STATE OF CONNECTICUT
CONNECTICUT SITING COUNCIL

Petition of BNE Energy Inc. for a Declaratory Ruling for the Location, Construction and Operation of a 4.8 MW Wind Renewable Generating Project on Winsted-Norfolk Road in Colebrook, Connecticut ("Wind Colebrook North")	**Petition No. 984**
	March 15, 2011

PRE-FILED TESTIMONY OF ERIC DAVISON

Q1. Please state your name, employer and your employer's address.

A1. My name is Eric Davison. I am employed by Environmental Planning Services ("EPS"), 89 Belknap Rd., West Hartford, CT.

Q2. What is your position with Environmental Planning Services?

A2. I am a wildlife biologist and wetland scientist.

Q3. Have you testified before the Siting Council before?

A3. Yes, I submitted pre-filed testimony regarding the BNE Energy, Inc. ("BNE") petition to site a wind project in Prospect, Connecticut in February 2011 and concurrent herewith have submitted pre-filed testimony regarding the BNE petition to site a wind project on Flagg Hill Road in Colebrook, Connecticut ("Wind Colebrook South"). I have also spoken before numerous inland wetlands, conservation and planning and zoning commissions throughout Connecticut on birds and other biological issues.

Q4. What is your involvement with this proceeding?

A4. EPS was retained by FairwindCT, Inc., Susan Wagner and Michael and Stella Somers to review the potential impacts of the proposed BNE Wind Colebrook North turbine

project on wetlands and watercourses, water quality, and bio-diversity. My particular area of responsibility is analysis of impact on birds.

Q5. What is your field of expertise?

A5. I am a wildlife biologist and wetland scientist. I have 15 years of experience conducting bird surveys in Virginia, Connecticut, Rhode Island and New York. I have a B.S. in Wildlife Conservation from the University of Massachusetts. My recent projects (2009-2010) include breeding bird surveys conducted in eastern New York for the Cary Institute of Ecosystems Studies, Millbrook, NY and for the National Audubon Society in southeastern Connecticut and Rhode Island. A copy of my current CV is attached to this testimony.

Q6. What did your initial review of this petition reveal?

A6. After reviewing the Petition and the supporting technical report by Western EcoSystems Technology, Inc. ("WEST") in Volume 3, Exhibit L (the "WEST Report"), I determined that despite the statement in the Executive Summary of the WEST Report with regards to the principle objectives of the study, to: "*provide site-specific resource and use data that would be useful in evaluating potential impacts from the proposed wind energy facility,*" no bird data of any kind was collected at Wind Colebrook North.

Q7. Would you have expected WEST to collect bird data at Wind Colebrook North?

A7. Yes, I would have expected that bird surveys would have been conducted as part of their environmental assessment of the site. Numerous organizations, including wind-industry organizations and national conservation organizations, have called for the need to assess pre-construction breeding and migratory bird use at proposed wind development sites. The National Wind Coordinating Collaborative noted: *"There is a need to conduct studies to identify migratory pathways, congregation areas such as staging and stopover habitats, and other areas of high*

concentration to aid in risk assessment and avoidance of high risk sites when developing windpower "(NWCC, 2010[1]).

The WEST Report states that: "*data on the effect of wind-energy on birds within largely forested landscapes is not currently available for analysis*" (Exhibit L, pg. 13). Despite this lack of available data on the impacts of wind turbines on birds in forested landscapes and the recognized need for pre-construction bird surveys, no surveys of the Wind Colebrook North's avian community were conducted. Instead, BNE chose to apply the bird survey data collected at Wind Colebrook South as representative of the birds expected to inhabit Wind Colebrook North.

Q8. Was the monitoring conducted by WEST at Wind Colebrook South sufficient to analyze the potential impact on birds at Wind Colebrook North without any monitoring at Wind Colebrook North? If not, please explain.

A8. No. No site-specific bird data was collected at Wind Colebrook North. As BNE states in the Executive Summary of the WEST Report: "Due to the similarity of habitat, landuse and landcover, results of field surveys for Colebrook South are likely indicative of breeding bird species composition and relative abundance for Colebrook North." (Exhibit L). However, this conclusion is flawed. While similar habitats will generally yield a similar group of species, bird species abundance and diversity is not evenly distributed across the landscape, even in landscapes with homogenous habitat types. This is particularly true for rare species (e.g., state-listed species). Rare species, such as those that are state-listed, are irregularly distributed at low densities within suitable habitat. Furthermore, while some of the same habitat types are present at both Wind Colebrook North and Wind Colebrook South, there are differences in the habitats and site characteristics. These include:

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[1] National Wind Coordinating Collaborative (NWCC). 2010. Wind Turbine Interactions with Birds, Bats, and their Habitats: a summary of research results and priority questions

a. Wind Colebrook North occurs at a lower elevation. The elevation of Wind Colebrook South ranges from approximately 1,420ft to 1,500ft. The elevation of Wind Colebrook North ranges from 1,330ft to 1,400ft.

b. Wind Colebrook South contains an open water beaver pond. This habitat type is not present at Wind Colebrook North.

c. Wind Colebrook North contains the habitat type "second growth northern hardwood – hemlock-white pine forest". This habitat type is not present on Wind Colebrook South.

d. Wind Colebrook North contains a perennial stream system (Mill Brook). This habitat type is not present on the Wind Colebrook South site.

e. Slope aspect at Wind Colebrook North consists of two broad northeast and northwest facing hills bordering the Mill Brook valley. Wind Colebrook South slope aspect is more variable.

