

STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

June 13, 2016- 1:28 p.m.

Public Utilities Commission

21 South Fruit Street Suite 10

Concord, New Hampshire

DAY 1

{Afternoon Session ONLY}

IN RE: SEC DOCKET NO. 2015-05

SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE:

Joint Application of New England
Power Company d/b/a National Grid
and Public Service Company of
New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource
Energy for a Certificate of
Site and Facility.

[Adjudicative Hearing]

PRESENT:

SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE:

F. Anne Ross, Esq. Public Utilities Commission
(Presiding as Presiding Officer)

Cmsr. Kathryn Bailey Public Utilities Commission
Cmsr. Jeffrey Rose Dept. of Resources and
Economic Development

Dr. Richard Boisvert Dept. of Cultural Resources
Division of Historical Res.

Michele Roberge Dept. of Environmental Serv.

Patricia Weathersby Public Member

Rachel Whitaker Alternate Public Member

Also Present for the SEC:

Michael J. Iacopino, Esq. (Brennan...

Pamela G. Monroe, SEC Administrator

COURT REPORTER: Susan J. Robidas, NH LCR 44

I N D E X (CONT'D)

OTHER APPEARANCES:

FOR THE APPLICANTS:

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Barry Needleman, Esq. (McLane Middleton)

Adam Dumville, Esq. (McLane Middleton)

Christopher Allwarden, Esq. (Eversource)

Reptg. National Grid:

Mark Rielly, Esq. (National Grid)

COUNSEL FOR THE PUBLIC:

Christopher G. Aslin, Esq.

Assistant Attorney General

N.H. Department of Justice

INTERVENOR:

Margaret Huard, pro se

I N D E X

WITNESS PANEL: BRIAN McNEILL
 JAMES VANCHO
 EMILIE O'NEIL

PAGE

Direct examination by Mr. Rielly	5
Cross-examination by Mr. Aslin	9
Cross-examination by Ms. Huard	18
QUESTIONS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SEC COUNSEL:	
By Presiding Officer Ross	37
By Mr. Iacopino	40
WITNESS: BRIAN HUDOCK	
Redirect examination by Mr. Rielly	42
WITNESS: JOHN HECKLAU	
Direct examination by Mr. Needleman	45
Cross-examination by Mr. Aslin	46
Cross-examination by Ms. Huard	57
QUESTIONS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS AND SEC COUNSEL:	
By Dr. Boisvert	85
By Ms. Whitaker	95
By Ms. Weathersby	95
Redirect by Mr. Needleman	96

I N D E X (CONT'D)

WITNESS: DAVID PLANTE

PAGE

Redirect examination by Mr. Needleman 100

QUESTIONS FROM SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS
AND SEC COUNSEL:

By Cmsr. Rose 104

By Mr. Aslin 106

By Ms. Huard 106

By Mr. Iacopino 108

By Ms. Weathersby 108

WITNESS PANEL: JOHN MARTIN
BOB ANDREW

Direct examination by Mr. Needleman 109

Cross-examination by Mr. Aslin 111

Cross-examination by Ms. Huard 120

1 AFTERNOON SESSION
2 (Resumed at 1:28 p.m.)

3 P R O C E E D I N G S

4 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Good
5 afternoon. We're going to open the afternoon
6 session with the witnesses on Financial
7 Capability, and we're going to begin by
8 swearing in the witnesses.

9 (WHEREUPON, BRIAN McNEILL, JAMES VANCHO
10 AND EMILIE O'NEIL were duly sworn and
11 cautioned by the Court Reporter.)

12 DIRECTEXAMINATION

13 BY MR. RIELLY:

14 Q. We're going to start with Brian and kind of
15 work our way down the panel.

16 Can you please provide your name and
17 current job position.

18 A. (McNeill) Sure. Good afternoon. My name's
19 Brian McNeill. I'm the vice-president and
20 chief financial officer of New England Power
21 Corporation.

22 Q. And what is your role in this Application?

23 A. (McNeill) My role, I'm responsible for the
24 overall financial performance of the company,

1 including being able to finance our investments
2 moving forward.

3 Q. And you've been provided a copy of your
4 prefiled testimony in support of the
5 Application.

6 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

7 Q. You've been provided a copy of your prefiled
8 testimony in support of the Application. Do
9 you see that in front of you?

10 A. (McNeill) Yes, I do.

11 Q. And do you recognize that document?

12 A. (McNeill) I do.

13 Q. Do you have any changes to your testimony at
14 this time?

15 A. (McNeill) I do. There's one change on Page 4
16 of 7, Line 19. I understand the project cost
17 estimate has changed from \$82 million to \$72
18 million, of which New England Power's portion
19 is \$35 million, which is \$11 million less than
20 was in the testimony.

21 Q. Does that change affect the conclusions
22 presented in your prefiled testimony?

23 A. (McNeill) It actually strengthens the argument
24 there. With it being lower cost to New

1 Hampshire, we have a better opportunity to fund
2 that project.

3 Q. And with that change, do you adopt your
4 prefiled testimony as written and affirm that
5 the information and opinions contained therein
6 are true and accurate to the best of your
7 knowledge?

8 A. (McNeill) I do.

9 Q. Mr. Vancho, could you provide your name and
10 current job position.

11 A. (Vancho) Sure. James Vancho. I'm the manager
12 of investment analysis and business development
13 for Eversource.

14 Q. And what is your role in this Application?

15 A. (Vancho) Providing financial support for the
16 Application process.

17 Q. You, too, have been provided a copy of the
18 joint prefiled testimony with Ms. O'Neil in
19 support of the Application. Do you see that in
20 front of you?

21 A. (Vancho) Yes, I do.

22 Q. And you recognize that as your prefiled
23 testimony?

24 A. (Vancho) Yes.

1 Q. Do you have any changes to that testimony at
2 this time?

3 A. (Vancho) Yes, we have a similar change on Page
4 4 of 9, again, the \$82 million that's been
5 reduced to \$72 million.

6 Q. And does that change affect your conclusions or
7 opinions in your testimony?

8 A. (Vancho) Eversource's portion of this project
9 has not changed --

10 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

11 A. (Vancho) Eversource's portion of the project
12 has not changed.

13 Q. So, with that change, do you adopt your
14 prefiled testimony as written and affirm that
15 it's true and accurate, to the best of your
16 knowledge?

