutchess County, N.Y. This PIP has been developed to facilitate the provision of information to the public and stakeholders, consider their input in the development and implementation of solutions when applicable, and ensure they are made aware of the commitment the project sponsor has made to consistent, frequent, and transparent outreach and communications.

The goals of the PIP are to:

- Inform the public about the project and any recommended project activities for their communities.
- Demonstrate a commitment to the community outreach process.
- Solicit and consider public input.

## Project Description

In a revised report issued June 2013 by New York Independent System Operator (NYISO), Cricket Valley Energy Center, LLC, "Cricket Valley," has been required to increase New York State's transfer capacity in order to connect with the State grid. Specifically, Cricket Valley is required to upgrade the transmission corridor that includes the Central East and UPNY/SENY interfaces—approximately 14.6 miles of Consolidated Edison (Con Edison) transmission lines from the Pleasant Valley substation to the Cricket Valley Energy Center in Dover and approximately 3.4 miles of reconductoring from Cricket Valley to the New York/Connecticut border.

Before the transmission upgrades can begin, the New York Public Service Commission (PSC) encourages Article VII applicants to develop and implement a PIP designed to engage and inform affected communities about the project and its construction impacts. The construction is estimated to take approximately one year and will occur within an existing right-of-way owned by Con Edison.

## Project Geographic Area

The primary study area for this project is within the Southern Dutchess County area. This area encompasses the towns of Pleasant Valley, LaGrange, Union Vale, and Dover. The demographic characteristics of Dutchess County and the respective towns, including population and population density are shown below..

### Demographics of Communities along the Project Right-of-Way

|                    | Dutchess County        | Town of Pleasant Valley | Town of La Grange      | Town of Union Vale     | Town on Dover          |
|--------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|------------------------|
| Population         | 297,488 people         | 9,672 people            | 15,730 people          | 4,877 people           | 8,699 people           |
| Population Density | 361 people/square mile | 291 people/square mile  | 394 people/square mile | 129 people/square mile | 156 people/square mile |
|                    |                        |                         |                        |                        |                        |
|                    |                        |                         |                        |                        |                        |

Source: American FactFinder (2013). 2010 Census; United States Census Bureau. Retrieved September 2013 from: <http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/searchresults.xhtml?refresh=t>

## Project Stakeholders

This plan will actively seek the input of a broad range of stakeholder perspectives in the development of the project and identification of potential solutions, and will outline an approach to communication before—and throughout— project construction. Potential stakeholders include:

1. Elected leadership and policymakers in:
  - a. Town of Pleasant Valley
  - b. Town of Dover
  - c. Town of LaGrange
  - d. Town of Union Vale
2. Residents with property abutting or contiguous to the Con Edison right-of-way
3. Civic, community, business, and special interest groups
4. Emergency services
5. Media

## **Meeting Stakeholder Information Needs**

This PIP defines methods related to identifying and delivering materials to inform, involve, and engage key stakeholders.

### Elected Leadership and Policymakers

Elected leadership and policymakers are acutely aware of the concerns and needs of their constituents and consequently must be informed about project progress. The project will deliver briefing packages to these stakeholders ahead of project milestones, and will coordinate periodic briefings with them to collect their input.

### Affected Property Owners

Because affected property owners have specific interests and issues of concern, communication with them will extend beyond that which is conducted with other audiences in order to provide them with as much detail as possible to address their needs. Residents with property abutting the existing right-of-way will be contacted by mail to provide them with detailed information on how the project will communicate with them, collect their input, and respond to their inquiries. The project will assign an ombudsman to provide them with direct contact expressly dedicated to their information needs. . They will be invited to attend Advisory Working Groups, public information meetings, and sign up for email updates, newsletters, and website postings.

### Civic, Community, and Business Groups

Civic and community groups, will play an important role in communication related to the project, and will be kept current about the project. They will be invited to join Advisory Working Groups, attend public information meetings, and sign up for email updates, newsletters, and website postings.

Public outreach information will be distributed to local libraries, offices of the aging, community centers, and other locations.

### Special Interest Groups

Special interest groups will include those formed specifically to address this project and those formed around another primary area of focus that have an interest in the project. They will be invited to join Advisory Working Groups, attend public information meetings, and sign up for email updates, newsletters, and website postings.

