

56 Prospect Street P.O. Box 270 Hartford, CT 06103

#### Kathleen M. Shanley

Manager – Transmission Siting Tel: (860) 728-4527

July 20, 2023

Melanie Bachman, Esq. Executive Director Connecticut Siting Council Ten Franklin Square New Britain, CT 06051

Re: Petition 1576– Interrogatory

Dear Ms. Bachman,

This letter provides the response to requests for information listed below.

Response to CSC-01 Interrogatories dated July 20, 2023

CSC-Petition 1576 Interrogatory responses

Sincerely,

Kathleen M. Shanley

Manager - Transmission Siting

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

## **Question: 1**

Referencing Petition p. 23, were any comments received from the City of Middletown and Town of Haddam or abutting property owners since the filing of the Petition? If so, what were their concerns, and how were these concerns addressed?

#### **Response:**

Eversource has not received additional comments or concerns from the City of Middletown and Town of Haddam since the filing of the Petition. There have been no comments submitted or issues raised by abutting property owners.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 2** 

Describe outreach efforts to project abutters. Have any abutters requested further information? Were right-of-way (ROW) restoration measures described during public outreach?

### **Response:**

Eversource has a dedicated outreach department that communicates with affected and interested stakeholders throughout the phases of a Project, from planning and inception through completion. On this Project, Eversource has completed a series of outreach efforts to date to connect with abutting property owners and inform them of the proposed Project. Eversource will continue to connect with property owners, municipal officials, and other interested stakeholders throughout the duration of the Project. There have been no comments or issues raised by abutting property owners.

Outreach on the Project began in January 2023, when Eversource sent abutting property owners a notice to introduce the Project and explain the proposed scope and its schedule. Following the mailing of this introduction letter, Eversource connected with abutting property owners in person by executing "door-to-door" outreach. During this type of outreach, if no one is home, a door hanger is left containing Project information and contact information for follow up. As a part of door-to-door outreach, Eversource meets with property owners and answers any questions or concerns, oftentimes walking through the property to review the limits of the easement area and site-specific impacts. Any follow-up topics or specific restoration requests are noted and appropriate follow up is completed. Eversource is committed to continuing these conversations with property owners and will continue to conduct mailings as well as in-person door-to-door outreach throughout the extent of the Project. Further, Eversource has a dedicated hotline (1-800-793-2202) and e-mail address (ProjectInfo@eversource.com) available for abutting property owners and other interested stakeholders to contact Project representatives. This hotline and e-mail account are monitored throughout the day, and most inquiries are acknowledged within two business day.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

# **Question: 3**

Identify any proposed new and/or replacement structures that are pending Federal Aviation Administration obstruction evaluation. Are any of the existing structures that would be replaced currently marked/lighted?

## **Response:**

None of the proposed structures require a filing with the Federal Aviation Administration. None of the existing structures are currently marked or lighted.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 4** 

Referencing Petition p. 2, what public utility uses/rights are identified under the easements along the existing ROW?

### **Response:**

In general, the easements along the existing ROW grant Eversource the right to enter upon the land and erect, inspect, operate, replace, remove, repair and patrol, and permanently maintain on the right of way, poles, towers, with necessary conductors, wires, cross arms, guys and other fixtures and appurtenances used or adapted for the transmission of electric current for power and other purposes and used or adapted for telephone purposes.

The easements also grant Eversource the right to trim, cut and remove trees, parts of trees, limbs, branches and underbrush within or projecting into the ROW as in the judgment of the Grantee may interfere with or endanger poles, towers and wires, and their operation or with any of the appurtenances.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

#### **Question: 5**

Under Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) 16-50j-2a(29), Site means a contiguous parcel of property with specified boundaries, including, but not limited to, the leased area, right-of-way, access and easements on which a facility and associated equipment is located, shall be located or is proposed to be located. Is the Project area described in the Petition synonymous with the existing facility site? Explain.

## **Response:**

Yes, the "Project area" described in the Petition is synonymous with the existing facility "Site" described in RCSA §16-50j-2a (29). In the Petition, "site" is typically used to refer to a portion of the Project area, such as "work pads at structure and wire pulling sites", "Project work sites" and any yet-to-be identified Project construction staging areas.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 6** 

Referencing Petition p. 5, when was the most recent vegetation management conducted in the ROW? What work was performed?