17 A. (Vancho) Yes.

18 Q. Ms. O'Neil, can you please provide your name
19 and business position for the record.

20 A. (O'Neil) My name is Emilie O'Neil. I'm the
21 director of corporate finance and cash
22 management for Eversource.

23 Q. And what is your role in the Application?

24 A. (O'Neil) I'm here to support the financial

1 aspect of the Application.

2 Q. And you, too, have been provided your prefiled,
3 joint prefiled testimony. Do you recognize
4 that document as such?

5 A. (O'Neil) Yes, I do.

6 Q. And do you have any other changes other than
7 what Mr. Vancho described?

8 A. (O'Neil) No, I don't.

9 Q. So, with that change, do you, too, adopt your
10 prefiled testimony as written and affirm that
11 it's true and accurate to the best of your
12 knowledge?

13 A. (O'Neil) Yes, I do.

14 MR. RIELLY: We tender the witnesses.

15 CROSS-EXAMINATION

16 BY MR. ASLIN:

17 Q. Thank you. Good afternoon. Mr. McNeill,
18 you've just indicated that the project's
19 projected cost has been reduced by
20 approximately \$11 million. And if I understand
21 correctly, that reduction is on the National
22 Grid portion of the project only; is that
23 correct?

24 A. (McNeill) That's correct.

1 Q. Could you describe relatively briefly the cause
2 of that reduction in projected cost?

3 A. (McNeill) I think I'll defer that question to
4 the project manager on the particular project.
5 I haven't been involved in the full cost
6 estimate. That's been driven by the project
7 estimating team and the project manager.

8 Q. Okay. But you were provided information from
9 the project manager, presumably, that the cost
10 had changed?

11 A. (McNeill) Correct.

12 Q. The original allocation between the projects I
13 believe was \$46 million for the National Grid
14 portion and \$36 or \$37 million for Eversource.
15 Is the new number for National Grid, then, \$35
16 million?

17 A. (McNeill) That's correct.

18 Q. And is the -- you may not know the answer to
19 this, based on your prior answer, but I'll ask
20 anyway. Has the projected cost of the project
21 also been reduced for the Massachusetts portion
22 of this transmission project?

23 A. (McNeill) I do not believe so, no.

24 Q. This question is for the whole panel.

1 In this case, this is a reliability
2 project that's been authorized or approved at
3 some level by the ISO-New England; is that
4 correct?

5 A. (McNeill) Yes, that's correct.

6 A. (O'Neil) That's correct.

7 Q. What does that mean in terms of the financing
8 of the project?

9 A. (O'Neil) Well, we would finance this project --
10 Eversource, PSNH would finance this project in
11 a very similar manner to the way we have
12 financed other transmission projects in the
13 past, initially with short-term debt. And then
14 we would refinance short-term debt out with
15 both equity and long-term debt. And once the
16 project went into service and we started to
17 collect revenues from the project, we would use
18 our cash from operations to support ongoing
19 efforts with the project.

20 A. (McNeill) And for National Grid it would be
21 very similar. This is one of the projects that
22 we have in the capital budget for this year, as
23 well as subsequent years. We finance -- we
24 make finance decisions on the overall portfolio

1 of capital projects for New England Power. And
2 we finance those through a combination of cash
3 generated from the business, short-term debt,
4 equity contributions from our parent, and
5 periodically long-term debt.

6 Q. Thank you. And as a reliability project, how
7 does cost recovery differ from the normal
8 independent project?

9 A. (McNeill) Within New England Power, any of the
10 projects that we have within New England Power,
11 we recover our costs and return on our
12 investment through our tariffs. So there's no
13 difference between a reliability project or any
14 other work that we're doing.

15 Q. Okay. Do you have an estimation of the
16 approximate allocation of the total project
17 cost to New Hampshire ratepayers under the --
18 for the cost recovery through the tariff?

19 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

20 A. (Vancho) For a regional network service --

21 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

22 A. (Vancho) I believe PSNH makes up approximately
23 6-1/2 percent of the regional network load.

24 Q. So, would approximately 6-1/2 percent of the

1 project cost be allocated to New Hampshire --
2 or to PSNH customers, or is it New Hampshire
3 customers?

4 A. (Vancho) That 6-1/2 is for PSNH, not all of New
5 Hampshire.

6 Q. And so what I'm trying to clarify for the
7 record, in part, is this is a regional
8 transmission project that is going to be
9 recovered through charges on customers
10 throughout the ISO-New England region, only a
11 portion of which are New Hampshire customers.
12 And am I understanding by your answer that
13 approximately 6.5 percent of the Eversource
14 portion of the project cost be borne by New
15 Hampshire customers?

16 A. (Vancho) Right. PSNH makes up 6-1/2 percent of
17 the network load. So that portion of the
18 revenue requirements cost of the project would
19 be allocated to PSNH.

20 Q. And then recovered through PSNH customers?

21 A. (Vancho) That's right.

22 Q. And in terms of National Grid?

23 A. (McNeill) It's regional. So, again, the
24 project costs are going to be part of the

1 regional tariff, of which the portion that
2 comes back to PSNH will be the only portion
3 that gets charged to those customers.

4 Q. So are you able to provide an estimate of the
5 portion of the \$72 million that will be paid by
6 New Hampshire ratepayers as opposed to other
7 ratepayers in New England?

8 A. (Vanch) I mean, ultimately be 6-1/2 percent of
9 those costs. But you're developing revenue
10 requirements over the life of the project. So
11 it's going to recover all the operating
12 expenses, the depreciation on that project,
13 returns on equity and interest. So, full
14 recovery will be 6-1/2 percent of those
15 projected revenue requirements.

16 Q. So, the total cost over time, including
17 carrying charges and everything else?

18 A. (Vanch) That's right.

19 Q. Thank you. This project has received a waiver
20 for the decommissioning portion of the
21 Application. And my question for this panel
22 is: Do you have an estimation of what the
23 decommissioning of the project would cost if it
24 were an obligation that came up sometime in the

1 future, in today's dollars?

2 A. (O'Neil) I think that's really a question for
3 the project managers and the engineers.

4 A. (McNeill) I believe there was testimony filed
5 to the estimate of the costs between, on the
6 NEP side, of between 9 and 13-1/2 million
7 dollars is a current estimate of cost in the
8 future.

