

Embargoed until 17 April 2007 12:01 AM EDT

6 April 2007

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Upper Delaware River Among America's Most Endangered

Massive Powerline Threatens Wild & Scenic River

Washington— The Wild and Scenic Upper Delaware River is the economic engine that drives a strong tourism-based economy in upstate New York, but that engine is threatened by a huge, proposed powerline that would slash through 73 miles of the river corridor. Leaders from across the region have united in opposition to the plan, which would mean massive clearcutting, ongoing herbicide use and seizing property from landowners by eminent domain. It's no wonder that the Upper Delaware is one of America's Most Endangered Rivers of 2007.

"There's nothing wild or scenic about a massive powerline running alongside one of the Northeast's best-loved rivers," says Rebecca Wodder, president of American Rivers. "The Upper Delaware is one of the nation's best examples of a river and local communities thriving side by side, but this scheme would bring that to a screeching halt."

The New York Regional Interconnection (NYRI) company is proposing an electric transmission corridor in the Upper Delaware River Valley. The proposed 1,200 megawatt high-voltage power line would begin in New York near Utica and extend 190 miles to Rock Tavern in Orange County, following the Upper Delaware River for 73 miles. The transmission corridor would require clear-cutting all trees and vegetation and regular spraying of herbicides within a 100-foot wide swath along the river.

Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-New York) has introduced legislation that would block the NYRI powerline from moving forward.

"The opposition by New York residents to NYRI's power line proposal is overwhelming. No one wants massive towers and power lines cutting through the Upper Delaware Scenic River Valley," Hinchey said. "These bills would prevent the federal government from stepping in on behalf of NYRI and forcing New

York residents to live with this power line project. The federal government should be in the business of protecting the interests of the people of New York and the entire country, not just helping power companies make huge profits.”

More than 500,000 people are drawn to the river annually to take part in the recreational opportunities available, including sightseeing, boating, camping, hunting, fishing, hiking and bird watching. Not surprisingly, tourism is the largest industry in the region, providing jobs to 10 percent of the local population and \$65 million to the local economy in Pike County, Pennsylvania. In Sullivan County, New York, the year-round population triples on typical summer weekends.

“The Upper Delaware is a treasure for the entire nation, and the economic engine that drives the region. It is sheer folly to consider a powerline that threatens all that, when other good alternatives exist,” says Marcia Nehemiah, secretary of the Upper Delaware Preservation Coalition.

About America’s Most Endangered Rivers

Each year, American Rivers solicits nominations from thousands of river groups, environmental organizations, outdoor clubs, local governments, and taxpayer watchdogs for the America’s Most Endangered Rivers report. The report highlights the rivers facing the most uncertain futures rather than those suffering from the worst chronic problems. The report presents alternatives to proposals that would damage rivers, identifies those who make the crucial decisions, and points out opportunities for the public to take action on behalf of each listed river.

This year community leaders from all across the country have joined with us, in the fight to help both their rivers, and their communities thrive. This year’s endangered rivers are: Santa Fe River (NM), San Mateo Creek, (CA) Iowa River (IA), Upper Delaware River (NY), White Salmon River (WA), Kinnickinnic River (WI), Neuse River (NC), Lee Creek (AR), Chuitna River (AK)

Interviews

**Rebecca Wodder is available for interview, both pre and post embargo.
Please contact either Garrett Russo (202) 423-9494 or Brad DeVries (202) 243-7023 for booking**

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American Rivers is the only national organization standing up for healthy rivers so our communities can thrive. American Rivers has more than 65,000 supporters nationwide, with offices in Washington, DC and the Mid-Atlantic, Northeast, Midwest, Southeast, California and Northwest regions. www.AmericanRivers.org