# **Response:**

The most recent vegetation management work performed was herbicide application and side trimming in October 2021.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

## Question: 7

Is the proposed project identified in any ISO-New England, Inc. (ISO-NE) needs and solutions analyses? Is the proposed project on the ISO-NE Regional System Plan (RSP), Project List and/or Asset Condition List? If yes, identify.

### **Response:**

The Middletown Substation to Oxbow Junction Upgrade Project (the Project) was not identified by an ISO-New England Inc. needs and solution analysis. The Project is associated with the Asset Condition List (Project number 378).

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

# **Question: 8**

Are any generation facilities listed on the ISO-NE interconnection queue associated with the proposed project? If so, please identify the generation facilities and the queue position.

## **Response:**

The proposed project scope is not associated with a generator interconnection. The purpose of the project is to address asset condition concerns.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 9** 

How would any interruptions to existing generation facilities proximate and/or interconnected to the transmission line be avoided/mitigated?

## **Response:**

The Project design, schedule, and construction sequence have been planned such that interruptions to generation facilities proximate to and/or interconnected to transmission line will be avoided and/or mitigated by reducing the risk of an interruption. Where line outages are required, the outage sequencing is scheduled to avoid unnecessary interruption risks.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

#### **Question: 10**

What is the total estimated cost of the project? Of this total, what costs would be regionalized, and what costs would be localized? Estimate the percentages of the total cost that would be borne by Eversource ratepayers, Connecticut ratepayers, and the remainder of New England (excluding Connecticut) ratepayers, as applicable.

## **Response:**

The total estimated cost of the project is approximately \$7.321 million. Eversource anticipates that the entire cost will be regionalized pending the final determination of ISO-New England's Schedule 12 C review.

The Company anticipates the following overall allocations for the total cost:

- Customers of Eversource: 19.2%

- Other Connecticut customers: 6.0%

- Other New England customers: 74.8%

The estimated allocations are based on 2022 actual loads.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 11** 

How does the project relate to other proposed, planned or constructed Connecticut reliability and asset condition projects?

## **Response:**

This Project is comparable to many other Eversource proposed, planned or constructed projects across Connecticut. The main purpose of such projects is first and foremost to improve transmission system reliability, which is achieved not only by expanding and upgrading existing infrastructure, but also by replacing aged infrastructure, such as structures, conductors or shield wire.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 12** 

Describe how the proposed project is consistent with the recommendations of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and the North American Electric Reliability Corporation (NERC) Report on Transmission Facility Outages During the Northeast Snowstorm of October 29-30, 2011 Causes and Recommendations.

## **Response:**

The Company plans to perform vegetation management maintenance after Project construction is complete as part of the Transmission Right-of-Way ("ROW") Reliability Program ("TRRP") in the same corridor as the Project. TRRP is an Eversource maintenance program to increase the maintained portion of ROW within the easement area by implementing edge to edge maintenance, which is consistent with the recommendations in the referenced FERC and NERC report.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 13** 

Identify all other permits required to perform the proposed work.

### **Response:**

Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (CTDEEP):

- General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities
- Natural Diversity Data Base Determination

United States Army Corps of Engineering/CTDEEP

• Self-Verification Notification ("SV") under Connecticut General Permit 21

Connecticut Department of Transportation encroachment permit to pull the Optical Ground Wire ("OPGW") over state road, Route 9, in Middletown.

Genessee and Wyoming encroachment permit to pull the OPGW over the railroad in Middletown.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 14** 

Provide maps for the entire ROW that depict locations of new and temporary access roads, work pads, and pull pads necessary for the static wire replacement with OPGW.

### **Response:**

Please see the attached environmental map sheets depicting four additional work pads for ADSS structures. One additional pull pad for structure 14036. One temporary construction matting to span a stream (S11), and a vernal pool (VP1). Another additional temporary construction matting to span Wetland32. No new access roads are required to solely support the OPGW work.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 15** 

Referencing Petition pp. 5-6, the conductors were installed in 1958. Why arent the conductors scheduled for replacement at this time? What is the life span of these conductors?

### **Response:**

Eversource estimates the approximate life span of the conductors to be between 60 and 70 years.

Conductors frequently go beyond, sometimes well beyond, the 40-year life span referenced in the Council's 2022 Life Cycle Report. The 40-year life reflects an average period utilized for assessing depreciation for transmission system assets, and in some cases 40 years proves to be the life span of such assets depending on the environmental conditions that the particular asset is exposed to.

