Kirkland, April

From: Emily Dingman <emilydingman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, April 10, 2019 1:22 PM
To: DEP, NECEC
Subject: NECEC public comment in opposition

Hello,

My name is Emily Dingman. I grew up in the town of Leeds, one of the many towns along the corridor of this proposed transmission line. I feel that it is important to recognize that the Clean Energy Connect transmission line from Canada to Massachusetts via the Maine woods is very problematic.

Growing up, I lived on River road and often walked, ran and skiid on the power lines. I went to college in 2004, and when I came home the lines had been widened. The trails I used to walk were nolonger sheltered, they were wide open to the sun and wind, much like a dirt highway.

This may seem trivial, but now that we face another expansion which will not deliver energy to Mainers, and which comes with much higher costs. I am asking you to look for more from CMP, and to look deeply at this project. Please consider the greater impact of this project on Maine's future, and please decline this project.

The energy transmitted by these lines is not proven to be additional renewable energy from Hydro Quebec. It may be reallocated from other places, which means that it will not reduce greenhouse gas emissions. It may actually increase total greenhouse gas emissions.

This project requires an environmental impact statement, which has not yet been undertaken. This analysis is important because it will cross hundreds of vernal pools and iconic Maine wilderness such as the Appalachian trail. It will permanently destroying the integrity of this historic landmark.

The transmission line will require cutting a 53 mile swath of Forest, which will be permanently destroyed. This will eliminate habitat for wildlife, and reduce Maine's appeal to tourists seeking wilderness experiences.

Mature hardwood forests sequester as much as 30,000 pounds of carbon dioxide per acre per year, according to ecologist Timothy J. Fahey of Cornell University. If 53 miles of Forest are cut, we will lose more than valuable hunting land, habitat, and tourism. We will lose 22,000 pounds of fresh oxygen per acre each year after the Forest is cut. Trees absorb carbon dioxide, and release oxygen. One square mile contains 640 acres. For every square mile that is cut for this transmission line, we would lose 19,200,000 pounds of carbon dioxide sequestration per year, and we would lose 14,080,000 pounds of fresh oxygen per year.

According to the New York Times article from 2012 titled "Tree Power", deciduous trees and conifers sequester roughly the same amount of carbon, although some conifers grow faster, thereby providing their carbon dioxide-oxygen exchange sooner than do slower growing trees. If anything, my estimates of carbon dioxide sequestration and oxygen production are low. Those numbers were for one square mile. Let's say this 53 mile swath is half a mile wide. 320 acres multiplied by 53 miles is 16,970 acres of Forest. In one year that much Forest has the capacity to sequester 508,800,000 pounds of carbon dioxide. Those same trees will provide 373,120,000 pounds of oxygen per year.

How much carbon dioxide will this transmission line sequester per year? How much oxygen will it produce? I guarantee that in year one we will be negative. We will release more carbon dioxide than the forest would have absorbed, and we won't have the forest to absorb anything. We won't be releasing any oxygen with this transmission line ever. That seems to be an instant loss. A loss that will only increase its deficit annually, with no economic or ecological benefit to Mainers worth mentioning.

This transmission line is being proposed to fulfill the obligation of the state of Massachusetts to its people, in an effort to reduce their impact on global greenhouse gas emissions. Why doesn't Massachusetts produce this energy locally?

Why should Maine be responsible for the transmission of energy to Massachusetts at little benefit to us? A paltry $20/year reduction in consumer bills is not worth permanently destroying our forests.

How can we be sure that CMP is going to propel us to a renewable energy future after devastating our forests? What terms bind them to making that transition a reality? What is the timeframe? Why would our last move before converting to renewable energy be to destroy the forces of the planet that renew themselves? It seems a backwards move in the larger scheme.

Over 5 years, if the forest is allowed to exist, it will sequester 2.544 billion pounds of carbon dioxide for free! In fact, it will do more. It will pay us with tourism, with sap, with hunting, fishing and with 1.866 billion pounds of clean air. Not only that, but it will offer the environmental resilience which comes through the preservation of biodiversity.

According to the United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization, 18 million acres of Forest are lost each year. Let's not contribute to that sad statistic. If we really want what's best for the planet, and our people, we need this forest. The jobs the project creates will be temporary. The damage will be permanent.

Thank you for considering my concerns and answering my questions. Please do not approve this application.

Emily Dingman

World Heritage Area Representative