9 Q. Thank you. Yes, I think that was part of
10 discovery responses and not part of the record
11 yet.

12 So, between 9 and 13-1/2 million dollars
13 is a potential range of cost for
14 decommissioning?

15 A. (McNeill) Yeah.

16 Q. Is that cost currently part of the project
17 budget?

18 A. (McNeill) I do not believe it is, no. I mean,
19 it's very atypical for a transmission project
20 for reliability in the region to be
21 decommissioned. We would typically refurbish
22 those projects over time because there's still
23 the need for the reliability in the region.

24 Q. Thank you. So, the \$72 million does not

1 include the 9 to 13?

2 A. (McNeill) Correct.

3 Q. If decommissioning were to become necessary at
4 some time in the future, how would that cost be
5 financed or paid out by the Company?

6 A. (O'Neil) The same way as our other costs are
7 financed and paid out: Initially with
8 short-term debt, and then after that with cash
9 from operations and long-term financings, both
10 debt and equity.

11 Q. In terms of cost recovery through the tariff,
12 at what point would the companies initiate that
13 cost recovery?

14 A. (Vancho) As soon as there's a legal obligation
15 to decommission, we go to FERC and try to get
16 approval for recovery of that. So, you know,
17 if that happened at the beginning of the
18 project, we would estimate those costs in the
19 future, again, the 9 to 13, present value that
20 back, and we would book an asset retirement
21 obligation at that present value level and
22 depreciate that over the life of the project.

23 There's also a second component, which is
24 an incurrence expense. Because we've booked

1 everything at present value, we need to mark
2 that up over time to get to the future
3 liability. So you'd have an incurrence expense
4 basically every year based on the discount
5 rate. Move it from present value to future
6 value. And so we collect those two components
7 every year: Depreciation and incurrence
8 expense.

9 Q. You said that that process would be triggered
10 by a legal obligation to decommission being
11 imposed at some point in time; is that right?

12 A. (Vancha) That's right.

13 Q. If the obligation to decommission occurred in
14 advance of the actual timing of
15 decommissioning, my understanding is you would
16 be able to begin cost recovery in advance of
17 the actual expense?

18 A. (Vancha) That's right.

19 Q. And on the flip side, if decommissioning was
20 ordered tomorrow, you would finance it as Ms.
21 O'Neil stated and then recover the cost going
22 forward?

23 A. (O'Neil) Correct.

24 Q. And in your opinion, is the 9 to 13.5 million

1 cost something that would be within the
2 financial capabilities of the companies to
3 cover?

4 A. (McNeill) Yes, it would.

5 A. (O'Neil) Very much so.

6 MR. ASLIN: Thank you. I don't have
7 any further questions.

8 CROSS-EXAMINATION

9 BY MS. HUARD:

10 Q. Good afternoon. Ms. O'Neil and Mr. Vancho, you
11 have stated that the construction costs will be
12 financed through internally generated cash and
13 short-term borrowing, and as the short-term
14 debt accumulates, refinance with long-term
15 debt; correct?

16 A. (O'Neil) Correct, and some equity.

17 Q. I'm sorry?

18 A. (O'Neil) And some equity.

19 Q. Right. And from time to time you receive
20 contributions from your parent company. Is
21 that what you're referring to?

22 A. (O'Neil) That's correct.

23 Q. I'd like to refer to Exhibit 1 and 2.

24 (Ms. Huard hands document to panel

1 members.)

2 Q. Do you agree these exhibits are balance sheets
3 and short-term and long-term debt portion of
4 the financial statements for Eversource at
5 12/31/2014?

6 A. (O'Neil) Yes, I do.

7 Q. And you, Mr. Vancho?

8 A. (Vancho) Yes.

9 Q. Looking at Exhibit 2, I'm going to read Note 9
10 out loud as follows: "On January 15, 2015,
11 Northeast Utilities' parent issued \$150 million
12 of 1.6 percent Series G Senior Notes due to
13 mature in 2018 and \$300 million of 31.5 percent
14 Series H Notes due to mature in 2025. The
15 proceeds, net of issuance costs, were used to
16 repay short-term borrowings outstanding under
17 the Northeast Utilities commercial paper
18 program" --

19 A. (O'Neil) I'm sorry. I don't see a 9. I see 7
20 and 8.

21 Q. It should be down way at the bottom.

22 (Ms. Huard indicates on document.)

23 Q. So, would you disagree with this? This is
24 the -- would you agree with this statement?

1 A. (O'Neil) Which statement?

2 Q. The one I just read, Footnote 9.

3 (Witness reviews document.)

4 A. (O'Neil) The statement's accurate.

5 Q. Thank you.

6 Ms. O'Neil, do you participate in the
7 preparation of the financial statements? Do
8 you participate in the preparation of financial
9 statements?

10 A. (O'Neil) Please define "participate." I'm not
11 in the accounting -- accounting puts together
12 financial statements.

13 Q. Do you contribute to them at all?

14 A. (O'Neil) I contribute to part of it.

15 Q. And what part of it do you contribute?

16 A. (O'Neil) Long-term debt, short-term debt.

17 Q. Do you prepare the schedules that go into the
18 financial statements?

19 A. (O'Neil) No, I don't prepare them.

20 Q. Do you provide the numbers for them?

21 A. (O'Neil) I review them.

22 Q. You review them. Thank you.

23 And, Mr. Vancho, do you participate in any
24 way or provide any information for the

1 financial statements generally?

2 A. (Vancho) No, I don't.

3 Q. So, Ms. O'Neil, are you familiar with the
4 standard ratios that are used in the financial
5 industry to determine relationships between
6 components in the financial statement?

7 A. (O'Neil) Can you be more specific?

8 Q. Are you familiar with the standard ratios that
9 the financial industry uses to compare the
10 various components in a financial statement?

11 A. (O'Neil) Which ratios are you referring to?

12 Q. Well, I'm asking you in general right now. Do
13 you know that there are standard ratios that
14 exist that the financial industry uses?

15 A. (O'Neil) That would be much more on the
16 accounting side. I'm familiar with rating
17 agency ratios.

18 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

19 Q. Rating agency ratios. Okay. Well, I'll just
20 ask you. I don't know if you'll be able to
21 answer these, then. I assumed I was speaking
22 to an accountant of some sort.

23 Are you familiar with what's called a
24 "quick ratio"?

1 A. (O'Neil) No, I'm not.

2 Q. Are you familiar with working capital?

3 A. (O'Neil) I am familiar with working capital.

4 Q. And looking at the financial statements, would
5 you agree that the current liability is
6 3.1 billion?

7 A. (O'Neil) For what company? PSNH or Eversource?

8 Q. I'm sorry. Eversource.

9 A. (O'Neil) Current liability's 3.1. Correct. As
10 of the end of 2014.

11 Q. Right. And would you agree that the current
12 assets are 2.7 billion for Eversource at the
13 end of 12/31/14?

14 A. (O'Neil) Yes.

15 Q. And would you agree that Eversource had
16 negative working capital for the period ending
17 12/31/2014?

18 (Witness reviews document.)

