

August 12, 2025

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

Re: PETITION NO. 1656 - The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy petition for a declaratory ruling, pursuant to Connecticut General Statutes §4-176 and §16-50k, for the proposed South Naugatuck Substation to Beacon Falls Junction Rebuild Project consisting of the replacement and reconductoring of electric transmission line structures along approximately 4 miles of its existing electric transmission line right-of-way shared by its existing 115-kilovolt (kV) 1142, 1319, 1580, and 1808 Lines between South Naugatuck Substation and Beacon Falls Substation traversing the municipalities of Naugatuck, Beacon Falls, and Oxford, Connecticut, and related electric transmission line and substation improvements - **Resubmittal of NDDB Letter Attachment for Interrogatory 24.**

Dear Attorney Bachman:

On July 10, 2025, The Connecticut Light and Power Company d/b/a Eversource Energy ("Eversource") submitted responses to Council Interrogatories to Petitioner for the above referenced project.

Eversource respectfully resubmits the following correct attachment for Interrogatory 24. The DEEP NDDB Final Determination (dated June 2, 2025) originally submitted in response to this interrogatory request was for another project. Please see the attached correct DEEP NDDB Final Determination dated April 29, 2025.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



By: _____

Deborah Denfeld
Team Lead – Transmission Siting
deborah.denfeld@eversource.com

Attachments: NDDB Final Determination Letter - Interrogatory No. 24



Connecticut
Department of Energy &
Environmental Protection

portal.ct.gov/DEEP

4/29/2025

Evan Ehrlich
EVERSOURCE ENERGY SERVICE COMPANY
107 SELDEN ST.
BERLIN, CT 06037
eversource.nddb@eversource.com

Subject: Towantic to South Naugatuck and Beacon Falls Rebuild Project

Filing #: 98628

NDDB - New Determination Number: 202304762

Expiration Date: 4/29/2027

Location Description: Eversource Energy Company, LLC, Off Road Access Road Improvements within South Naugatuck State Forest as Part of the Towantic to South Naugatuck and Beacon Falls Rebuild in Naugatuck, Oxford and Beacon Falls, Connecticut

I have reviewed NDDB maps and files regarding the proposed Eversource Energy Company, LLC, Off Road Access Road Improvements within South Naugatuck State Forest as Part of the Towantic to South Naugatuck and Beacon Falls Rebuild in Naugatuck, Oxford and Beacon Falls

Protection for State Listed Animals

According to our records there known extant populations of State Threatened Five-lined skink (*Eumeces fasciatus*) and State Special Concern Eastern box turtle (*Terrapene c. carolina*) and Eastern hognose snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*), Red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*) and Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferus*) known within the boundaries of this property/project.

Protection for State Threatened Five-lined skink

In the NDDB Preliminary Assessment letter 202304762 dated September 13, 2023, the NDDB Program asked for field surveys and habitat assessments for Five-lined skinks in the project footprint. We received Five-lined skink (*Plestiodon fasciatus*) Habitat Evaluation South Naugatuck to Beacon Falls Junction Rebuild Project Naugatuck, Oxford and Beacon Falls report developed by Davison Environmental and dated November 19, 2024. The report outlined a habitat assessment completed on July 25, 2024, by Quinn Ecological, LLC herpetologists. During the habitat evaluations, patches of suitable habitat were observed within Map Sheet 8 (proposed structures 19407 and 19408) and Map sheet 11 (proposed structures 19403 through 19406). Although no skinks were observed, the project area is suitable for the state threatened five-lined skink.

In order to protect the five-lined skink from adverse impacts from this project, the following five-lined skink protection measures are required:

Where possible, temporary timber matting is proposed to minimize ground disturbance. A total of 9,317 square feet of matting is proposed in skink habitat. However, at several locations, loss of identified suitable skink habitat (i.e., grading, gravelling and rock removal) will be required due to the presence of steep slopes that cannot be safely matted. Direct impact to skink habitat totals 65,920 square feet. This includes access roads and work pads. To mitigate these impacts, a portion of the impacted habitat will be restored post construction. In these areas, gravel will be laid over geotextile filter fabric and removed upon completion of construction, allowing the native vegetation to recover. Therefore, the total permanent impact will be 7,789 square feet.

