



**THE STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**BEFORE THE**

**PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION**

**DOCKET NO. DG 14-\_\_\_**

**PETITION OF NORTHERN UTILITIES, INC. FOR LICENSE TO CONSTRUCT AND  
MAINTAIN A DISTRIBUTION GAS MAIN ACROSS PUBLIC WATERS**

TO THE PUBLIC UTILITIES COMMISSION:

Northern Utilities, Inc. (“Northern”) respectfully petitions the New Hampshire Public Utilities Commission (“Commission”) pursuant to RSA 371:17 for a license to construct and maintain a natural gas distribution main over public waters owned by the State of New Hampshire. In support of this Petition, Northern states as follows:

1. Northern is a public utility providing natural gas service to over 28,000 customers in 23 municipalities in the southeastern and seacoast regions of New Hampshire. Northern owns and operates natural gas distribution facilities regulated by the Commission within franchise areas previously approved by the Commission, including the City of Dover.

2. Northern currently operates a natural gas distribution main in the vicinity of Rochester Neck Road in Dover, which generally runs along the westerly shore of the Cocheco River.

3. The County of Strafford has requested that Northern provide natural gas distribution service on the east side of the Cocheco River to ten County-owned buildings along County Farm Road in Dover.

4. To provide service to the County's buildings it is necessary for Northern to cross the Cocheco River with a new gas main. Northern considered installing a new main underneath the Cocheco River using horizontal directional drilling, but it was instead able to negotiate rights

to attach a new 8" steel main to an existing privately-owned foot bridge that crosses the Cocheco River in the vicinity of Covered Bridge Road and County Farm Road.<sup>1</sup> The portion of the main attached to the bridge is approximately 140 feet in length and will be constructed and attached in accordance with the design that is provided as Attachment A to this Petition. A letter from the bridge supplier confirming that the bridge will be able to carry the additional load presented by the new gas main is provided as Attachment B to this Petition.

6. To provide natural gas service to Stafford County's facilities, as well as other potential future customers located on the east side of the Cocheco River, Northern respectfully requests a license, pursuant to RSA 371:17, to construct and maintain a new gas pipeline over the Cocheco River, to the extent such a license is necessary.<sup>2</sup>

7. Northern believes that the Commission license will be exercised without substantially affecting public rights in affected waters. The foot bridge has been constructed and in place for years, and the new main will not present any impediment to foot traffic on the bridge or marine traffic on the River. The new gas main will not impose any additional burden upon the public interest and it will allow Unitil to extend natural gas service to the County and potentially other future customers.

WHEREFORE, Northern respectfully requests that the Commission:

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<sup>1</sup> The existing foot bridge is located in approximately the same location previously occupied by a bridge that connected Covered Bridge Road (on the western shore of the Cocheco River) to County Farm Road (on the eastern shore of the River). The foot bridge is owned and maintained by an unincorporated non-profit association known as the Dover Landfill Work Settling Defendants. The owners of the foot bridge operate a sewer pipeline that connects the former Dover Municipal Landfill to the City of Dover's sewage treatment plant.

<sup>2</sup> Northern has been unable to determine with certainty whether the segment of the Cocheco River over which the foot bridge passes has been designated as a Public Water. *See* New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services Official List of Public Waters; available at <http://des.nh.gov/organization/commissioner/pip/publications/wd/documents/olpw.pdf>.

- A. Find that the license for construction and maintenance of a natural gas main over the Cocheco River in the vicinity of Covered Bridge Road and County Farm Road in the City of Dover may be exercised without substantially affecting public rights in State waters;
- B. Grant Northern a license to construct and maintain a natural gas main over the Cocheco River in the vicinity of Covered Bridge Road and County Farm Road in the City of Dover; and
- C. Issue an order *nisi* and orders for its publication.

Dated at Hampton, NH on this 22nd day of September, 2014.

Respectfully submitted,

Northern Utilities, Inc.

By Its Attorney,



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