

1 **Rebuttal to Testimony of Joseph Christopher on behalf of Western Mountains & Rivers**
2 **Corporation:**

3 With regard to the testimony submitted by Joseph Christopher on behalf of Western Mountains
4 & Rivers Corporation, on page 3 of Mr. Christopher's testimony, he asserts that CMP has
5 addressed concerns regarding the "scenic and aesthetic impact of the Project from an overhead
6 crossing of the Kennebec River. CMP has addressed these concerns by proposing that the
7 transmission line cross the river underground and by locating structures and other development
8 associated with the termination points away from the viewshed of users of the river." It should be
9 noted that Mr. Christopher identifies in his pre-file testimony that his background and
10 qualifications are as a business owner and having leadership involvement with related business
11 associations. Mr. Christopher does not identify himself as a scenic and aesthetic expert, therefore
12 the previous statement should be disregarded by the review committee.

13 As a business owner and member of WM&RC, Mr. Christopher's business would have a direct
14 benefit if NECEC is approved. It is to be noted that Mr. Christopher, as all of the WM&RC
15 Board of Directors per the MOU, are obligated to testify in these proceedings per the MOU on
16 page 6, item 7(a), which states, "At the request of CMP, WM&RC will provide written and/or
17 oral testimony to one of more regulatory agencies with the power to issue one or more of the
18 Required Approvals. The essence and extent of WM&RC's testimony will be that the mitigation
19 packages for the crossings described in Sections 4(a) and 4(b) of this MOU are appropriate
20 offsets to the environmental, natural resources and community impacts of the Project because the
21 benefits of the package to the region are substantial and long lasting."¹

¹[http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/mpbn/files/201806/memorandum_of_understanding_may_30_2c_2018_fin
al_p1522306x9f873.pdf](http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/mpbn/files/201806/memorandum_of_understanding_may_30_2c_2018_final_p1522306x9f873.pdf)

1 Also, on page 3 of his pre-filed testimony, Mr. Christopher does not provide any empirical
2 studies, whether it be related to environmental impacts or recreational-user impacts, to
3 substantiate his statement, “there also should be little impact from the Project upon users of other
4 rivers, streams, ponds, lakes, and waterways for rafting, boating, fishing, or other activities.”
5 This statement seems to reflect an anecdotal opinion that is not based upon any identified
6 research.

7 On page 5, “The economic benefits to the tourist industry and local economy would also be
8 significant and should not be understated.” To date, neither Mr. Christopher, nor the applicant,
9 nor any other party, has submitted an economic impact study related to NECEC to any of the
10 three approval agencies. This statement is hearsay and cannot be substantiated.

11 According to page 2 of the MOU, WM&RC was established to “promote outdoor activities in
12 Central and Northern Somerset County”.² In Mr. Christopher’s conclusion on page 6, he asserts
13 that “we [WM&RC board members] are confident that the NECEC will have no adverse impact
14 on the existing scenic/aesthetic, recreational, or navigational uses of the areas directly impacted
15 or adjacent to the Project.” It is important to note that WM&RC does not speak for the people in
16 the affected region of western Maine. His assertion is in direct conflict with formal town votes
17 resulting in opposition along Segment 1 of the proposed corridor including towns of Jackman,
18 Moose River, Dennistown, Caratunk, West Forks, The Forks. Towns along other segments of the
19 corridor have voted to oppose NECEC including Embden, Wilton, and Alna.

20 **Rebuttal to Testimony of Larry Warren on behalf of Western Mountains & Rivers**

21 **Corporation:**

²[http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/mpbn/files/201806/memorandum_of_understanding_may_30_2c_2018_fin
al_p1522306x9f873.pdf](http://mediad.publicbroadcasting.net/p/mpbn/files/201806/memorandum_of_understanding_may_30_2c_2018_final_p1522306x9f873.pdf)

1 While Mr. Warren has had success as a lucrative businessman and developer in Franklin and
2 Somerset counties, he does not identify himself as an expert in the area of scenic character or
3 aesthetic quality. On page 3 of his testimony, Mr. Warren claims that NECEC’s river crossing
4 will have “no direct scenic or aesthetic impact from the standpoint of users of the river.” Group
5 10 reminds the Commission to consider appropriate source experts when deciding on this
6 component of the Site Application, such as James Palmer’s Visual Impact Analysis submitted to
7 these official proceedings.

8 Furthermore, Mr. Warren adds that the applicant stated that “snowmobilers are accustomed to
9 seeing transmission corridors and travelling within the cleared corridors, so it is unlikely that the
10 Project would have an impact on their continued enjoyment of snowmobilers. Hikers’
11 experiences should also not be adversely impacted by the Project.” To date, neither Mr. Warren
12 nor the applicant have provided citations to user studies conducted to support these statements,
13 thus diminishing their credibility on these topics.

