The New Hampshire Site Evaluation Committee (SEC) unanimously approved construction of Eversource’s SeaCoast Reliability Project (SRP), a 13-mi. 115 kV transmission line that will enhance reliability of the electric system and support continued economic growth in the Seacoast region. The committee’s approval of the SRP follows a series of public information sessions and evidentiary hearings in Concord and the communities that will host the new transmission line. The project, which will be constructed almost completely within existing rights of way between Madbury and Portsmouth, will address a need for additional transmission capacity that has been identified by the independent regional grid operator.

“The SeaCoast Reliability Project is critical to delivering the reliable power our SeaCoast communities and businesses depend on, and will support continued economic growth throughout the region,” said Eversource NH President Bill Quinlan. “We are grateful to the SEC for its thorough consideration and dedication throughout the review of our project. Just as we worked closely with local officials and property owners throughout the planning process and made significant modifications to the project design based on their input, we will continue to work closely with the host communities during construction. This includes our strong commitment to environmental responsibility with respect to the historic and natural resources that are critical to our state, like Little Bay.”

Prior to the SEC process, the Independent System Operator of New England (ISO-NE) identified an urgent need for additional transmission capacity in the Seacoast region — one of the leading areas in New Hampshire and New England for economic growth — and selected the SRP as the preferred solution to meet that need. While this investment will result in direct benefits for New Hampshire communities, residents and businesses — including the creation of local jobs, enhanced reliability for customers and increased property tax payments — the cost of the project will be paid by all electric customers in New England.

To construct the project and bolster regional infrastructure, Eversource will invest more than $84 million in the region, with estimated property tax payments for Madbury, Durham, Newington and Portsmouth in the first year following the SRP being placed into service totaling more than $900,000.

In addition to working closely with local officials, residents, businesses, environmental groups and other stakeholders in the host communities throughout construction, Eversource will follow guidelines already established in comprehensive construction agreements and discussions with Portsmouth, Newington, Durham, UNH and Madbury. To ensure that all stakeholders are informed of construction activities, a dedicated project web page will provide regular construction updates.

For more information about the SeaCoast Reliability Project, call 888/926-5334, visit Eversource.com or email nhprojectinfo@eversource.com.

Woonsocket Hill Road Bridge Opens Ahead of Schedule

The Rhode Island Department of Transportation (RIDOT) celebrated the early reopening of the Woonsocket Hill Road Bridge in North Smithfield. The department closed the structurally deficient bridge in February and completed its replacement approximately one month ahead of schedule.

The bridge carries approximately 1,000 vehicles per day over Route 146. It serves as an important connection for residents and businesses between Route 5 (Providence Pike) and Route 146A (Smithfield Road), including the popular Wright's Dairy Farm and Bakery.

“All road and bridge segments are vitally important, no matter how many vehicles they serve,” RIDOT Director Peter Alviti Jr. said. “We want the public to know that we are laser focused on rebuilding our transportation system, and whenever we need to close a road or bridge we work diligently to restore that connection in as short a time frame as possible.”

“The town of North Smithfield is happy to return to a normal traffic pattern and grateful for the funding provided to complete the reconstruction of our Woonsocket Hill Road Bridge,” said Town Administrator Gary S. Eozvski. “The entire community appreciates the effort of every worker whose hands created the structure and the managers who coordinated their efforts in a safe and deliberate manner.”

RIDOT credits its project management approach to administering projects for careful oversight in reopening the bridge ahead of schedule. The department also conducted two sets of weekend closures of segments of Route 146 for bridge demolition and steel erection. This shaved several weeks off the project schedule and limited traffic impacts on Route 146 to two weekends as opposed to a multiple overnight partial and full road highway closures.

The replacement of the Woonsocket Hill Road Bridge is one of two bridges being rehabilitated as part of the $11.3 million Route 146 Corridor Bridges project. It was scheduled to remain closed through the end of December, but reopened on Nov. 21. The other structure, the Pound Hill Road Bridge, remains under construction through the end of 2019.

The Route 146 Corridor Bridges Project was made possible by RhodeWorks. RIDOT’s ongoing commitment to repair structurally deficient bridges and bring Rhode Island’s transportation infrastructure into a state of good repair, promote economic development, and create jobs.

For more information, visit www.ridot.net/RhodeWorks. (This story also can be found on Construction Equipment Guide’s website at www.constructionequipmentguide.com.)