July 22, 2016

Ms. Pamela G. Monroe, Administrator
NH Site Evaluation Committee
21 South Fruit Street, Suite 10
Concord, NH 03301-2429

Re: Intervention in SEC Docket No. 2015-04: Application of Eversource Energy for a Certificate of Site and Facility – Seacoast Reliability Project

Dear Ms. Pamela Monroe:

This letter is intended to be a motion to intervene in SEC Docket No. 2015-04: Application of Eversource Energy for a Certificate of Site and Facility – Seacoast Reliability Project.

We have concerns about the potential impact of the Eversource Seacoast Reliability Project on our small business, Fat Dog Shellfish Co., LLC. Fat Dog Shellfish is a 12-acre oyster farm located in Little Bay, 4 acres of which are located only a few hundred meters north of the proposed cable crossing in Little Bay. This 4-acre site is the "base of operations" for our business and includes our primary nursery area as well as the source of the vast majority of our market oysters. This site houses 1.5 to 3 million oysters at any given time, and oysters range in size form ¼-inch seed oysters to 3-inch market size oysters. The remaining 8 acres of our state licensed aquaculture area, located in upper Little Bay, are in the process of being put into full production.

Our concerns relate to short and long term loss of sales due to compromised product quality as well as mortality and loss of stock. As filter feeders, oysters take water in to extract food from the water column. Oysters filtering/feeding in turbid waters will retain sediment and grit, and will be unfit for consumption. We anticipate that the sediment plume resulting from both heavy equipment and diver dredging may cause us to suspend sales during the entire dredging period and immediately following until the sediment plume clears and the oysters are able to "flush out" contaminants

Extended periods of turbidity in the water column will interrupt feeding. This will result in a loss of growth and productivity, and will impact sales over the long term due to an extended grow out period. In some cases, extended periods of turbidity may result on direct mortality of juvenile oysters.

The primary grow-out method employed by Fat Dog Shellfish is rack and bag and cage culture. These structures slow water flow and cause suspended solids to drop out of the water columns. Extended periods of high sediment loads/turbidity can cause bags and cages to fill with sediment faster than oysters can clear them and smother the oysters, particularly juveniles.

We are concerned that any long-lived contaminants exposed and suspended during the dredging period may result in contamination of our oysters, either resulting in direct mortality, or rendering our product unsuitable for sale.

In many cases, oysters at our site and many others in Little Bay are planted directly on the substrate for grow out. We are concerned that sediment deposition may smother these oyster and kill them, or make them impossible to locate and recover, resulting in a complete loss of this stock.

Finally, we are concerned about unanticipated impacts related to sediment deposition or prolonged high concentrations of suspended sediment in the water column. Oysters are famously tied to the environment where they are grown. Water quality and sediment characteristics dictate their appearance, meat quality, taste, and all other features of an oyster; features that drive sales and define our brand. We are concerned that prolonged exposure to turbidity, sedimentation rates, and poor water quality could irreparably damage the characteristics of an entire stock of our oysters.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Jason and Elizabeth Baker, owners
Fat Dog Shellfish Co., LLC
3 Chain Bridge Dr.
Newburyport, MA 01950
jbaker@fatdogshellfish.com
978-979-0450

cc: Distribution List of the Seacoast Reliability Project, SEC Docket 2015-04