

# RECENT MARYLAND PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION TRANSMISSION LINE DECISIONS 2019-2023

The purpose of this document is to give those concerned about the proposed [Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project](#) (MPRP) an understanding of how the [Maryland Public Service Commission](#) (PSC) [Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity](#) (CPCN) process works since this process will be the most important opportunity to resolve MPRP impacts. According to PSC [annual reports](#) for 2019 to 2023, seven transmission line CPCN applications were considered. Of the seven transmission line cases, Transource was the project most like the MPRP. Transource impacts were substantially reduced by requiring that the line be constructed within existing transmission right-of-way.

## TRANSOURCE

This project was proposed as a 45-mile, double circuit 230 kV transmission line between two new 500/230 kV substations. As shown in the map below, the WEST portion of the project would have run south for 29 miles from the Rice substation in Franklin County, Pennsylvania to the Ringgold substation in Washington County, MD. The EAST portion of the Transource project would have run north for 16 miles from the Conastone substation in northwest Harford County, MD to the Furnace Run substation in York County, Pennsylvania.



On December 27, 2017, Transource submitted an application to the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) for a Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity (CPCN). Public hearings were held by PSC in Harford County on April 27, 2019 and in Washington County on May 18, 2019. The PSC evidentiary hearing began on May 18, 2019 in Washington County.

On June 30, 2020, PSC issued an *Order Approving Settlement and Granting Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity and Waivers*, which can be viewed at: <https://www.psc.state.md.us/wp-content/uploads/Order-No.-89571-Case-No.-9471-Order-Approving-Transource-Settlement->

[Granting-CPCN-and-Waivers.pdf](#). Following are excerpts from this order I found most relevant to resolving impacts. I recommend that those concerned about MPRP impacts to farms, homes, and sensitive ecological areas read the entire Order beginning with summaries of [Maryland Department of Natural Resources](#) (DNR) [Power Plant Research Program](#) (PPRP) testimony (Items 54 to 61) on pages 25 to 30.

In 2018, PPRP filed a motion to dismiss the Transource application alleging:

“Transource failed to carry out the predicate analysis required under [PUA Section 7-209](#), which requires that:

(a) The Commission shall examine alternatives to the construction of a new transmission line in a service area, including the use of an existing transmission line of another company, if:

(1) the existing transmission line is convenient to the service area; or

(2) the use of the transmission line will best promote economic and efficient service to the public.

(b) In considering the use of an existing transmission line under subsection (a) of this section, the Commission need not consider whether the company that owns the line has a franchise in the service area.”

While PSC denied the PPRP motion to dismiss, PSC did:

“Modify the procedural schedule in order to allow the parties the opportunity to conduct additional analysis and discovery regarding the use of existing transmission lines, as proposed by PPRP (i.e., PPRP’s “Conceptual Alternatives”). In particular, the Commission recognized PPRP’s need for supplemental information to address the PUA § 7-209 requirement to examine [running the Transource project along] existing transmission line routes.” [added text]

“On September 26 and October 10, 2019, Transource and PPRP filed status reports, followed by a Joint Motion for Adoption of Settlement (“Settlement Petition”) filed on October 17, 2019. In its Settlement Petition, Transource states that it entered into a comprehensive settlement agreement with PPRP; the Commission’s Technical Staff; BGE; Harford County, MD; and certain other Intervenor—Mary Beth and Daniel John Scott, Tony D. and Cynthia A. Tanner, Barron Shaw, and STOP Transource (the “Landowner Parties”) (collectively the “Settling Parties”). Under the Settlement Agreement and Stipulation (“Settlement Agreement” or “Settlement”) attached to the Settlement Petition, the Settling Parties requested that the Commission approve a CPCN for Transource to construct the IEC West portion of the IEC Project (“IEC West Portion”), and grant CPCN waivers to BGE to upgrade two segments of BGE’s existing transmission infrastructure in Harford County, MD to construct an “alternative configuration of the ‘IEC East’ portion of the IEC Project” (hereinafter “Alternative IEC East Portion”).