19 A. (O'Neil) If you don't include the deferred
20 credits and other liabilities, yes, I would say
21 that.

22 Q. Working capital typically is calculated as the
23 difference between current liabilities and
24 current assets?

1 A. (O'Neil) Typically. But I've also seen
2 situations where sometimes deferred credits or
3 deferred debts are included.

4 Q. And what are you referring to as your deferred
5 debts? What line item?

6 A. (O'Neil) Regulatory assets.

7 Q. Regulatory assets.

8 A. (O'Neil) Sometimes marketable securities.

9 Q. Are marketable securities under your Other
10 Non-current Assets?

11 A. (O'Neil) They're under Deferred Debits and
12 Other Assets.

13 Q. I don't see -- I see a heading, "Other
14 Non-current Assets."

15 A. (O'Neil) It's right under Goodwill.

16 Q. Thank you.

17 A. (O'Neil) You're welcome.

18 Q. Derivative Contracts? Is that what you're
19 referring to?

20 A. No, I'm --

21 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

22 Q. Financial investments.

23 A. (O'Neil) I'm under Deferred Debits and Other
24 Assets. I'm on the balance sheet.

1 Q. And I am, too. I see Current Assets. I see
2 Equity Investments. I see property, plant
3 investments. I see Other Non-current Assets.
4 Are you under Other Non-current Assets?

5 A. (O'Neil) Underneath Property, Plant and
6 Equipment, there's a line called Deferred
7 Debits and Other Assets.

8 A. (Vancho) You might have different --

9 Q. Are you on -- I'm sorry. That would help.

10 MR. IACOPINO: Are you using
11 Exhibit 1, Ms. Huard?

12 MS. HUARD: Never mind. Yeah. I had
13 given away my only Exhibit 1. I didn't expect
14 to go back there.

15 BY MS. HUARD:

16 Q. So, to backtrack, so then, typically, so you're
17 attempting to include other things besides
18 current assets and current liabilities in your
19 calculation.

20 A. (O'Neil) The standard method of calculating
21 working capital is merely current assets minus
22 current liabilities.

23 Q. Is there any -- is there a standard inference
24 that the financial industry uses or infers from

1 a negative working capital?

2 A. (O'Neil) I think the best way to see working
3 capital is if you have a cash flow statement.
4 Do you have a cash flow statement?

5 Q. I do not.

6 A. (O'Neil) To me, when I calculate working
7 capital, I go to a cash flow statement.

8 Q. So you're ignoring the standard interpretation
9 of a negative -- a pure calculation of working
10 capital. I do not have a copy of cash flow.
11 What else would you have included to turn this
12 working capital into a positive number?

13 A. (O'Neil) Well, as I said before, I go to a cash
14 flow statement when I calculate working
15 capital. But if you're asking me if current
16 assets are less than current liabilities, the
17 answer is yes.

18 Q. Okay. Well, not looking -- without looking at
19 your cash flow statement, I don't have anything
20 to add to my consideration. But typically in
21 the industry, is a negative working capital a
22 sign of potential bankruptcy?

23 A. (O'Neil) I don't know the answer to that. I
24 guess the only way I can really respond to that

1 is Eversource Energy has the highest Standard &
2 Poor's credit rating in the entire utility
3 industry at an A. And Standard & Poor's has
4 PSNH Senior Secured Debt rating at an A-plus.
5 So, certainly the rating agencies don't think
6 we're going near bankruptcy.

7 Q. Would that be because of a couple of factors,
8 one being that you can tuck it to the
9 ratepayers for any debt that you incur?

10 A. (Vancho) Certainly we cover our interest
11 expense. We certainly capture that as part of
12 the cost recovered.

13 Q. And would the other reason be because you
14 constantly refi your debt?

15 A. (O'Neil) Well, there's a good reason we
16 refinance our debt. We refinance our debt
17 because interest rates keep going down. So, in
18 terms of how the customers are concerned, I can
19 tell you right now that PSNH is borrowing
20 short-term at .66 percent, which you really
21 can't get much lower than that. And if we were
22 to tab the long-term market, the 10-year market
23 today, we'd probably be borrowing around 275 or
24 280 for 10 years. So I would think the

1 ratepayers would be extraordinarily happy with
2 that type of interest expense.

3 Q. You consider 6.6 percent a good rate for --

4 A. (O'Neil) I think 6.6 percent is an awful rate.
5 I said .66 percent.

6 Q. Oh, .66. I was going to say. Thank you.
7 Thank you for clarifying that.

8 What is the amount of your long-term debt
9 as of 12/31/2014?

10 A. (O'Neil) Are you asking PSNH or Eversource?

11 Q. Eversource. Sorry.

12 A. (O'Neil) If you were to go to the balance
13 sheet, long-term debt is approximately
14 8.6 billion. And the long-term debt current
15 portion is approximately 245 million.

16 Q. Thank you.

17 A. (O'Neil) You're welcome.

18 Q. Who decides how much short-term debt that you
19 can incur?

20 A. (O'Neil) Our limit on short-term debt
21 borrowings is contingent upon the New Hampshire
22 PUC.

23 Q. And how do they determine that?

24 A. (O'Neil) They have determined, in the case of

1 PSNH, that it is 60 million plus 10 percent of
2 net plant.

3 Q. What is included in your net plant -- net fixed
4 assets -- net fixed plant?

5 A. (O'Neil) It's plant minus depreciation.

6 Q. But what is included in your plant? What types
7 of property? Is your infrastructure included
8 in that number?

9 A. (O'Neil) Yes.

10 Q. You had just touched on the change in the cost
11 of the project per company. I'd like to
12 confirm PSNH's portion is 36 or 37 million?

13 A. (O'Neil) I believe it's 37 million,
14 approximately.

15 Q. It had been noted by the joint prefiled
16 testimony of Brian Hudock and David Plante that
17 the number of miles attributed to PSNH's
18 project were 9.8 miles, which is approximately
19 10 miles. What would you -- or how would
20 you -- would you agree that that is
21 three-point -- approximately \$3.7 million per
22 mile of this project?