If work is conducted during the active season for skink (April 1st through November 1st), the following protection measures will be implemented for work conducted around structures located within identified skink habitat (Structures 19403 through 19408):

1. **Isolation Measures**

2. Installation of exclusionary fencing (i.e., geotextile silt fencing), will be installed as a barrier to migrating/dispersing herpetofauna, preventing them from accessing all construction and staging areas. The qualified herpetologist will review and approve the final installation of the isolation barrier. During installation, species sweeps will occur to ensure no five-lined skinks are impacted. Sweeps will be conducted by a qualified herpetologist with experience with five-lined skinks in Connecticut.

1. The intent of the barrier is to isolate the majority of the work zone from foraging/migrating/dispersing herpetofauna. Oftentimes complete isolation of a work zone is not feasible due to accessibility needs. In these circumstances all openings in the isolation barrier, used during the workday for accessibility, should be closed at the completion of each day. Temporary silt fence backed with straw bales can be used but often breakdown rapidly requiring regular repair. As an alternative, more permanent structures made from plywood can be constructed and used as temporary barriers. These must be sturdy, fit tight against existing exclusionary fencing, and sit flush (or have gaps filled by straw waddles) with the ground to remain effective as barriers to dispersing wildlife.

1. All compromised areas of silt fence must immediately be repaired. The herpetological monitor should follow up with the contractor's daily inspections on a weekly basis. The extent of the barrier fencing should be as shown on the site plans. The Contractor should have available additional barrier fencing should field conditions warrant extending the fencing as directed by the herpetological monitor.

1. No equipment, vehicles, or construction materials should be stored outside of the exclusionary barrier fencing inside five-lined skink habitat.

1. All barrier fencing, temporary access structure, waddles, and securing gravel should be removed at the completion of construction.

2. **Species Sweeps**

Prior to any construction activities, species sweeps by a qualified herpetologist with experience with five-lined skinks in Connecticut should occur within the excluded construction area. Any five-lined skinks encountered during these surveys should be relocated outside the construction area.

3. **Contractor Education**

4. Prior to working on site, the Contractor shall attend an educational session at the preconstruction meeting with a qualified herpetologist. This orientation and educational session should consist of an introductory meeting providing photos of herpetofauna that may be encountered during construction activities, specifically five-lined skink.
1. The education session will also focus on means to discriminate between five-lined skinks and other native species (specifically salamanders which are often mistaken for skinks) to avoid unnecessary “false alarms”. Encounters with all species should be documented by the environmental monitor and/or herpetologist. All species encountered should be relocated outside the construction area.
1. The Contractor will be provided with cell phone and email contacts for the herpetologist to immediately report any encounters with listed species, or other herpetofauna species.

4. **Reporting**

5. Following completion of the construction project, a summary report to the CTDEEP documenting the monitoring and maintenance of the barrier fence should be completed by the herpetologist.
1. Any observations of state listed species must be reported to CTDEEP by a qualified herpetologist with photo?documentation (if possible) and with specific information on the location and disposition of the animal at the time of observation.

These additional best management practices to protect State Special Concern Eastern box turtle (*Terrapene c. carolina*) and Eastern hognose snake (*Heterodon platirhinos*) should be implemented throughout the entire work area.

The following protections measures will help avoid negative impacts to these two reptile species:

- You must hire a qualified herpetologist to be on site, educate workers about protection strategies and to oversee this project.
- All personnel working within the eastern box turtle or hognose snake habitat must be apprised of the species description and the possible presence of a listed species and instructed to relocate turtles or snakes found in work areas or notify the appropriate authorities to relocate individuals.

Protection during Active Period (March 1st through November 30th):

- The Contractor must search the work area each morning prior to any work being done. If a turtle or snake is discovered later in the day after the initial search work should stop until the animal can be relocated by educated construction worker.
- Any box turtle, or hognose snake encountered within the immediate work area shall be carefully moved to an adjacent area outside of the work area. The goal is to keep these reptiles from being unintentionally killed during this project.
- All staging and storage areas, outside of previously paved locations, regardless of the duration of time they will be utilized, must be reviewed to remove individuals and exclude them from re-entry.
- No heavy machinery or vehicles may be parked in any turtle smooth green or hognose snake habitat.