However, Eversource performs regular inspections and maintenance on its infrastructure with the goal to reasonably maximize the remaining useful life of its installed assets, provided that such assets continue to meet transmission system needs. While some transmission system assets are replaced around the 40-year mark, Eversource will keep the assets in operation provided that they are assessed to be reliable, in good condition, and sufficient for transmission system needs.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 16** 

Referencing Petition p. 7, after the structure replacements for Sub-petition 1293-HM-01 and the structure replacements for the project, what number of existing structures would remain and when is replacement of those structures anticipated?

### **Response:**

After the scopes of work in the referenced Sub-Petitions and Petition are completed, the structures remaining that will not have been replaced are as follows:

On the 1620 line, between Middletown Substation and Oxbow Junction, there are 13 remaining natural wood structures that will not be replaced out of 60 total structures.

Eversource does not have current plans to replace any of the remaining 13 structures because they were neither required to be replaced for asset condition reasons, nor overloaded by the new work being done in the Project area.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 17** 

Referencing Petition Map Sheet 4, Structure 14027 is marked for replacement; however, this structure was also marked for replacement in Council Sub-Petition No. 1293-HM-01, approved by the Council on December 10, 2018 and completed on November 6, 2019. Explain why it is necessary to replace this structure as part of this Project.

## **Response:**

Structure 14027 is an existing wood three-pole structure currently supporting AT&T and T-Mobile communication equipment. Eversource and the carriers were unable to complete the necessary coordination steps in time to meet the line outage construction window for the work described in Council Sub-Petition No. 1293-HM-01. Eversource is currently coordinating the with the carriers regarding the current Project schedule, to ensure the structure's successful replacement.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 18** 

In addition to Eversources Best Management Practices, what other specific environmental mitigation measures and/or monitoring would be conducted for construction within environmentally sensitive areas?

#### **Response:**

In addition to Eversource's Best Management Practices, Eversource would comply with any recommendations detailed in the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection ("CT DEEP") Natural Diversity Database Determination Letter for additional protection measures, which may include, but not be limited to, providing contractor training, time of year restrictions for work in certain species habitat areas, monitoring, and/or installation of exclusionary features (e.g., silt or snow fencing) as directed by qualified individuals.

Gravel work pad restoration measures would also be implemented to mitigate impacts within environmentally sensitive areas, which would include amendment of the work pad surface with stockpiled topsoil or fine process gravel, application of a native warm season grass mix, and installation of temporary erosion and sediment controls (e.g., straw mulch, compost filters, biodegradable erosion control blankets, etc.). These erosion and sediment controls would be regularly inspected and maintained until final stabilization has been achieved.

In addition to the monitoring requirement under the CT DEEP's General Permit for the Discharge of Stormwater and Dewatering Wastewaters from Construction Activities ("General Permit"), Eversource will assign a qualified environmental inspector to conduct weekly inspections for the duration of the Project activities, including restoration, and to perform post-restoration inspections on a monthly basis until all disturbed areas are stabilized and the Notice of Termination is filed per the General Permit requirements.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 19** 

Referencing Petition p. 18, required inspections associated with the DEEP SWPCP are mentioned. In addition to the qualified inspector required by the General Permit, would there be other environmental inspectors assigned to the Project? If yes, identify specific inspection duties. If not, why not.

## **Response:**

No environmental inspectors are required beyond the qualified SWPCP inspector. However, a qualified individual will oversee implementation of listed species protection measures and conduct contractor training as required by the Project NDDB Determination ("Determination"). Further, contractors will be responsible for conducting pre-construction and construction inspections ("sweeps") for the presence of listed species. These inspections will occur prior to the start of work each day and periodically throughout the workday. Contractors will follow established protocol for removing listed species from construction areas as detailed in the Determination. Eversource construction representatives will be onsite daily to help ensure these inspections are performed by contractors as required.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Ouestion: 20** 

Has Eversource developed a Protection Plan for wetlands, watercourses and vernal pools, including applicable pre-construction environmental resource field delineations and environmental inspections and duties, in its construction plans for the project? If yes, submit such plan. If no, when would such a plan be developed?

### **Response:**

Eversource has not developed a single, stand-alone Protection Plan for wetlands, watercourses, and vernal pools for the Project. However, the Project Stormwater Pollution Control Plan ("SWPCP") that was submitted the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection on April 26, 2023, details work areas, erosion and sedimentation control measures and matting configurations. These measures and configurations are intended to protect sensitive resource areas (e.g., wetlands, watercourses, and vernal pools) during construction. Approval of the SWPCP is still pending but would be issued prior to the start of construction.

