

## **Environmental Stewardship Helps Osprey**

(From the January/February 2005 issue of *Network USA*, National Grid's newspaper for U.S. employees)

What began as a standard pole replacement project along high voltage transmission lines ended not only in new transmission structures but two new nesting sites for osprey as well. An osprey is a large, hawk-like bird best known for dramatic high dives into the water to capture its prey.

National Grid line crews were replacing poles along a 50-mile route of transmission line that goes through the 4,600 acre Birch Hill Wildlife Management Area near Royalston, Mass. Development of the surrounding land and lack of suitable nesting habitat had caused the osprey to leave the area several years ago, and park officials have been trying to lure them back.

Instead of discarding the old poles, the crews used them to build nesting sites to attract the osprey. They installed two of the 50-foot poles near the Birch Hill Dam, attaching wooden pallets to the tops. The poles, located in open areas near a river, provide an attractive site for nesting osprey. For National Grid, the man-made nests are a better nesting habitat for the birds than the transmission structures, and their presence hopefully will help avoid reliability problems that can occur when the birds nest near live power lines and equipment.

“In this situation, everyone wins,” said Joe Callanan, manager of Environmental Affairs. “We were able to recycle the old poles, satisfy a need for the park and even help the environment by building nesting sites for the osprey. The National Grid environmental policy states, ‘We are committed to protect and improve, where we can, the environmental status of the land on which we operate.’”

The osprey platforms are an example of environmental stewardship and National Grid saying what it means and meaning what it says.”

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