

Beyer, Jim R

From: Burke, Ruth A
Sent: Tuesday, October 12, 2021 9:47 AM
To: Beyer, Jim R
Subject: FW: D.E.P. Hearing on CMP/NECEC Public Land Lease

Ruth Ann Burke
Maine Department of Environmental Protection Board of Environmental Protection Commissioner's Office

-----Original Message-----

From: Paul Frederic <frederic@myfairpoint.net>
Sent: Monday, October 11, 2021 8:55 PM
To: Burke, Ruth A <Ruth.A.Burke@maine.gov>
Subject: D.E.P. Hearing on CMP/NECEC Public Land Lease

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To Members of the DEP,

I am contacting the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) concerning the public land lease between the State of Maine and Central Maine Power Company (CMP) and New England Clean Energy Connect LLC (NECEC). The Maine Superior Court ruled that the lease was issued without following a clear process in determining if the agreement involved a change of land use on public land. This lease has been negotiated twice, first in 2014 and again, with a higher rent, in 2020. The lease is for a transmission line and there is already a line on the property. The agreement followed a traditional pattern associated with public land leases. This implies that there is no change in circumstance regarding the public land under this lease.

Suspension of the lease will result in significant damage to Maine's environment and economy. Delays will result in extending the high fossil fuel consumption that the state depends on to provide electricity and will continue related climate change problems. This climate change will likely pose more risk to our Maine environment than any negative impacts of the NECEC construction.

The economic stagnation created by a stoppage is of major concern. Delay of the NECEC corridor will prolong time needed to reduce Maine's energy costs. NECEC is currently supporting more than 1000 well paying construction jobs and generating millions of dollars for local vendors selling everything from timber mats to food and fuel. Municipalities that host portions of the project are receiving millions of new tax dollars beginning this year, based on NECEC's estimate that one third of the endeavor is already in place. The annual flow of tax revenue will grow over the next few years as the transmission line and converter station are completed. The project has been fully vetted by all state and federal agencies that issue relative permits. The issue before you is an example of corridor opponents seeking to delay a project that is beneficial to Maine. I ask the DEP to support the public land lease that has been issued in good faith to the benefit of Maine.

Sincerely,

Paul B. Frederic, Ph.D. Geography
former Director of the Maine Land Use Regulation Commission First Selectman, Town of Starks