Project work will comply with the SWPCP, Eversource's BMP Manual, which focuses on the protection of wetlands, watercourses, and vernal pools, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Self-Verification Authorization Conditions for work in wetlands. Eversource will also conduct weekly inspections to ensure compliance with the General Permit, BMPs, authorizations, and permit conditions.

Eversource believes that the protection measures defined in the SWPCP, authorizations, and BMP Manual are comprehensive and meet the intent and spirit of a single Protection Plan.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 21** 

Describe post-construction construction cleanup procedures in the ROW, including the disposition of woody debris from tree clearing. In what areas will woody debris and other natural materials be disposed of? Have abutters been notified of the disposal areas?

### **Response:**

Post-construction cleanup procedures involve removal of construction related equipment and materials, including signage, from the right-of way, with subsequent restoration, as needed. No tree clearing is associated with this Project. As such, there will be no large woody debris to dispose of. Mowing may be required where new work pads are proposed. Cut vegetation will remain on-site. Abutters have not been notified that cut vegetation will not be removed from the property.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 22** 

What measures would be taken, if necessary, to determine if excavated soils are suitable for reuse or redistribution in other Project areas?

### **Response:**

Excavated soils from the Project that cannot be used as backfill on the property where they were excavated would be regraded into adjacent uplands and stabilized in accordance with Eversource's April 2022 Construction & Maintenance Environmental Requirements, Best Management Practices Manual for Massachusetts, and Connecticut ("BMPs") and the Stormwater Pollution Control Plan ("SWCP"). Any excavated soils that cannot be reused on the property from which they were excavated would be transported from the Project area and properly managed off-site in accordance with Eversource BMPs and any applicable local, state, or federal laws.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Ouestion: 23** 

Referencing Petition pp. 6-7, six existing wood pole structures would be removed. If known, were the wooden poles chemically treated at the time of installation? Describe any best management practices associated with the disposal of the wood poles.

### **Response:**

Although no specific data is available, it is likely that the wood poles for the structures were treated prior to installation.

Eversource's Best Management Practice ("BMP") Manual, Section 3.12.1 – Pole Butt Removal, addresses the BMPs regarding wooden pole removal. Specifically, the BMP Manual states:

When transmission poles are decommissioned or otherwise taken out of service, in most cases the entire pole shall be removed. Treated wood pole butts shall be removed completely from the ground and properly disposed at an off-site location. Locations where the removal of pole butts may cause significant disturbance to wetlands or other sensitive environmental areas will be considered for exception to this practice on a site-by-site basis. The Transmission Line Construction and Maintenance Manager, in consultation with Eversource Environmental Licensing and Permitting, will be responsible for determining if a pole butt can be removed if located in a sensitive environmental area.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 24** 

Would Eversource implement the same mitigation measures and/or use the same construction methods (ex. watercourse crossings, secured mats in flood zone areas, etc.) for areas of the Project as were implemented and used in Sub-Petitions 1293-HM-01? Explain how these areas overlap.

## **Response:**

Sub-Petition 1293-HM-01 is associated with previous structure replacement activities within the Project area. However, the proposed Project activities would not include activities in flood zone areas; therefore, secured mats would not be required. As detailed in the Project map and BMP Manual, streams will be spanned with temporary construction mats to allow unrestricted water flow.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 25** 

Referencing Map Sheet 3, can the temporary matting within Wetland 10 be eliminated by using existing access roads east and west of the wetland?

## **Response:**

Installation of temporary matting through Wetland 10 could be avoided by accessing Structure 14008 from the southeast from Brooks Road, but Wetland 18 (a larger wetland) would require more temporary matting to span this wetland and result in greater temporary impacts.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 26** 

Referencing Map Sheet 6, can the temporary matting within Wetland 56 be eliminated by installing the work pad in the upland west of the wetland?

## **Response:**

It is not possible to avoid placement of matting within Wetland 56 as detailed on Map Sheet 6. This work pad area is required to install the new structure, install guy anchors, and to remove the existing structure.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 27** 

Has Eversource consulted with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service through its Information, Planning, and Consultation (IPaC) service regarding federal-listed species that may be present within the Project area?