Q9. Would the Siting Council be evaluating information sufficient to establish the potential impact of Wind Colebrook North on birds in the event it accepted BNE's submission of the WEST Report in this Petition 984?

A9. No, the failure to collect data at Wind Colebrook North represents a significant lack of understanding of the avian community at Wind Colebrook North and makes a reasonable assessment of the impacts of wind development on birds there unfeasible. Further, in the event the Siting Council does accept the WEST Report as analysis of Wind Colebrook North's potential impact on birds, I incorporate herein the content of my pre-filed testimony set forth in Petition 983.

The statements above are true and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Eric Davison

Date

Eric Davison

ATTACHMENT

Exhibit 1 CV of Eric Davison

EXHIBIT 1

Eric R. Davison, CSS, CPWS

116 Smith Road, East Haddam, CT 06423
860-873-9119
edavison@comcast.net

EDUCATION

2000 **University of Massachusetts** **Amherst, MA**
New England Regional Soil Science Certificate Program

1998 **University of Massachusetts** **Amherst, MA**
Bachelor of Science, Wildlife Conservation & Management

WORK EXPERIENCE

2009-present **Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies, Millbrook, NY**
Biodiversity Specialist

- Conduct biodiversity studies throughout Connecticut and New York
- Catalogue breeding bird species via visual identification and song
- Inventory amphibians and reptile species using field techniques including cover searching, minnow trapping, pitfall trapping and hoop-net trapping
- Describe and characterize upland and wetland wildlife habitats including dominant flora
- Compile all field data collected using GIS software; and create GIS maps and shapefiles of all field data collected

1998-present **Private Environmental Consultant, East Haddam, CT**
Wetland Scientist, Wildlife Biologist & Soil Scientist

Provided the following consulting services to clients:

- Wetland functions and values assessments
- Herpetological surveys including vernal pools
- Wildlife inventory and habitat assessment
- Breeding bird surveys
- GIS based environmental assessments
- Wetland delineation and soil mapping
- Local, state and federal wetland permitting assistance
- Wetland impact assessments
- Wetland restoration and mitigation plans
- Representation at municipal land-use hearings

2000-2002 **Northwest Park and Nature Center, Windsor, CT**
Naturalist -Land Manager

- Responsible for habitat management and wildlife monitoring on 473 acre town owned park, with a focus on early-successional habitat management and monitoring of rare and state-listed grassland and shrubland bird species
- Responsible for hiring and supervising interns
- Conducted public programs and special events
- Conducted conservation related public outreach
- Staff liaison for the Town of Windsor Conservation Commission

1998-2000 **Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection, Stafford, CT**
Park Maintainer

- Maintained all state park and forest areas within Shenipsit State Forest Unit
- Responsible for all facility and grounds maintenance
- Regular equipment operation included chainsaws, tractor with backhoe, loader, dumptruck, snowplow, skid-steer, mowers & woodworking

1995 **Smithsonian Institution, Quantico Marine Base, Quantico, VA**
Field Technician

- Mist netting and banding of neotropical migrant songbirds
- Radio telemetry of the Wood Thrush (*Hylocichla mustelina*)
- Vegetation surveys around wood thrush nesting sites

Certifications & Computer Skills

- Certified Soil Scientist (Society of Soil Scientists of Southern New England)
- Certified Professional Wetland Scientist (Society of Wetland Scientists)
- Proficient in GIS (ESRI ArcMap 9.3), Microsoft Word, Excel & Access

Relevant Projects

- Author, Audubon Important Bird Area Conservation Plan, Northwest Park, Windsor, CT
- Author, Audubon Important Bird Area Conservation Plan, Bent of the River Sanctuary, Southbury, CT (*in progress*)
- Field biologist and co-author, Haines Pond biodiversity study, Brewster, NY
- Field biologist, Eastern Westchester Biotic Corridor-Titicus Reservoir, North Salem, NY
- Field biologist and co-author, 2005 Natural Resource Inventory, Town of Windsor, CT

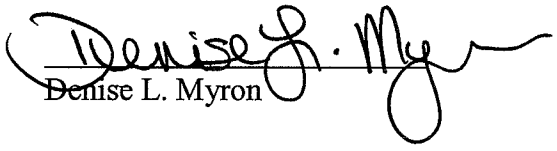
CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that a copy of the foregoing document was delivered by first-class mail and e-mail to the following service list on the 15th day of March, 2011:

Carrie L. Larson
Paul Corey
Jeffery and Mary Stauffer
Thomas D. McKeon
David M. Cusick
Richard T. Roznoy
David R. Lawrence and Jeannie Lemelin
Walter Zima and Brandy L. Grant
Eva Villanova

and sent via e-mail only to:

John R. Morissette
Christopher R. Bernard
Joaquina Borges King



Denise L. Myron