

**STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE
PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

DG 14-154

NORTHERN UTILITIES, INC.

Petition to Extend Franchise to Brentwood and to Cross State Property

Summary Order *Nisi* No. 25,700 Granting Petition

August 1, 2014

Northern Utilities, Inc. (Northern), is a public utility that provides natural gas service to approximately 28,000 customers in southeastern New Hampshire. Northern filed a petition seeking approval to extend its service area into the Town of Brentwood and to build a pipeline beneath Bloody Brook and New Hampshire Route 101 on its route from Exeter into Brentwood. Northern plans to serve two industrial customers who have each agreed to make a substantial contribution in aid of construction. Northern filed the contracts with these two customers subject to a motion for confidential treatment. Northern also stated that the extension will pass many residences and businesses and will put Northern's pipeline closer to Exeter High School and the Rockingham County Complex, all representing potential natural gas customers.

Northern stated it has sufficient supply to serve these new customers and that it has the financial, technical, and managerial experience to extend its service territory into Brentwood. Northern also stated that the crossings satisfy the statutory requirements for a license because they are "necessary ... to meet the reasonable requirements of service to the public" and can be exercised "without substantially affecting the public rights" in those waters and lands.

Commission Staff recommended that the Commission approve the petition, because the Town of Brentwood is adjacent to Northern's existing service territory in Exeter, the Exeter and Brentwood boards of selectmen support the expansion, the proposed expansion will not

adversely affect Northern's supply resources, the expected revenues from the project meet the Northern's return requirements, and new customers along the new pipeline will have access to natural gas.

By order *nisi* dated August 1, 2014, the Commission granted Northern's petition to expand its franchise into Brentwood because Northern has the required capabilities to provide natural gas service in the Town of Brentwood, and because the proposed expansion is for the public good. The Commission granted Northern a license to twice cross state lands at Route 101. The Commission found that no license was necessary for the water crossing because Bloody Brook is not among the "public waters" defined by the Department of Environmental Services. The Commission also granted Northern's motion for confidential treatment.

In order to ensure that all interested parties receive notice of this docket and have an opportunity to request a hearing, the Commission will delay the effectiveness of this approval until September 1, 2014. All persons interested in responding to the Commission's approval may submit their comments or file a written request for a hearing which states the reason and basis for a hearing no later than August 18, 2014. Any party interested in responding to such comments and request for hearing shall do so no later than August 25, 2014. Following consideration of any comments and request for hearing received, the Commission may further extend the effective date of its approval. The Commission's approval shall become final and effective on September 1, 2014, unless the Commission orders otherwise.