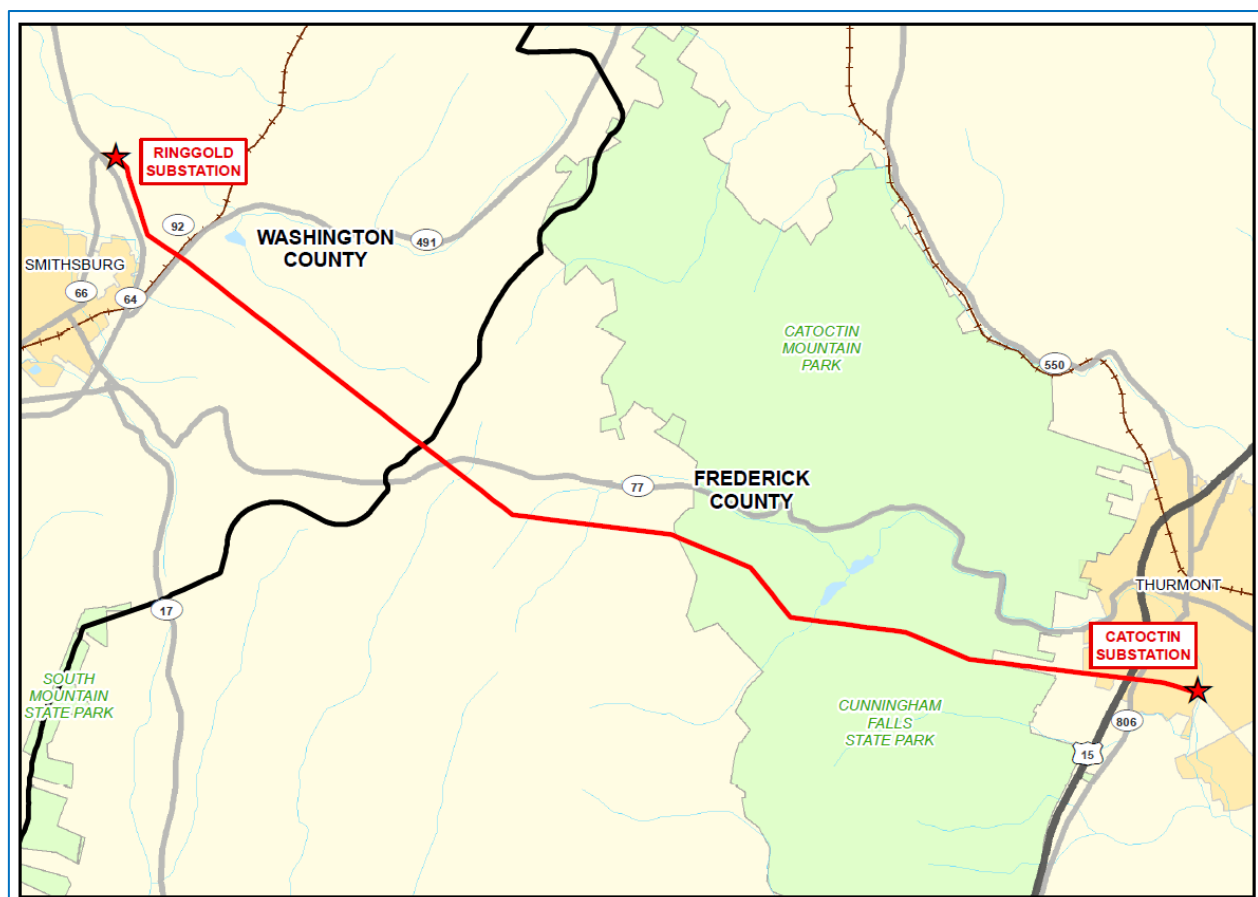
PSC approved the settlement agreement and granted a CPCN for the Transource project on June 30, 2020 with a number of conditions which will be found in Appendices A to C, beginning on page 98 of the [Order](#). All documents from the PSC review of Transource are available at: <https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9471>.

According to the 2022 PPRP publication [\*Maryland Power Plants and the Environment: A review of the impacts of power plants and transmission lines on Maryland's natural resources\*](#), the EAST portion of the Transource project was located entirely within existing transmission line right-of-way.

The Pennsylvania Utility Commission (PUC) denied approval for the WEST portion of Transource. However, on July 10, 2024, the Franklin County, Pennsylvania Commissioners approved a [settlement agreement](#) for the portion of the west Transource project within their jurisdiction which may lead to PUC approval.