23 A. (Vancha) I mean, that's the math. I don't know
24 how relevant that is.

1 Q. Right. Okay. And Mr. McNeill, you've also
2 stated that the construction would be financed
3 through short-term borrowings, the internal
4 money pool, equity contributions from the
5 parent company, National Grid; correct?

6 A. (McNeill) Plus internal cash generated in the
7 business.

8 Q. Internal cash.

9 I'd like to refer you to Exhibit 3 and 4.

10 (Ms. Huard hands document to panel
11 members.)

12 Q. Mr. McNeill, do you participate in the -- do
13 you recognize these exhibits as balance sheets
14 and the long-term debt portion of the
15 Statements of Capitalization for National Grid
16 at 3/31/14?

17 A. (McNeill) Yes.

18 Q. And had you seen financial statements before
19 today?

20 A. (McNeill) Yes, I have.

21 Q. And what is your role in preparing these
22 financial statements?

23 A. (McNeill) Within National Grid, our financial
24 reporting team within accounting prepares all

1 the financial statements. As the CFO, I review
2 them and am familiar with the information
3 that's in them.

4 Q. Looking at Exhibit 4, Consolidated Statement of
5 Capitalization, under Long-term Debt you have
6 all of the notes payable grouped together. Who
7 would those notes be with?

8 A. (McNeill) So the statement you're looking at is
9 for National Grid USA, which is the parent
10 company of New England Power. We have notes
11 payable with many different institutions.
12 Within the statements there will be a list of
13 those. If you're interested in seeing
14 specifically who the bonds are with, you can
15 see those with the amounts and the rates.
16 There are multiple institutions.

17 Q. It says here that the interest rate is as high
18 as 9.75?

19 A. (McNeill) Correct. Some bonds are issued that
20 don't have the ability to be called or
21 redeemed. So, some of the higher-interest
22 debt, that's why they're still out there.
23 Similar to PSNH, National Grid manages our bond
24 portfolio very closely. We're investment rated

1 with S & P. We issue debt at extremely low
2 levels, pretty much the same .6 percent in the
3 short-term market, and we issue 10- and 30-year
4 debt in the sub-4 percent range. It's a very
5 effective and cheap debt that the ratepayers
6 are benefiting from.

7 Q. Do individuals ever -- do you ever issue notes
8 to individuals?

9 A. (McNeill) Not typically, no. We typically
10 issue hundreds of millions of dollars of bonds
11 that individuals aren't able to contribute to.

12 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

13 A. (McNeill) Some are not able to participate.
14 Some can participate through their brokerage
15 firms, but not -- we typically do not issue
16 individually to consumers.

17 Q. So you say "typically." Would there be any
18 individuals in this line item?

19 A. (McNeill) I'm not aware that there's an
20 individual person there. Those are mostly
21 institutions, whether they're pension funds,
22 insurance companies. They tend to be two of
23 our more -- of the entities, that types of
24 businesses that we issue to.

1 Q. Do you see the Long-term Debt listed on the
2 balance sheet for 3/31/2014? For National
3 Grid. Sorry.

4 A. (McNeill) Yes, I do.

5 Q. And what would the amount of long-term debt be
6 for National Grid at 3/31/2014?

7 A. (McNeill) Eight point two billion.

8 Q. Eight point two billion.

9 What does the Advance from Affiliates for
10 about \$2 billion represent?

11 A. (McNeill) That's the company equity
12 contributions that we talked about. So that's
13 an equity infusion from our parent company, NG
14 NA, who funds the NG USA operations. And it's
15 an equity contribution. If you look at NEP's
16 financial statement, you'll see a similar one
17 in 2014 for 375 million. That's NG USA
18 providing an equity contribution into New
19 England Power.

20 Q. And are you familiar with the standard ratios
21 used in the financial industry to determine
22 relationships between components in the finance
23 statement?

24 MR. RIELLY: Let me object to the

1 relevance of that question. Perhaps she can
2 explain why those ratios are relevant --

3 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

4 MS. HUARD: I think it's highly
5 relevant if the ratepayers are going to be
6 expected to pay for the construction and the
7 costs will ultimately be added to your debt
8 structure. It will ultimately not only will be
9 interest on the debt coming back to us, but in
10 the event that you do -- are not able to pay
11 your liabilities, somehow that will come back
12 to the ratepayers.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Can you
14 explain what ratio it is that you think will
15 indicate whether or not a debt can be repaid?

16 MS. HUARD: Well, I was actually
17 going to ask the same question about the
18 working capital. The only one I was going
19 to -- actually, I'm sorry. I was going to ask
20 a question about standard quick ratio to show
21 how quickly they could pay their debt back.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I'll allow
23 the question on the standard quick ratio.

24 MS. HUARD: Thank you.

1 A. (McNeill) Okay. So the answer is yes, I'm very
2 familiar with the financial ratios that are
3 used in the industry --

4 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

5 A. (McNeill) -- whether it's the financial
6 performance of the business or the credit
7 worthiness of the company. Similar to PSNH, we
8 are rated by both S&P and Moody's. Our rating
9 with S&P is A minus, and with Moody's A3 [sic].
10 They employ a very sophisticated methodology to
11 evaluate the credit worthiness of any
12 particular company, using much more
13 sophisticated metrics to the ones you're
14 mentioning around interest coverage, FFO to
15 debt. And they have a whole methodology of
16 weighted metrics that go into their evaluation.
17 Coming in with an investment rating of -- an
18 investment rate is critically important for us
19 to be able to issue debt at the most optimal,
20 lowest rates available, and that's what we do.

21 To answer your working capital question,
22 our business is very cyclical. We buy and sell
23 power. The prices of power move pretty
24 significantly year to year. So it's very

1 typical in our industry to have very wide
2 swings year over year in working capital that's
3 funded through our short-term borrowing, where
4 we are cash flow outflow on working capital.
5 But over time, we recover that from our
6 customers. But it's very typical in the
7 utility industry to be in that position.

8 The quick ratios are a very basic ratio
9 that you look at. We're really looking over
10 the long term to see how we fund the business
11 optimally.

12 A. (O'Neil) And if I could add just one other
13 thing. Rating agencies go and actually rate
14 the debt of these companies. They look at
15 short-term as well as the long-term. So there
16 are also short-term ratings that they assess,
17 which would coincide more with what we're
18 talking about here, in terms of the quick
19 ratio. They evaluate short- and long-term
20 risk.

