

charles.soltan@soltanbass.com
james.bass@soltanbass.com
benjamin.smith@soltanbass.com

(207) 621-6300 (p)
(207) 621-9797 (f)
www.soltanbass.com

July 18, 2018

Via First Class & Email (NECEC.DEP@maine.gov)

Jim Beyer, Bureau of Land Resources
Maine Department of Environmental Protection
106 Hogan Road Suite 6
Bangor, Maine 04401

**Re: New England Clean Energy Connect – Petition for Leave to Intervene and
Comments of Western Mountains & Rivers Corporation**

Dear Jim,

Please accept this letter as my entry of appearance on behalf of Western Mountains & Rivers Corporation (“WM&RC”) in the above-mentioned proceeding.

Enclosed please find a letter from Russell Walters, President of WM&RC in support of WM&RC’s petition for leave to intervene in this proceeding. Mr. Walters will be the spokesperson for WM&RC. As shown by Mr. Walters’s letter, WM&RC has a direct and substantial interest that will be impacted by the New England Clean Energy Connect (“NECEC” or “Project”). WM&RC is also prepared and capable of participation in this proceeding. WM&RC thus meets the requirements of Chapter 3, Section 11(A) of the Department’s Rules and should be granted intervenor status as a full party to the proceeding, with all rights attendant thereto.

During its evaluation of the NECEC, WM&RC also wishes the Department consider the comments raised in Mr. Walters’s letter. As a Maine nonprofit public benefit corporation formed for the purpose of expanding conservation along Western Maine’s rivers, developing recreation projects and educational programs about the history, ecology and uses of Maine’s rivers, and expanding economic development opportunities in Western Maine, WM&RC is in a unique position to provide input on the Project vis-à-vis the relevant statutory criteria. These include the extent to which the Project would cause unreasonable interference with existing scenic, aesthetic, recreational or navigational uses of the Kennebec River in the vicinity of the crossing (38 M.R.S. § 480-D (1); DEP Regs. Ch. 315), whether and to what extent any crossing alternatives would create an adverse effect on the natural environment (38 M.R.S. §

484(3); DEP Regs. Ch. 375), and mitigation of the Project (DEP Regs. Ch. 315(8)) as well as alternatives to the Kennebec River crossing (38 M.R.S. § 480-D(8); DEP Regs. Ch. 310).

WM&RC appreciates the Department's consideration of WM&RC's petition for leave to intervene and additional comments and welcomes the opportunity to answer any questions that the Department may have. Please feel free to call if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Benjamin J. Smith".

Benjamin J. Smith, Esq.

BJS/car

Enclosures