### **RINGGOLD-CATOCTIN-TRANSMISSION LINE REBUILD**

This is an 9.8-mile transmission line connecting the Ringgold and Catoctin substations in, respectively, Washington and Frederick counties is shown in the map below. The Potomac Edison Company filed an application with the Maryland Public Service Commission (PSC) for a Certificate of Public Convenience & Necessity (CPCN) on December 22, 2017 to rebuild an existing circuit of the 138 kilovolt (kV) transmission line and upgrade it to 230 kV. On October 30, 2018 and

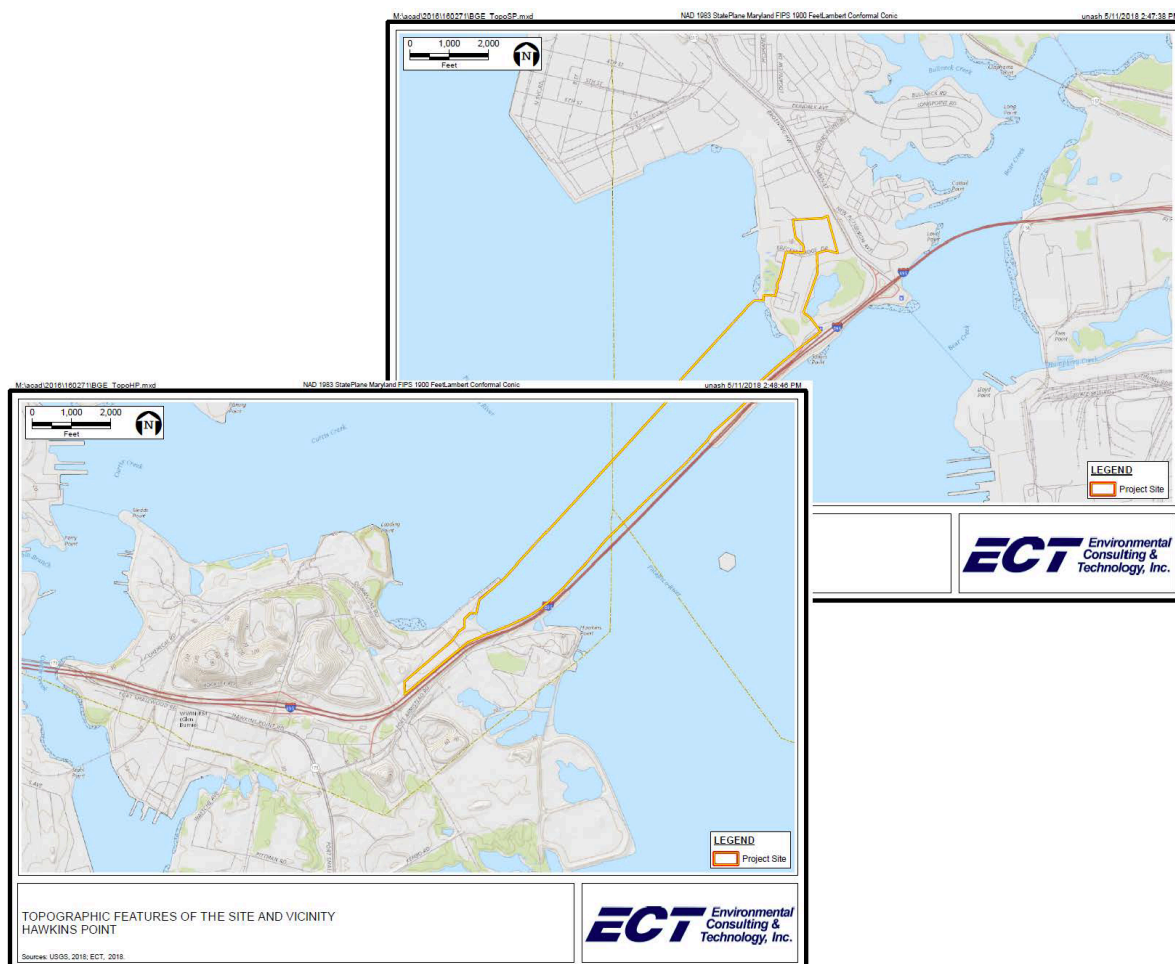


November 1, 2018 public comment hearings were held in Hagerstown and Thurmont. The evidentiary hearing was held on November 7, 2018.