21 Q. Do you think that these agencies give you any
22 sort of consideration for the fact that you can
23 automatically recover most of it from the
24 ratepayers without any question from the

1 ratepayers?

2 A. (McNeill) I would disagree with that statement.
3 We do not have the right -- we have the right
4 to recover prudent expenses from ratepayers.
5 We don't have the right to recover "any
6 expenses" from ratepayers. As we talked about,
7 we're issuing very cost-effective debt here to
8 fund this business. And any challenge to the
9 prudence of that I would say is doubtful.

10 Q. Do you consider \$8 billion to be prudent debt?

11 A. (McNeill) Yes, we do. Absolutely. We have a
12 large business of keeping the lights on in New
13 England. We have to make investments in that
14 business. It's funded with both equity and
15 debt through an optimal capitalization
16 structure. As the business grows, so does the
17 debt. It's a very healthy business, and the
18 cap structure is very healthy. So, yes, I do.

19 A. (O'Neil) Before we can issue debt in New
20 Hampshire, we need PUC approval.

21 Q. Is that also with long-term debt?

22 A. (O'Neil) Yes, it is.

23 Q. So, the New Hampshire PUC has approved
24 \$8 billion long-term debt?

1 A. (O'Neil) I said in New Hampshire. This is
2 Eversource debt.

3 Q. Okay. I have no further questions.

4 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Questions
5 from the Committee members?

6 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS:

7 Q. I have just one. Could one of the witnesses
8 explain what exactly "quick ratio" is since
9 it's been mentioned?

10 A. (McNeill) Sure. Quick ratio is the difference
11 between your current assets --

12 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

13 A. (McNeill) Sorry. I'm from New York.

14 Quick ratio is simply an accounting ratio
15 that compares your current assets to your
16 current liabilities. And it's a very basic
17 metric to see if you have more assets than you
18 have liabilities, if in your bank account you
19 have more assets in the bank than you do
20 credit-card debt. It's a very short-term,
21 focused metric. It doesn't take into account a
22 lot of the other financial aspects of the
23 business.

24 Q. And to follow up, the comment that you would

1 also need to look at cash flow, what would that
2 tell you in addition to the quick ratio that
3 would be helpful?

4 A. (O'Neil) Well, the quick ratio is a real -- for
5 lack of a better word, it's sort of a crude way
6 of looking at how quickly you can pay back
7 short-term debt. Generally, we look more in
8 terms of, you know, cash from operations, which
9 you get from your cash flow statement. You're
10 not going to be getting that from your balance
11 sheet.

12 Q. And will the cash flow statement show you the
13 cyclical nature of the cost and revenues --

14 A. (O'Neil) It would, it would, because it's
15 prepared according to GAP, the way the other
16 statements are. And, you know, the nature of
17 our business really is cyclical. And you'll
18 see it with the 12 months trailing. If you
19 were to look at our numbers, 12 months trailing
20 or 3 months trailing, September could look very
21 different from three months trailing June.

22 A. (McNeill) If you look at financial statements
23 that were included in the application and you
24 look at '12, 13 and '14, you can see three

1 years. And you can look at cash from
2 operations and see what that is. That's
3 critical. That's cash coming into the business
4 that's used to fund the working capital as well
5 as the capital expenditures and dividends. You
6 can see how it moves over a three-year period.
7 Working capital is included. So when you look
8 at New England Power, you know, it's somewhere
9 between a billion and two billion a year of
10 cash flow from operations, including the years
11 where working capital was negative. We have
12 other income coming in other than working
13 capital. So, on average, it's a billion to two
14 billion a year in cash coming in the door for
15 New England Power.

16 Q. And so it's both companies' testimony that,
17 notwithstanding the negative working capital
18 from the snapshot of your financial, which is
19 year-end, that the cash flow adequately
20 supports the expense if you look at the whole
21 year?

22 A. (McNeill) Right.

23 A. (O'Neil) Absolutely.

24 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Okay. Thank

1 you.

2 BY MR. IACOPINO:

3 Q. Mr. Vancho, I may be confused. But when you
4 were questioned by Counsel for the Public, you
5 had mentioned that 6-1/2 percent of this
6 project is Public Service's responsibility --
7 or Public Service customers' responsibility.
8 Previously in the public hearing in this case
9 we heard the figure of 9 percent being the New
10 Hampshire portion of this reliability project
11 which New Hampshire customers would be
12 responsible for. Can you clear up my confusion
13 on that?

14 A. (Vancho) I was providing a number I believe for
15 PSNH. There could be additional New Hampshire
16 customers that make up the difference. But my
17 understanding is PSNH makes up 6-1/2 percent of
18 the network load.

19 Q. Okay. So the other electricity companies with
20 franchises in New Hampshire make up that
21 balance.

22 A. (Vancho) That's my understanding. That's
23 right.

24 Q. Thank you.

1 There was also -- in response to Counsel
2 for the Public's questioning, there was a
3 question about the estimate of decommissioning
4 cost, and the figure 9 to 13 million was used.
5 Is that for the entire project or just New
6 England Power's?

7 A. (McNeill) No, that's -- the estimate on New
8 England Power is 18 miles. I believe it was
9 estimated between half a million a mile and
10 750,000 a mile.

11 Q. Is there a different estimate for Eversource?

12 A. (Vancho) Hold on. I'm just going to review
13 some of the follow-up questions here. One
14 second.

15 (Witness reviews documents.)

16 MR. NEEDLEMAN: Maybe I can help.
17 The response to Data Request CP1-4, which is
18 Counsel for the Public 1-4, addressed this
19 issue. And I believe that the response
20 indicated that it was for the Applicants. It
21 said the Applicants estimated that the removal
22 of the 3124 line would cost between 500,000 to
23 750,000 per mile in 2016 dollars. And it
24 refers to -- or approximately 9 million to 13.5

1 million for the 18 miles of the 3124 line
2 located in New Hampshire.

3 A. (McNeill) My mistake. Then it was for both, as
4 opposed to New England Power.

5 MR. IACOPINO: Thank you.

6 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Does the
7 Applicant have any redirect?

8 MR. RIELLY: No redirect. There was
9 a question early on about the reason for the
10 change in NEP's estimate. We could bring the
11 project manager, Brian Hudock, back up to
12 answer that question if you'd like.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I think that
14 might be a good idea.

15 (BRIAN HUDOCK, previously duly sworn,
16 joins current panel members.)

