



Southern Loop Power Plans Catch Town Residents by Surprise

by Calvin Farwell

Dummerston residents have only recently become aware that, for almost two years, Vermont Electric Company (VELCO) and Central Vermont Public Service (CVPS) have been planning a project known as the "Southern Loop Coolidge Connector" which is designed to upgrade the capacity and reliability of the high voltage power grid in southern Vermont. This project seems to be driven mainly by increasing demand for power in central and northwestern Vermont, as well as by ski areas and North Brattleboro businesses. Plans for the project will be presented to the Vermont Public Service Board for approval on July 25. Three pieces of this project will heavily impact the very northwest corner of Dummerston, served by the final mile of the Camp Arden Road, an area known for some time as the "Hague".

The first piece of the project involves doubling the capacity of the existing 345-kilovolt north-south power line that enters Dummerston from West Brattleboro, crosses Kelly Road, Stickney Brook Road and Hill Road, follows the Dummerston-Newfane border and crosses Route 30 and the West River just east of the Rock River bridge. From the West River, the line passes through the Patriquin and Wilson properties, just beyond the end of Camp Arden Road, and proceeds into Brookline. VELCO is planning to add a second 345-kilovolt line alongside the existing one which travels along a cleared one hundred and fifty foot wide path, but it will have to widen this cleared area by removing another 100 feet of forest along the western edge of the current swath. The total deforestation in Dummerston would amount to about 64 acres. The current easements will accommodate this widening, without any legal modification.

continued on page 15



March On!

Dummerston School Marching Band performs on Brattleboro's Main Street during the annual Strolling of the Heifers celebration. The saxophone players are (from left) Hannah Reynolds, Hared Gray, Kara Piergentili and Elena Eames.

Townpeople Work to Save Dummerston's Farm & Forest Land

by Eesha Williams

The number of houses in Dummerston more than doubled from 1960 to 2000. Very few of the new houses were built close to other houses. Almost all of them were single family houses, not the kind of multi-family housing found in downtown Brattleboro and Putney. We are losing Dummerston's large expanses of farm and forest land. This makes it harder for farmers and loggers to stay in business,

and reduces the scenic beauty of our town. It also reduces opportunities for hiking, hunting, cross-country skiing and other fun and healthy outdoor activities in town.

To help address this problem, Dummerston has a farmland protection fund. This fund can be used for protecting farm- and forest-land, as long as the forest land is being used for some kind of agricultural purpose (like maple syrup production). Unfortunately, the fund has

continued on page 16