On December 14, 2018, a proposed order was issued granting the CPCN, subject to the licensing conditions recommended by Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Power Plant Research Program (PPRP) and PSC Staff. The gist of [PPRP testimony](#) was that the project would not have a significant environmental impact because the rebuild would occur within the existing right-of-way (ROW). On February 15, 2019, the Commission issued Order No. 89035, slightly modifying a Staff condition clarifying that the CPCN was contingent upon the approval of a CPCN for the Transource project and affirming the proposed order. For further detail see the documents posted at: <https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9470>.

### KEY CROSSING RELIABILITY INITIATIVE TRANSMISSION LINE PROJECT

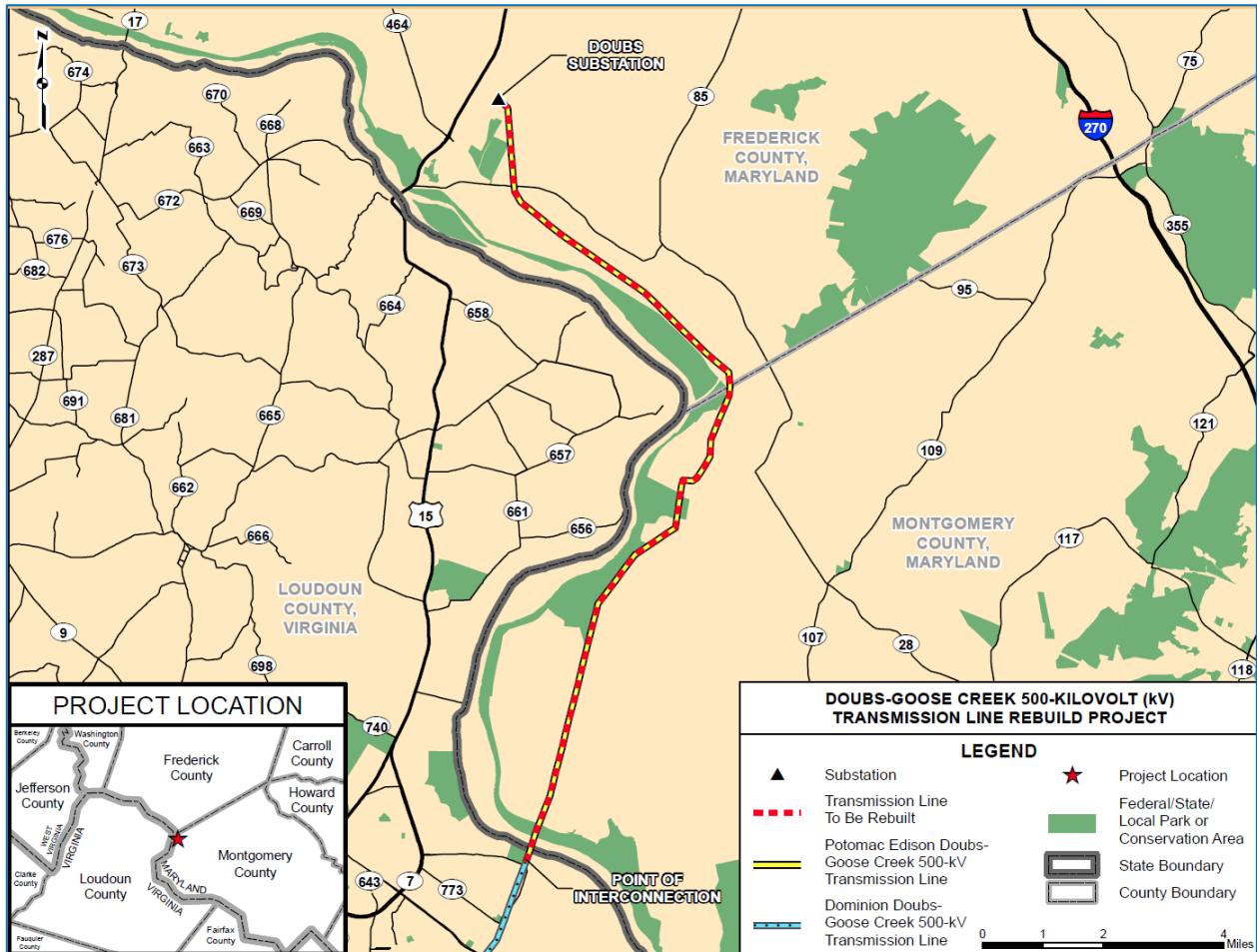
BGE requested a CPCN to convert a 2.25-mile underground portion of an existing 230 kV transmission line to an overhead line. As shown in the maps below, the line ran from the Riverside substation in Baltimore County southwest to the Brandon Shores substation in Anne Arundel County. Public comment hearings were held in September 2019 and December 2019. The evidentiary hearing was held on January 28, 2020. The CPCN was issued on February 12, 2020. For further detail see: <https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9600>.