Protection During Inactive Period (October 1st through March 30th):

- Keeping heavy equipment in the open ROW to the greatest extent will minimize the potential for heavy machinery to crush hibernating turtles or snakes located in the forested edges along the ROW.
- No heavy machinery or vehicles may be parked in any turtle or snake habitat.

Any confirmed sightings of these species should be reported and documented with the NDDB (nddbrequestdep@ct.gov) on the appropriate special animal form found at (http://www.ct.gov/deep/cwp/view.asp?a=2702&q=323460&depNav_GID=1641)

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Red Bat (*Lasiurus borealis*):

Tree Roosting Bat Protection Recommendations:

Typically, larger diameter trees (12-inch DBH and larger) are more valuable to these bats. Additionally, trees with loose, rough bark such as maples, hickories, and oaks are more desirable than other tree species due to the increased cover that the loose bark provides. Large trees with cavities are also utilized by this species.

To reduce impacts to these tree roosting bats:

- Retain the above-mentioned trees, wherever possible.
- Do not remove trees between April 15th and October 31st.

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Whip-poor-will (*Caprimulgus vociferous*):

Recommended Protection Strategies for Whip-poor-Will

- Do not cut, clear, remove trees or shrubs, or disturb ground or forest floor between May 1st and July 30th.

Protection for State-listed Plants and State Listed Invertebrate Species

According to our information there are State Listed plants and invertebrates within the footprint of this project. They include:

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State-listed Invertebrate Species

- **Barrens buck moth (*Hemileuca maia maia*)- State Endangered**

Host plant: Buck moth caterpillars feed primarily on oaks including scrub oak, live oak, blackjack oak, and dwarf chestnut oak.

- **Columbine borer (*Papaipema leucostigma*) – State Special Concern**

Host plant: Larva on Columbine

State-listed Plant Species

- ***Hydrophyllum virginianum* (Virginia waterleaf)**

State Status: Special Concern

Habitat: Rich, moist, deciduous woods and/or alluvial floodplains.

Blooms: June

- ***Asplenium montanum* (Mountain spleenwort)**

State Status: Special Concern

Habitat: Acidic rocky cliffs in deep shade

Blooms: Mature sporangia in July. Identifiable throughout growing season

We received a report State-Listed Plant Species Survey Mountain Spleenwort (*Asplenium montanum*), Virginia Waterleaf (*Hydrophyllum virginianum*), Eastern Red Columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*), Barrens Buckmoth habitat developed by Davison Environmental and dated December 11, 2024. The report indicated that Neither of the two State-listed plants (mountain spleenwort, Virginia waterleaf), or eastern red columbine were observed. However, a total of 22 scrub oak trees, a preferred host plant for State Endangered Barrens buck moth was observed within the project footprint. Additionally 7.85 acres of a critical habitat, Acidic Rocky

Summit Outcrop was also present within the project footprint.

To protect the State Listed State Endangered Barrens Buckmoth and the Acidic Rocky Summit Outcrop in the project footprint, the following best management practices will be implemented:

1. Work will not occur within the area of identified scrub oak plants. Work areas do occur within habitats identified as ARSO critical habitat.
2. Where possible, temporary timber matting is proposed to prevent permanent impact to critical habitat.
3. However, at several locations, loss of ARSO habitat (i.e., grading, gravelling and rock removal) will be required due to the presence of steep slopes that cannot be safely matted. Direct impact to ARSO habitat totals 68,090 square feet. This includes access roads and work pads.
4. To mitigate these impacts, approximately 85% of the impacted habitat will be restored post construction. In these areas, gravel will be laid over geotextile filter fabric and removed upon completion of construction, allowing the native vegetation to recover. Therefore, the total permanent impact will be 11,441 square feet.
5. Prior to the start of work:
6. The northerly limits of the scrub oak (facing the work area) will be reflagged in the field.
7. All ARSO critical habitats will be reflagged in the field.
6. No scrub oaks shall be cut, nor shall there be any entry, by vehicle or by foot, into the scrub oak area, as it occurs entirely outside of the ROW.
7. Where work occurs within ARSO Critical Habitats, fencing (e.g., orange snow fencing) will be installed to cordon off the workspace, to limit impacts to the areas denoted on the mapping.
8. No materials or equipment will be staged in any rare plant area or critical habitat unit.
9. Woody debris that is cut for construction preparation will not be placed within critical habitats.

