

1 Docket No. 470 - NTE Connecticut, LLC application for a  
2 Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need for  
3 the construction, maintenance and operation of a 550-megawatt  
4 dual-fuel combined cycle electric generating facility and  
5 associated electrical interconnection switchyard located at 180  
6 and 189 Lake Road, Killingly, Connecticut.

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8 **Pre-Filed Direct Testimony of Benjamin Williams,**  
9 **President of the Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.**

10  
11 **Q: Please state your name and occupation.**

12 **A:** My name is Benjamin Williams and I am the President of the  
13 Wyndham Land Trust, Inc.

14 **Q: What is the purpose of your testimony?**

15 **A:** I wish to express Wyndham Land Trust's concern that the  
16 construction and operation of the Killingly Energy Center  
17 ("KEC") power plant on Lake Road in Killingly will adversely  
18 affect the mission and purpose of the Wyndham Land Trust with  
19 respect to the real property that the Trust owns directly  
20 adjacent to the proposed power plant location.

21 **Q: What is the Wyndham Land Trust?**

22 **A:** The Wyndham Land Trust is a non-profit corporation that was  
23 formed in 1975 with the mission to conserve the natural  
24 resources of Northeast Connecticut for the general public. To  
25 fulfill this mission, the Wyndham Land Trust has acquired over  
26 2,100 acres of forested and open space land and it protects  
27 another 700 acres of land through conservation easements or  
28 other restrictions. The Land Trust's property and net earnings

1 are used exclusively for conservational, recreational,  
2 educational, and historic purposes. Our properties also are  
3 used by the public, including local school children, to engage  
4 in the scientific study of plants, animals, birds and other  
5 wildlife.

6 **Q: You mentioned that the Wyndham Land Trust owns real**  
7 **property directly adjacent to the proposed KEC power plant.**  
8 **Please describe that property.**

9 A: The property is known as the Killingly Dunn Preserve Trust  
10 Land and the KEC site is located adjacent to the eastern  
11 property line of the Dunn Preserve. The Dunn Preserve is about  
12 32 acres in size and it was acquired in 1992. The Land Trust  
13 specifically selected the Dunn Preserve for conservation because  
14 the land was isolated and buffered from the industrial  
15 development of Killingly and it provided the public with a  
16 forested access to the Quinebaug River. The Dunn Preserve has  
17 always been surrounded by residential or rural properties that  
18 create a scenic, vegetative and noise buffer for persons using  
19 the Dunn Preserve and for the wildlife that utilizes that  
20 parcel.

21 **Q: Is the Dunn Preserve developed in any way?**

22 A: Other than some footpaths and a buried natural gas  
23 pipeline, it has been preserved in a natural state.

24 **Q: Tell us more about the natural gas pipeline that is buried**  
25 **under a portion of the Dunn Preserve.**

26 A: Several decades ago, long before the Land Trust acquired  
27 the Preserve, a natural gas pipeline was installed and buried  
28 under a portion of the property. Today there is vegetation that

1 is present over that gas line and it is otherwise hidden from  
2 public view.

3 **Q: Do you have any concerns about the natural gas pipeline and**  
4 **the KEC development?**

5 A: Yes, as I understand the current KEC proposal, Yankee Gas  
6 is going to remove that gas pipeline and replace it with a much  
7 larger pipeline to supply natural gas to the KEC power plant.  
8 In order to do that work, much of the Dunn Preserve will be  
9 denuded of trees and vegetation and large quantities of soil  
10 will be excavated. The work will create a substantial  
11 disturbance to the Dunn Preserve and will effectively prohibit  
12 the use of the Preserve by the public and by the wildlife that  
13 currently resides there. Furthermore, unless an aggressive  
14 replanting plan is required, it will take decades for the  
15 destroyed vegetation and soils to reestablish the current  
16 forested nature of the Dunn Preserve.

17 **Q: What about the KEC power plant? What are your specific**  
18 **concerns about the construction and operation of that plant?**

19 A: With regards to the construction, the plans show that the  
20 million gallon fuel oil tanks and associated berms will be  
21 located as close as 60 feet to the border of the Dunn Preserve.  
22 At least 23 acres of forested land is going to be cut down on  
23 the KEC property. The removal of the vegetation will result in  
24 the removal of the visual and sound buffers that have served for  
25 over 25 years as protection for the Dunn Preserve. During  
26 construction, the noise of the tree cutting and construction  
27 equipment will disrupt all effective use of the Dunn Preserve by  
28 the public and wildlife. Once built, persons walking on the

1 Dunn Preserve will see nothing but large metal fuel oil tanks,  
2 parking lots, a 150 foot tall stack and a massive power plant  
3 when looking to the northeast and east. And while operating,  
4 the sound of the power plant operations located only 60 feet  
5 from the Dunn Preserve will be completely disruptive.

6 **Q: So what do you think will happen to the Dunn Preserve if**  
7 **the KEC power plant is built?**

8 **A:** Honestly, I don't see any reason why any of the public  
9 would want to continue to use the Preserve for the purposes that  
10 it was originally established. Who wants to take a nice hike  
11 with views of a power plant? Who wants to walk and hear the  
12 constant hum and noise of power plant equipment? What quality  
13 of wildlife experience can the public anticipate when the  
14 natural environment has been so disrupted? I fear that the Dunn  
15 Preserve will fall into disuse and will be a victim of yet  
16 another power plant in Killingly and it will be yet another  
17 conservation loss for the residents of Northeast Connecticut.  
18 As a result, not only will 69 acres of the KEC property be lost  
19 to wildlife use and preservation in a rural condition, but the  
20 32 acres of the Dunn Preserve will also be lost.

21 **Q: Does the Wyndham Land Trust own any other property that**  
22 **will be impacted by this project?**

23 **A:** Yes, we have a large parcel named the Duck Marsh Preserve  
24 located in Pomfret that the gas pipeline travels through that  
25 will also be significantly impacted.

26 **Q: Can you please describe the Duck Marsh Preserve?**

27 **A:** It is comprised of 147 acres and was acquired in separate  
28 transactions in 1994 and 2007. The Duck Marsh is a valuable

1 wetland habitat that has been protected by the Wyndham Land  
2 Trust since 1994. The property is an ideal location for  
3 birdwatching and includes access trails, two blinds, and two  
4 observation platforms. The southern edge of the preserve runs  
5 along the Airline Trail. In 2007, the preserve was extended west  
6 to Wright's Crossing Road with the addition of the 45-acre Loos  
7 property. The first observation platform sits on "The Knoll" and  
8 looks north over the wetlands and the surrounding countryside.  
9 The second platform is along Wrights Crossing Road and looks  
10 south over the wetlands. The blind on the left looks to the east  
11 over a beaver impoundment. The blind to the right looks south  
12 across the marsh. The water level depends on a series of beaver  
13 dams. When the lowest dam is out, as happens periodically, the  
14 resulting mud flats are attractive to a large variety of waders  
15 during both spring and fall migration.

16 **Q: How will the Duck Marsh preserve be impacted by the**  
17 **pipeline construction?**

18 A: The pipeline easement goes right through the marsh, two  
19 hayfields, and under the brook. This will cause a major  
20 disturbance of significant wetlands. It will also damage newly  
21 planted hayfields that have been established as a habitat for  
22 nesting grassland birds, which can not be disturbed for six  
23 months of the year due to the nesting birds. Digging up the old  
24 pipeline and installing the new pipeline will have an absolutely  
25 disastrous impact upon the wildlife habitat in the Duck Marsh  
26 Preserve for years to come.

27 **Q: Does this complete your testimony?**

28 A: Yes