

1 **PERSONAL BACKGROUND**

2 Q. Please state your name and property address.

3 A. Matthew and Amanda Fitch, 291 Durham Point Road, Durham, NH 03824

4 Q. Please state your status in this docket.

5 A. We were granted intervenor status in the Seacoast Reliability Project docket along with  
6 our neighbors initially as the Durham Point/Little Bay Abutters group and then later, the Durham  
7 Residents per an SEC ruling. Our participation was not limited except that in “order to avoid  
8 duplicative arguments and to ensure the prompt and orderly development of these proceedings,  
9 [our] participation in this docket [was] combined [with the Durham Residents] for the purposes  
10 of presentation of evidence, argument, cross-examination, and other participation.” Order on  
11 Petitions to Intervene, dated August 24, 2016, at page 10.

12

13 **ADDITIONAL CONCERNS**

14 Q. What is the purpose of your supplemental testimony?

15 A. We are supplying supplemental testimony to address additional concerns we have and  
16 reinforce prior concerns based on new materials or references discovered.

17

18 Q. Why are you concerned about the negative impact to the enjoyment of your property?

19 A. When building our home on family land almost 15 years ago, we did not expect, predict  
20 or anticipate that a project of this magnitude could or would traverse our property. An 85’ tall  
21 structure carrying high voltage lines is proposed to be installed on our property with said lines  
22 passing very nearby our home. The project will forever and dramatically change the character of  
23 this property to something our family would not have considered building next to originally nor

1 would consider buying in the future. We are concerned about how our viewscape will change  
2 with the new poles and lines installed, the sounds emitted from the lines during various weather  
3 conditions, the accuracy of pre and post construction ELF/EMF calculations as opposed to actual  
4 readings and their impacts on and around our property and the material negative impact to value  
5 of our home and property. All of these concerns worry us for how our property will be forever  
6 changed and negatively impacted by the project.

7

8 Q. What concerns do you have about the peaceful, rural character of your property?

9 A. As previously noted in our pre-filed testimony and above, we are concerned that the  
10 project will forever change the character of our property by installing an 85' pole on the property  
11 carrying high voltage wires, emitting an as-yet-to-be-measured amount of ELF/EMF on and/or  
12 near our home, dramatically changing the viewscape from our home and property and having a  
13 material negative impact to the current and future value and desirability/marketability of the  
14 home and property.

15

16 Q. What is your opinion of loss of value and marketability of your home?

17 A. Various resources I have read/discovered indicate that properties such as ours, that will  
18 have a pole physically installed on the property, with wires passing nearby the home and  
19 visibility of the poles and/or lines could expect to experience a negative impact in property value  
20 up to and beyond 30%. A quote from an article previously supplied states: "In conclusion, it can  
21 be stated with a high degree of certainty that there is a significant negative effect ranging from -  
22 10% to -30% of property value due to the presence of the high voltage electric transmission line.  
23 The actual loss depends on factors of land use, location of the power line and its size."

1     (Kielisch, “*Valuation Guidelines for Properties with Electric Transmission Lines*”). Another  
2     source of concern in this area is from James Chalmers, Eversource’s witness pertaining to  
3     property value impact. His comments under examination during the Northern Pass hearings  
4     indicate a potentially higher percentage negative impact to property value: “If it is basically a  
5     view lot and your view is down the valley and you string transmission lines across that valley  
6     right in the middle of the view shed and that becomes kind of the dominant feature of the view, I  
7     can easily imagine your \$200,000 second home might only be a \$75,000 second home or a  
8     \$100,000 second home -- something like that,” (*Northern Pass, Day 24 Afternoon Session Only*  
9     (7-31-17) Page 90, lines 18-24, Page 91, lines 1-2).

10    Furthering our concerns in this area and additionally, casting doubt on what we as homeowners  
11    thrust into this process can reliably believe or not, is a Washington Post article from August 4,  
12    2009 referencing a work James Chalmers is associated with: “...a closer read of the actual  
13    report on which the story is based, High-Voltage Transmission Lines: Proximity, Visibility, and  
14    Encumbrance Effects, reveals that this is hardly a trustworthy research paper. If appraisers in the  
15    field rely on this article, they could produce skewed valuations.

16

17    First clue: The study was paid for by **Northeast Utilities**, in anticipation of expansion of high-  
18    voltage transmission grid in New England. Second clue: The authors, **James A. Chalmers**  
19    and **Frank A. Voorvaart**, are consultants in the fields of real estate damages and real estate  
20    litigation. You might see them in court if you were to, say, sue a utility company that wants to  
21    run a high-power line near your home.” (*Razzi, Washington Post, Aug 4, 2009 “Do High-Voltage*  
22    *Lines Zap Property Values?”*)

1 Based on the references above, I believe the marketability of our property will be negatively  
2 impacted by the project and we can expect to experience a loss in value ranging up to 30% and  
3 beyond. Additionally, as a layman and homeowner, I am concerned that Mr. Chalmers research  
4 and comments provided as an expert witness for the Applicant appears to conflict dramatically  
5 and is potentially suspect based on my understanding of the 2009 Washington Post article.

6

7 Q. Do you have other concerns about the project?

8 A. Yes. The potential negative impact to Little Bay from the cable crossing remains a  
9 major concern as I do not believe it can be adequately or accurately modeled, forecast or  
10 predicted and the possibility for permanent negative effects to the region is too great.  
11 The potential negative impact to the wildlife habitat in the area also remains a concern as a major  
12 construction project will be traversing what currently has been an undisturbed and uninterrupted  
13 area for the past several decades.

14

15 Q. Does this conclude your supplemental testimony?

16 A. Yes.