## Media

Media serving the project area will be kept apprised with regular press releases related to project milestones, briefings as needed, and distribution of fact sheets and other materials. The media will be invited to attend Advisory Working Groups, public information meetings, and sign up for email updates, newsletters, and website postings.

## **Public Involvement Methods**

The following list of communication methods will be used. (Details follow.)

- **Distribution List**
- **Ombudsman**
- **Community Outreach Office**
- **Public Information Meetings**
- **Advisory Working Groups**
- **Presentations**
- **Website**
- **E-blasts**
- **Direct Mail**
- **Project Brochure**
- **Project Newsletter**
- **Public /Legal Notices**
- **News Releases**

### **Distribution List**

A project public involvement database will be established, maintained, and continually updated as the distribution resource for project communication. The list will also include the names of community groups and agencies.

Methods to expand the distribution list will include:

- Opt-in sign up for email updates on the website
- Invitations to sign up for notifications on meeting announcements and project communication through the mail
- Distribution of a postcard at project launch to all addresses within the environs of the project to invite sign-ups for notifications

## Ombudsman

- Cricket Valley Transmission Upgrade will identify an ombudsman specific to this project. The ombudsman will provide a direct contact for those with property abutting the existing Con Edison right-of-way, to ensure their input is collected, questions are answered, and concerns are addressed.

## Meetings and Events

- **Community Outreach Office** – Cricket Valley Transmission Upgrade will maintain an office in the area at 5 Market Street, Dover Plains, NY. The public can call (845) 877-0596 or email [info@cricketvalley.com](mailto:info@cricketvalley.com) to receive information about the project. Displays, maps, and information will be available, and small group meetings can be held at the office.
- **Public Information Meetings** – Well-publicized public information meetings will be conducted as needed to keep the public informed and provide opportunities for input on topics related to the project. Meeting materials and outreach actions will be fully documented and made available to stakeholders and the public.
- **Advisory Working Group** – An Advisory Working Group (AWG) will be established to provide stakeholders with an opportunity to interact with project experts to build awareness of key topical issues related to the project, foster an open exchange of information, and provide the project team with an opportunity to collect input from participants. AWGs will be well publicized, and attendance will remain open throughout the project.
- **Presentations to local elected officials** – Milestone presentations will be conducted with local elected officials within the project area and will include an overview of project status, updates on requested information, and the collection of input from these key stakeholders.

## Electronic Media

- **Website**  
The project website will be the communication center for the project, providing a user-friendly resource for all project information. The website shall be updated periodically throughout the life of the project.
- **E-blasts**  
E-blasts are emails designed to be broadcast to a large number of email addresses simultaneously. They are typically no more than one page in length and use concise language and some visual content. They will be used to announce meetings, milestones, and updates to the website as well as to disseminate important project related information.

## Print Media

- **Direct Mail**  
Letters will be sent directly to property owners adjacent to the proposed transmission line, providing information regarding the project, milestones, and contact information.
- **Project Brochure**  
This outreach tool will provide an overview of the project, its goals, and key participants. It will address frequently asked questions and provide answers to concerns surrounding the project and its potential impact and will drive interested parties to the project website.
- **Project Newsletter**  
A Cricket Valley Energy newsletter, including content related to this project, will be delivered in print and via the Web, at key milestones to keep stakeholders informed on the project's process, and on opportunities to participate. It will be mailed directly to homes, schools, libraries, and interest groups in the project area.
- **Public /Legal Notices**  
All public notices will be placed in newspapers as required and posted on the project website to provide timely and appropriate information for stakeholder and public use. They will be prepared to conform with all applicable regulations and guidelines.
- **Notices, flyers**  
Notices and flyers will be created and posted on community bulletin boards and calendars or distributed in high traffic areas throughout the project area to inform the public of upcoming meetings or drive parties to the project website.
- **Advertisements**  
Advertisements will be placed in area daily and weekly newspapers to promote attendance at public meetings and Advisory Working Group sessions.

## Media Relations

- A database of media contacts (print, radio, and electronic) will be developed for this project, and will include local and regional media, including any available special interest media directed specifically to ethnic populations, and those with limited English proficiency.
- Media releases will be developed and distributed to announce completion of project milestones and to announce public information opportunities and other project news.