17 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

18 BY MR. RIELLY:

19 Q. Brian, you're still under oath. Can you please
20 explain the reason for the estimate decrease?

21 A. (Hudock) Yes. So this is typical for projects
22 throughout the life cycle. There's an update
23 on the estimate as it becomes better known and
24 more details about the project are incorporated

1 in this estimate. So, National Grid refined
2 its estimate further. That resulted in the
3 overall slight increase in project costs.
4 Broken down, that was a slight increase in the
5 Massachusetts section and a decrease in the New
6 Hampshire section. The reasons for this mainly
7 were for the cost of environmental controls.
8 There's much more extensive matting and other
9 wetland controls required in Massachusetts.
10 The proportion of structures in Massachusetts
11 requiring more expensive concrete caisson
12 foundations ended up being more, a
13 significantly higher percentage of the
14 structures in Massachusetts. And the overall
15 siting and permitting costs associated with
16 federal, state and local permitting in
17 Massachusetts ended up being more expensive
18 versus in New Hampshire. So, overall, the
19 costs were very similar on a project basis than
20 previous, but like I said, Massachusetts costs
21 increased and New Hampshire costs decreased.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: What was the
23 decrease in New Hampshire cost due to
24 specifically?

1 THE WITNESS: (Hudock) Well, again,
2 the overall cost takes a look at the entire
3 project. So the allocation of the two costs
4 assumed more of a proportional allocation of
5 things like environmental controls, things such
6 as proportion of structures that would be
7 caisson foundations, and similar siting and
8 permitting costs. So that initial estimate was
9 made, you know, before more was known about
10 those different factors. So, ultimately, when
11 each of those three were known in greater
12 detail, the higher proportion of each of those
13 three were borne more heavily by Massachusetts
14 than the New Hampshire portion. But
15 ultimately, like I said, the net cost impact to
16 New Hampshire ratepayers is very similar. So,
17 regardless whether the Massachusetts costs are
18 higher or lower, or the New Hampshire costs are
19 higher or lower, for the New Hampshire
20 ratepayer it's ultimately the overall cost that
21 really would matter.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Counsel for
23 the Public, did you have any follow-up?

24 MR. ASLIN: No, that clarifies it for

1 me. Thank you.

2 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Any other
3 questions for the witness?

4 [No verbal response]

5 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: All right.
6 Thank you. This panel is excused. And our
7 next panel is Mr. Hecklau on Aesthetics.

8 (WHEREUPON, JOHN HECKLAU was duly sworn
9 and cautioned by the Court Reporter.)

10 DIRECT EXAMINATION

11 BY MR. NEEDLEMAN:

12 Q. Good afternoon, Mr. Hecklau. Could you please
13 state your full name for the record.

14 A. My name is John Hecklau.

15 Q. You have to pull that a little closer. Red
16 light?

17 A. Is this working now?

18 Q. And where do you work?

19 A. I work for a firm called Environmental Design
20 and Research, or EDR.

21 Q. And what was your role in this project?

22 A. My role was preparation and oversight of the
23 Visual Impact Assessment of the project.

24 Q. And you have your prefiled testimony in front

1 of you; is that correct?

2 A. I do.

3 Q. Do you have any changes to that testimony?

4 A. I do not.

5 Q. And do you swear to that testimony and adopt it
6 as your own today?

7 A. I do.

8 Q. Okay.

9 MR. NEEDLEMAN: He's available for
10 questioning, Madam Chair.

11 CROSS-EXAMINATION

12 BY MR. ASLIN:

13 Q. Good afternoon, Mr. Hecklau.

14 A. Good afternoon.

15 Q. As part of your Visual Impact Assessment, you
16 selected some key observation points among the
17 identified scenic resources; is that correct?

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. Is it correct that KOPs, for ease of reference,
20 were selected for some, but not all of the
21 identified scenic resources?

22 A. That's correct.

23 Q. Could you refresh my memory as to how many KOPs
24 you have and how many scenic resources were

1 identified?

2 A. So it's outlined in the Visual Impact
3 Assessment, the VIA. I'll try to recall as
4 best I can. I believe there were 108 scenic --
5 well, potential scenic resources that we
6 identified within the 2-mile radius study area
7 around the line. Through our field work, we
8 determined that, once you got beyond a
9 half-mile from the line, you essentially could
10 not see the line from these sites. So that
11 reduced the number to 51, which was the number
12 of resources within a half-mile of the line.
13 We then took a look at those 51 to determine if
14 they met the criteria that the SEC rules use to
15 define a "scenic resource," and that was that
16 they either enjoyed a designation of "scenic"
17 or they had scenic qualities, and they were
18 publicly accessible. Based on that, I think we
19 got that number down to 21 that actually met
20 the criteria. And then, after that, we -- you
21 know, maybe I can just check my notes. I want
22 to make sure I get the numbers right for you.

23 Q. Sure. Thank you.

24 (Witness reviews document.)

1 A. I apologize. I wrote this down, but I'm having
2 trouble finding it. Let me just grab my notes.

3 Okay. So, the total was 108; there were
4 51 within a half-mile; 28 met the definition of
5 "scenic resource," according to the SEC
6 criteria; and of those, 13 were considered, or
7 determined to have potential views of the
8 project. So we looked at those 13 in detail,
9 and it was from that 13 that we selected the
10 eight KOPs. The ones that were not selected
11 either proved not to have a view or were better
12 represented by sort of equivalent viewpoints in
13 the selected KOPs.

14 Q. Thank you. So the distinction between the 13
15 scenic resources that were identified to be --
16 to meet the criteria and that have potential
17 views, and the 8 KOPs, was that some of those
18 13 didn't have -- they had potential views but
19 no actual views when you studied them further?

20 A. That's right. On Page 57 of the VIA, it talks
21 about viewpoint selection. And it basically
22 says right here, the sites described above --
23 that's the 13 -- views of the proposed project
24 are likely to be distant or substantially

1 obscured from three of these, which was
2 Londonderry Town Center, George Muldoon Park
3 and Robinson Pond Park. So, out of the 10 that
4 we thought we had views from, of those we
5 picked the 8. The other ones we felt were not
6 as suitable for development simulations because
7 there was more screening or because they were
8 not really adding anything to the analysis.
9 And the ones we didn't use were -- it says down
10 here, "Although clear views of the project
11 would be available from the Town of
12 Londonderry" --

13 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

14 A. I'm sorry. The lack of scenic quality
15 suggested that the Route 28 scenic byway was a
16 better one to use, and that that was a better
17 representation of the project's effect on the
18 scenic quality on a designated scenic road.