14 The Commission, again, should dismiss Mr. Warren’s testimony and refer to Palmer’s 2018
15 independent peer review of NECEC. On page 2, Palmer reports, “Recreation Use. There are no
16 data in the NECEC VIA describing recreation use of the role of scenic quality in recreation
17 experience and how “the use or viewer expectations of the scenic resource will be altered by the
18 visual change” (Chapter 315.9). There are only very general statements about how the project
19 will affect motorists, the recreation population and the working population. These statements are
20 not supported by references to authoritative sources.”³

21 **Rebuttal to Robert Meyers on behalf of Group 3:**

³ Palmer, J. Review of the New England Clean Energy Connect Visual Quality and Scenic Character. August 20, 2018.

1 On page 2, item 4, Mr. Meyers' pre-filed direct testimony states, "In my full-time work with the
2 Snowmobile Association I hear large numbers of complaints from snowmobilers. I have never
3 heard a single complaint about seeing, or snowmobiling in the vicinity of, a power line. In my
4 opinion, the predominant attitude of the Association's membership with respect to the
5 construction of the proposed transmission line would be indifference or support, with little or no
6 opposition." The focus of this statement is Mr. Meyer's admission of it being his "opinion." To
7 date, neither Mr. Meyers nor the Maine Snowmobile Association have conducted a member
8 survey regarding opinions on the proposed corridor. According to their website, MSA has the
9 capacity and history of conducting recreational studies⁴, however, in this case has not consulted
10 members on prevailing opinion voiding his assertion of MSA's predominant attitude. Unlike the
11 Sportsman's Alliance of Maine, the Maine Snowmobile Association did not allow members to
12 weigh in on the decision of whether or not to support NECEC.⁵

13 In his testimony, Mr. Meyers does not address or acknowledge members' comments sent to him
14 in the Fall 2018 regarding their opposition to NECEC. At the October 2018 Maine Snowmobile
15 Association show at the Augusta Civic Center, Mr. Meyers personally escorted NECEC
16 opponents, who were MSA members, from the exhibition show.⁶ There is also concern^{7,8,9} that
17 Mr. Meyers' support for NECEC is violating MSA Bylaws amended on April 22, 2017¹⁰, which
18 states, "To encourage among its members an appreciation of the natural and scenic areas of our
19 state and the need to protect them."

⁴ <http://www.mesnow.com/Study.html>

⁵ Trahan, David: SAM public comment 11-20-19; <https://mpuc-cms.maine.gov/CQM.Public.WebUI/Common/CaseMaster.aspx?CaseNumber=2017-00232>

⁶ https://www.facebook.com/groups/279944929428517/search/?query=snowmobile%20show&epa=SEARCH_BOX

⁷ https://www.facebook.com/groups/279944929428517/search/?query=msa&epa=SEARCH_BOX

⁸ https://www.facebook.com/groups/279944929428517/search/?query=msa&epa=SEARCH_BOX

⁹ https://www.facebook.com/groups/279944929428517/search/?query=msa&epa=SEARCH_BOX

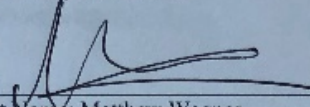
¹⁰ <http://www.mesnow.com/pdfs/BYLAWS4-17.pdf>

1 Mr. Meyers did, however, participate in the 2019 Winter Recreation Survey conducted by Sandra
2 Howard, Ph.D.¹¹, which included 163 participants from 8 states. Relevant findings from this
3 study revealed 70% of respondents reported least preference to ‘riding along a power line trail’
4 and most preference to ‘groomed trailing riding in forested areas.’ 70% of respondents reported
5 that a ‘150-foot wide cleared corridor with 90-foot transmission towers’ to have a strong
6 negative impact on their snowmobiling experience. 60% of respondents reported they would be
7 less likely to ‘visit a scenic area which contains large-scale developments for a snowmobiling
8 destination.’ Mr. Meyers’ expert opinion seems to be based on maintaining credibility and
9 snowmobile access with a private land-owner, the applicant, which he noted in item 3 of his
10 testimony - “620 miles of 14,000 miles of trails located on CMP property.”

¹¹ <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/141IZFJODNaoCaNwIYlroTjewlEqOCZ5j>

Date: 3/23/2019

Respectfully submitted,

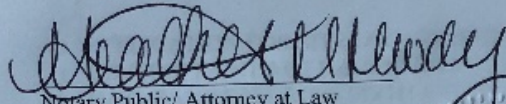
By: 
Print Name: Matthew Wagner

3/23/19

STATE OF Maine
COUNTY OF Waldo

Personally appeared before me the above- named Matthew Wagner, who being duly sworn, did testify that the foregoing testimony was true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief.

Before me,


Notary Public/ Attorney at Law
My Commission expires _____

Heather M. Moody
Notary Public, State of Maine
My Commission Expires August 20, 2022

