



---

**Environmental Review Committee**  
**Meeting Minutes**

*Thursday June 23, 2022, 4:00 p.m.*

*Via Zoom*

Committee Members Present: Roger Bolton (Chair), Malcolm Fick, Mark Smith, Kyle Hanlon, and John Duval

Others Present: Bob Deptula (Eversource), Chris Fritz (Eversource), Becky Weissman (SWCA Environmental), Jamie McCarthy, Melissa Provencher (BRPC) and Tom Matuszko (BRPC)

**I. Call to Order**

ERC Chairman Bolton called the meeting to order at 4:45pm and began roll call.

**II. Approval of Meeting Minutes from January 10, 2022**

K. Hanlon made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by M. Smith. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye

M. Smith: Aye

M. Fick: Abstain

J. Duval: Aye

K. Hanlon: Aye

The motion passed.

**III. NSTAR Transmission Right-of-Way Reliability Project - Expanded Environmental Notification Form**

Chairman Bolton explained that a remote site visit was held by MEPA on June 22, 2022 and attended by both Chairman Bolton and M. Provencher. Comments on the EENF are due by July 8, 2022.

M. Provencher presented the Environmental Review Report for the NSTAR Transmission Right-of-Way Reliability Project (TRRP) EENF and explained that the intent of the proposed project is to improve system reliability by reducing the number of tree fall-in risks and to create a sustainable environment comprised of vegetation that can safely coexist with the transmission lines. The long-term management objective of the TRRP is to manage the newly cleared areas as early succession habitat and encourage the growth of grasses, forbs, and shrubs. The Project exceeds review thresholds set forth by the MEPA regulations requiring an ENF and a mandatory Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The proponent has requested that MEPA allow the preparation of a Single EIR.

The Project will result in temporary impacts to approximately 7.9 acres of BVW and 0.1 acre of IVW as a result of construction matting for access. Additionally, tree clearing is proposed in approximately 18 acres of BVW and 0.1 acre of IVW. Permanent change to wetland classification from palustrine forested

(PFO) to palustrine scrub-shrub (PSS) will occur due to tree clearing. BRPC supports the request for a Single EIR and has noted several points of clarification to be addressed within the Single EIR.

M. Provencher informed the Committee that during the remote site visit the proponent indicated their intent to develop a plan for compensatory mitigation. The project appears to be well-suited for such an approach in light of the fact that permanent impacts to wetlands will not result in the loss of wetland resources but will result in the conversion from one wetland type to another. R. Bolton suggested that staff add additional language to the comments to encourage the proponent to work with the Towns and to work with Town Managers/Administrators, DPW, and other boards in addition to the conservation commissions when determining compensatory compensation.

K. Hanlon moved to authorize the Executive Director to send a letter on behalf of the Committee consistent with staff recommendations within the Environmental Review Report and the Committee discussion. M. Fick seconded the motion. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote

R. Bolton: Aye  
M. Fick: Aye  
K. Hanlon: Aye

M. Smith: Aye  
J. Duval: Aye

The motion passed.

#### **IV. Other Business**

No other business.

#### **V. Discussion of General Review Practices**

Chairman Bolton explained that he had asked to include a discussion of the general review practices on the agenda as it has been some time since the practices have been reviewed and the written practices appear to be out of date. The Committee agreed to table discussion of the general review practices to a future meeting.

#### **VI. Adjournment**

K. Hanlon made a motion to adjourn at 5:06pm. The motion was seconded by M. Smith. ERC Chairman Bolton conducted a roll call vote.

R. Bolton: Aye  
K. Hanlon: Aye  
M. Fick: Aye

M. Smith: Aye  
J. Duval: Aye

The motion was passed unanimously.

Materials distributed electronically:

- ERC Agenda 6/23/22
- ERC Minutes 1/10/21
- Environmental Review Report 6/23/22
- NSTAR Transmission Right-of-Way Reliability Project, Expanded Environmental Notification Form
- ENF & EIR General Review Procedures