



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

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VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

December 9, 2020

Robin Kipnis, Esq.
General Counsel
Connecticut Municipal Electric Energy Cooperative
30 Stott Avenue
Norwich, CT 06360
rkipnis@cmeec.org

RE: **PETITION NO. 1436** - Groton Utilities petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed replacement and reconductoring of electric transmission line structures along approximately 1.7 miles of its existing 115-kilovolt (kV)/69-kV 1410/400 double-circuit electric transmission line and 115-kV 1280 single-circuit electric transmission line within existing Groton Utilities electric transmission line right-of-way between Groton/Ledyard town line and Buddington Substation located north of Gold Star Highway in Groton, Connecticut, and related transmission line and substation improvements.

Dear Attorney Kipnis:

The Connecticut Siting Council (Council) requests your responses to the enclosed questions no later than December 30, 2020. To help expedite the Council's review, please file individual responses as soon as they are available. At this time, consistent with the Council's policy to prevent the spread of Coronavirus, please submit an electronic copy only to siting.council@ct.gov. However, please be advised that the Council may later request one or more hard copies for records retention purposes.

Any request for an extension of time to submit responses to interrogatories shall be submitted to the Council in writing pursuant to §16-50j-22a of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Sincerely,

s/Melanie Bachman

Melanie Bachman
Executive Director

MB/RM

Petition No. 1436- Groton Utilities

Interrogatories

1. For the 69-kV 400 Line, are there any plans to upgrade the line to 115-kV? If not why not? Will the new structures supporting the 1410/400 Lines be designed to support a conductor upgrade on the 400 Line from 69-kV to 115-kV if needed in the future?
2. Please explain how replacing the structures will eliminate thermal and voltage violations without replacing the conductors.
3. Referring to Petition p. 8, was a copy of the historic/archeological assessment filed with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)? If yes, please submit any response from SHPO regarding the proposed project.
4. Petition p. 5 and p. 7 states the Project would require some tree clearing and that the clearing is not significant. Petition Attachment B shows tree clearing along the east and west sides of the right-of-way so that the managed area is the full width of the right-of-way. Estimate of the total amount of tree clearing (in acres) required to convert unmanaged areas of the right-of-way to managed areas.
5. Referring to Petition pp. 15-16, was there any consultation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regarding potential project impacts to the Northern Long-eared Bat? If so, please submit the response from the USFWS. If not, does Groton Utilities intend on filing a consultation form with the USFWS?
6. Referring to Petition pp. 19-20, is property owner outreach performed prior to the installation of gravel work pads? If so, are work pad mitigation/design options discussed with the property owner at that point? If not, what post-construction mitigation options are available to the property owner after a gravel pad is installed?
7. Petition Sheet 1 shows temporary impacts to Wetland 10 but this wetland was not described in Petition Attachment D. Provide more information regarding Wetland 10.
8. Petition Sheet 1 shows minimal areas of temporary matting within the gravel work pad at Structure 127 and Structure 7435 to protect Wetlands 9 and 10, respectively. Can the use of temporary matting at these two locations be expanded to reduce the impact to soils immediately adjacent to these wetlands?
9. How will tree clearing work to expand the managed portion of the right-of-way, as shown in Petition Attachment B, be performed to reduce impacts to NEC populations as well as to enhance habitat for the NEC?
10. Petition Attachment G - Item #10 states stonework pad sizes shall be minimized to the extent practicable. Has Groton Utilities reduced the size of the Project work pads to lessen construction related impacts to NEC habitat?
11. Referring to Petition p. 2, provide representative photographs of structural deficiencies identified in the recent transmission structure assessment.