## REBUILD THE DOUBS-GOOSE CREEK TRANSMISSION LINE

In August 2021, Potomac Edison filed an application for a CPCN to rebuild the 18-mile, 500 kV Doubs-Goose Creek transmission line that runs from southwest Frederick County, MD through Montgomery County, MD to Loudoun County, VA. Potomac Edison stated that the rebuild was needed because the 40-year-old-line was approaching the expected end-of-life. The rebuild would nearly double the maximum operating capacity. Public hearings were held in December 2021 and October 2022. The evidentiary hearing was held in January 2023. The CPCN was granted in March 2023. In April 2023 the [Maryland Office of People's Council](#) (OPC) noted an appeal. In June 2023 PSC denied the appeal. For further detail see: <https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9669>.



## FIVE FORKS TO MARYLAND/PENNSYLVANIA BORDER TRANSMISSION LINE

Baltimore Gas and Electric Company (BGE) filed an application for a CPCN to rebuild a 1.89-mile existing dual-circuit 115 kV transmission line segment between BGE's Five Forks substation in northern Harford County, MD, and the Maryland/Pennsylvania border. PSC initiated a new docket for this project in February 2020. Virtual public comment and evidentiary hearings were held in September 2020. A CPCN was issued in May 2021. For further detail see: <https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9636>.

## BUSH RIVER CROSSING PROJECT

In April 2020, BGE submitted an application to replace 1.3 miles of an existing 115 kV transmission line running from Edgewood to Perryman across the Bush River in Harford County, MD. A virtual public hearing was held in February 2021 and a virtual evidentiary hearing took place in March 2021. A CPCN was issued in April 2021. For further detail see:

<https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9642>.

## VIENNA SUBSTATION TO MD/DE STATE LINE TRANSMISSION LINE

In April 2023, Delmarva Power & Light Company (DPL) requested a CPCN to rebuild 7.6-miles of a 13.7-mile 138 kV transmission line running from the Vienna, MD substation to the Nelson substation in Sussex County, Delaware. “The transmission line was identified by PJM as a reliability risk due to the future deactivation of the Indian River 4 coal-fired generator and determined rebuild was necessary to avoid thermal overload or potential catastrophic failure of the line.” A virtual public hearing and a virtual evidentiary hearing was held in October 2023. The CPCN was issued in December 2023. For further detail see: <https://webpsc.psc.state.md.us/DMS/case/9698>.

## TIMELINES

The following table shows that it took 0.7 to 2.5 years from the date PSC received an application for a transmission line CPCN to the date when PSC rendered a decision. The 2.5-year Transource timeline is likely the most applicable to the Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project.

	Application Submitted to PSC	PSC Public Hearing	PSC Evidentiary Hearing	PSC CPCN Decision Issued	Years from Application to Decision
Transource	Dec 2017	April 2019	May 2019	Jun 2020	2.5
Ringgold-Catoctin	Dec 2017	Oct 2018	Nov 2018	Feb 2019	1.2
Key Crossing	Dec 2018	Sept 2019	Jan 2020	Feb 2020	1.1
Doubs-Goose Creek	Aug 2021	Dec 2021	Jan 2023	Mar 2023	1.6
Five Forks	Feb 2020	Sept 2020	Sept 2020	May 2021	1.2
Bush River	Apr 2020	Feb 2021	Mar 2021	Apr 2021	1.0
Vienna	Apr 2023	Oct 2023	Oct 2023	Dec 2023	0.7

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[CEDS Transmission Lines Webpage](#)

[PSEG Transmission Line CEDS Youtube Presentation](#)

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