### **Response:**

Eversource consultation with the USFWS via the IPaC tool has been completed. Copies of the IPaC determination and accompanying northern long-eared bat determination key will be submitted as part of the United States Army Corps of Engineers Connecticut General Permit ("USACE CT GP") process. A preliminary determination of "may affect, but not likely to adversely affect the Endangered northern long-eared bat ('NLEB')" has been received and additional consultation with the USFWS (via the lead federal agency, USACE CT GP) is anticipated as part of the federal regulatory permitting process. Agency recommended measures for protection of the NLEB will be employed by the Project team.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 28** 

Referencing Petition p. 13, provide the DEEP Natural Diversity Data Base (NDDB) Determination letter dated February 27, 2023. How are specific recommendations for each NDDB species implemented prior to or during construction?

### **Response:**

The Eversource environmental subject matter expert ("SME") assigned to the project is responsible for reviewing information provided in the NDDB Determination. The SME provides any time of year constraints and special protective measure requirements to the Project team. As needed, the SME will hire a qualified environmental vendor familiar with the species to develop a protection plan. Surveys for the presence of listed species are conducted prior to the start of construction. Listed species documented in the project area and associated protective measures are detailed on the map set issued for construction.

Requirements for the protection of listed species are provided to the contractor prior to the start of construction. The qualified vendor will conduct on-site training with all contractors accessing the construction area and oversee installation of protective measures where recommended. Where needed, physical protection measures (e.g., exclusion fence) are inspected by the contractor and by the environmental inspector. The contractor's morning tailboards include a discussion of listed species documented in the Project area where the day's work will occur and any required protection measures. Eversource construction representatives, who are on-site daily, help to ensure that these tasks are appropriately executed. Weekly construction meetings between contractors and the Eversource Project team also will include a summary discussion of listed species that may be present, observations made during the week, and actions taken.

Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 29** 

Referencing Petition pp. 9-10, submit a copy of the March 28, 2023 correspondence from SHPO addressed to Heritage Consultants, LLC related to the results of the cultural assessment.

# **Response:**

A copy of the March 28, 2023 correspondence is attached.



March 28, 2023

Mr. David George Heritage Consultants, LLC 830 Berlin Turnpike Berlin, CT 06037 (sent via email only to dgeorge@heritage-consultants.com)

Subject: Archaeological Reconnaissance Survey

Eversource Energy Line 1620 Copper Replacement and ACR Project

Middletown & Haddam, Connecticut

#### Dear Mr. George:

The State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) has reviewed the report titled, *Phase IB Cultural Resources Reconnaissance Survey of Project Items Associated with the Line 1620 Copper Replacement and ACR Project in Middletown and Haddam, Connecticut* prepared by Heritage Consultants, LLC (Heritage) and dated March 2023. The submitted report is comprehensive and meets the standards set forth in the *Environmental Review Primer for Connecticut's Archaeological Resources*. The reconnaissance survey was completed in support of United States Army Corps of Engineers permitting requirements. Comments are provided pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended

SHPO understands that the project entailed the archaeological reconnaissance survey of two work areas associated with Structures 14027 and 14037. A previously completed archaeological assessment survey determined that the two work areas retain moderate/high archaeological sensitivity. No properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places were identified within 500 feet of the project items. However, a previously recorded archaeological site (Site 83-37) was identified approximately 400 feet north of Structure 14037. Heritage recommended the avoidance of ground disturbance in the vicinity of Site 83-37. During survey, Heritage completed 17 of 22 planned shovel tests. The five planned but unexcavated shovel tests fell within wetland areas or areas containing previous disturbance. Subsurface testing resulted in a single positive shovel test that contained a quartz bifacial retouch flake. Four delineation shovel tests failed to produce evidence of additional cultural material. Heritage determined that the identified archaeological deposits were not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and no further investigation was recommended. Based on the information provided to our office, it is the opinion of SHPO that no historic properties will be affected by the proposed project and no additional archaeological investigation is warranted. Comments are conditional upon the submission of two bound copies of the final report to our office for permanent curation and public accessibility.

SHPO appreciates the cooperation of all interested parties in the professional management of Connecticut's archeological resources. Do not hesitate to contact Cory Atkinson, Staff Archaeologist and Environmental Reviewer, for additional information at (860) 500-2458 or cory.atkinson@ct.gov.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Kinney

State Historic Preservation Officer

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Date Filed: July 19, 2023

**Request from: Connecticut Siting Council** 

**Question: 30** 

How are invasive species within work areas identified prior to the commencement of construction?

# **Response:**

Invasive species are identified by project environmental personnel during preconstruction survey work and constructability walkdowns.













