

Kirkland, April

From: Mary Hawko <mary.hawko@maine.edu>
Sent: Saturday, March 23, 2019 9:08 PM
To: DEP, NECEC
Subject: Fwd: my public comment on the CMP proposed transmission line

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Gentlemen,

As a citizen of Maine and one who values all that makes Maine the beautiful place that it is, I would like you to consider my comments regarding the NECEC project as you move forward with your decision process. This proposal only seems like a wonderful idea on the face of it - let's advance clean energy and reduce climate change for the good of everyone (and for free!!). We can agree that those are among the most pressing issues humankind must face. However, I do not see that this project in any way advances Maine's goals in that regard except peripherally at best.

There are ways to address the problem of greenhouse gas emissions, however, the problem we are addressing is the NECEC corridor. This project was never designed with the purpose of advancing Maine's climate change goals, much less for enhancing ecosystems, clean air, water quality, or conservation of habitat. It was designed to meet the Massachusetts RFP to bring in clean energy, and to do that for corporate profit, not designed to fill a need faced by Maine citizens or to convenience them in any way. There is a strong consensus that this effort likely will not do any such thing as reduce greenhouse gases, despite CMP/Avangrid/Iberdrola's attempt to frame it that way. If incorporated by Hydro-Quebec, the NECEC project could involve the subsequent shuffling of power generation from one facility to another in Canada with no net decrease in regional emissions. What is at stake is a functionally intact, importantly ecologically connected temperate forest, and essential environmental features that make Maine worth protecting and that are what people need and want. We all need energy, but there must be a better means to secure it than this.

For Maine to develop and implement clean energy strategies, it must have the capacity, yet this project limits the grid infrastructure in the state by congestion on the transmission lines. The state would also suffer the loss of ecosystem services provided by forested areas that are an important component of any carbon emissions reduction plan. The environmental impacts to species and habitats need to be carefully evaluated, not brushed aside. Allowing a biodiverse forested ecosystem to be sacrificed on the altar of clean energy is patently absurd. The NECEC's quick, "no cost to Maine" but very lucrative for a select few is a proposal being proffered under a guise. Careful planning and less bullying by corporations and politicians who posture as champions of climate change is called for to meet the challenge of clean energy, the needs of the public, and the essential need for natural habitat and environmental protection.

Thank you if you took the time to read this. I hope you are able to come to a justifiable position on the issue.

Mary Hawko
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