Instructions for submitting your survey information or other additional reporting requirements can be found at the end of this letter.

Your submission information indicates that your project requires a state permit, license, registration, or authorization, or utilizes state funding or involves state agency action. This NDDDB - New determination may be utilized to fulfill the Endangered and Threatened Species requirements for state-issued permit applications, licenses, registration submissions, and authorizations.

Please be aware of the following limitations and conditions:

Natural Diversity Database information includes all information regarding listed species available to us at the time of the request. This information is a compilation of data collected over the years by the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection's Natural History Survey and cooperating units of DEEP, land owners, private conservation groups and the scientific community. This information is not necessarily the result of comprehensive or site-specific field investigations. Current research projects and new contributors continue to identify additional populations of species and locations of habitats of concern, as well as enhance existing data. Such new information is incorporated into the Database and accessed through the ezFile portal as it becomes available. New information may result in additional review, and new or modified restrictions or conditions may be necessary to remain in compliance with certain state permits.

- During your work listed species may be encountered on site. A report must be submitted by the observer to the Natural Diversity Database promptly and additional review and restrictions or conditions may be necessary to remain in compliance with certain state permits. Please fill out the [appropriate survey form](#) and follow the instructions for submittal.
- Your project involves the state permit application process or other state involvement, including state funding or state agency actions; please note that consultations with your permit analyst or the agency may result in additional requirements. In this situation, additional evaluation of the proposal by the DEEP Wildlife Division may be necessary and additional information, including but not limited to species-specific site surveys, may be required. Any additional review may result in specific restrictions or conditions relating to listed species that may be found at or in the vicinity of the site.
- If your project involves preparing an Environmental Impact Assessment, this NDDDB consultation and determination should not be substituted for biological field surveys assessing on-site habitat and species presence.
- The NDDDB - New determination for the Towantic to South Naugatuck and Beacon Falls Rebuild Project as described in the submitted information and summarized at the end of this document is valid until 4/29/2027. This determination applies only to the project as described in the submission and summarized at the end of this letter. Please re-submit an updated Request for Review if the project's scope of work and/or timeframe changes, including if work has not begun by 4/29/2027.

Additional reporting requirements indicated above have been requested. Include the Project Name Towantic to South Naugatuck and Beacon Falls Rebuild Project and Determination Number 202304762 on all correspondence. Please note that, as stated above, survey data indicating the presence of listed species not described in this letter may necessitate additional review and restrictions or conditions. Forward additional reporting requirements to each of the following two addresses:

1. Dawn.McKay@ct.gov
2. deep.nddbrequest@ct.gov

If you have further questions, please contact me at the following:

Dawn McKay
CT DEEP Bureau of Natural Resources

Wildlife Division
Natural Diversity Database
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127
(860) 424-3592
Dawn.McKay@ct.gov

Please reference the Determination Number 202304762 when you e-mail or write. Thank you for consulting the Natural Diversity Data Base.

Dawn McKay
Wildlife Division- Natural Diversity Data Base
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127
(860) 424-3592
Dawn.McKay@ct.gov

Application Details:

Project involves federal funds or federal permit:	Yes
Project involves state funds, state agency action, or relates to CEPA request:	No
Project requires state permit, license, registration, or authorization:	Yes
DEEP enforcement action related to project:	
Project Type:	
Project Sub-type:	Repairs to Transmission lines, cables, pipelines
Project Name:	Towantic to South Naugatuck and Beacon Falls Rebuild Project
Project Description:	Eversource is rebuilding several transmission lines within the right-of-way (ROW) corridor as part of the lattice tower and copper retire programs.