19 And then we also stated in here, the view
20 from the Appleway was determined to
21 represent -- be representative of potential
22 views from the town of Londonderry -- see View
23 14 -- and that the Peabody Town Forest and
24 Musquash Conservation Area adequately

1 represented potential views from the Bockes
2 Memorial Forest. So I know that's a little bit
3 confusing, but that's how we got down to the
4 number seven -- or eight, rather.

5 Q. Thank you. That helps clarify.

6 In addition to scenic resources, I believe
7 in Supplement 3 you included some photo
8 simulations for selected private property views
9 of the project; is that correct?

10 A. That's correct.

11 Q. How did you choose those observation points for
12 private property?

13 A. So, when we did the field work for the project,
14 we got the original photos. We visited a
15 variety of locations throughout the study area.
16 A hundred twenty different spots were used, and
17 photos were collected from all those, trying to
18 cover not only the scenic resources, but also
19 the different landscape character types and
20 viewer groups that might be in the study area.
21 And quite a few of those were from residential
22 areas. The study area in general is very
23 suburban, so there are a lot of residential
24 areas within that 2-mile radius. Most of the

1 photos we ended up taking were very close to
2 the line because that's where views actually
3 were available. And from those we looked
4 through to see, both geographically, in terms
5 of the extent of the line, and also the type of
6 changes in the view that might result, and we
7 picked five viewpoints that we thought gave a
8 good representative cross-section of the visual
9 change that might result from the project.

10 Q. Okay. Thank you. Would you agree that, with
11 this project, given that the work is all within
12 an existing right-of-way with other electric
13 transmission lines, that the areas of visual
14 impact are primarily from tree clearing and
15 from the limited additional height of these
16 structures compared to existing structures?

17 A. Yeah, I think one of the conclusions of the VIA
18 is that the tree clearing in particular is what
19 changes the visual -- visibility and visual
20 effect from the project the most.

21 Q. And would you agree -- well, let me ask before
22 that.

23 Were you in the hearing room earlier when
24 Exhibit CFP1 was discussed by the engineers?

1 A. I don't think so.

2 Q. Okay. Let me find it. There was an exhibit
3 created by the engineers showing for each
4 structure along the project the difference in
5 height between the proposed structures and the
6 current highest existing structures in the
7 vicinity. And that showed -- there was some
8 testimony on that showing approximate height
9 increases between 5, and in a couple extreme
10 cases, 45 or 50 feet, but more on average in
11 the 15- to 25-foot range. Was that data
12 something that was considered in your original
13 Visual Impact Assessment?

14 A. Yeah. I mean, part of an assessment is an
15 evaluation of potential project visibility, and
16 that's what we refer to as a "viewshed
17 analysis," which is essentially a line-of-sight
18 analysis that looks at all the structures,
19 where they're proposed and the heights
20 proposed, and identifies those areas within the
21 study area that would potentially have a direct
22 line of sight based on the existing topography.
23 And then we use, also, mapped forest vegetation
24 from the National Land Cover Dataset. So we

1 did a viewshed analysis of both the existing
2 structures on the right-of-way and the proposed
3 structures on the right-of-way, and then
4 prepared a figure that showed the comparison of
5 the two and how much more visible within that
6 study area the new project structures would be.

7 Q. Great. I'd like to just look at one example
8 that I looked at with the engineers earlier,
9 just for an example. You probably don't have
10 it up there right now, but if one of the
11 attorneys could get the Supplement 3 binder. I
12 want to turn back to that same map in the
13 Wildlife Habitat Land Cover Map, Page 8 of 16.

14 MR. IACOPINO: And just for the
15 Committee members, that you would only have
16 electronically. That's not something you would
17 have on paper, Supplement 3.

18 BY MR. ASLIN:

19 Q. So, Mr. Hecklau, I will direct your attention
20 to the map that you have now, which is Page 8
21 of 16, and you will see the proposed 3124 line
22 depicted in yellow along the right-of-way. Do
23 you see that?

24 A. I do.

1 Q. And each of the proposed new structures is
2 labeled with a number. And the one I'm going
3 to direct you to is Structure No. 204, which is
4 just off of Lenny Lane.

5 A. I see that.

6 Q. Okay. Earlier we had looked at the exhibit.
7 And rather than showing it to you, I'll just
8 represent that the Structure 204 is listed as
9 being either 30 or 20 feet higher than the
10 existing two structures, which are 84 and 85 on
11 the line. I guess I'm directionally
12 challenged. Just above, let's call it, on the
13 page.

14 A. Okay.

15 Q. Do you also understand -- and this view, the
16 area where this portion of the project is being
17 proposed, is within an area that would need
18 tree clearing?

19 A. I can see that, yup.

20 Q. And so in this case, what's your opinion as to
21 the impact of the -- visual impact of clearing
22 the trees along that portion of the
23 right-of-way and increased -- adding a new
24 structure that's 20 or 30 feet taller than the

1 existing structures in the right-of-way?

2 A. Well, I think, you know, the actual analysis we
3 did, you know, focused on scenic resources.
4 But I think the end result might be similar in
5 a situation like this, where it's the tree
6 clearing that will have the largest effect.
7 And the effect will be that it will remove some
8 screening that currently exists and allow
9 visibility of not only the new structure, but
10 perhaps some of the existing structures in
11 areas where it might currently be screened.

12 As far as the height of the new structure,
13 you know, at this distance I'm not sure that
14 the height is really the issue, just because
15 all of the structures are going to look tall
16 when viewed proximate to them. And my guess is
17 that a 20-foot increase in height, while it
18 will be noticeable, won't make that structure
19 dramatically different than the other
20 structures on the right-of-way.

21 Q. Okay. So it's, in your opinion, more tree
22 clearing than height that will make a
23 difference to the visual impact.

24 A. I think so. At this distance, yeah.

1 Q. Would you agree that, for those properties that
2 are near a portion of the project where there's
3 tree clearing, that that's where the greatest
4 visual impact will be?

5 A. Yeah. The greatest impact will be just what I
6 said, either exposing more structures to view
7 or creating the perception of a wider, cleared
8 right-of-way.

9 Q. And there was also testimony earlier that there
10 was, I believe, 71 acres of tree clearing in
11 this project. While there were not a lot of
12 scenic resources affected, would you agree
13 there will be a number of private properties
14 that will be affected from a visual impact
15 standpoint?

16 A. Yeah, there's no question that, you know,
17 there's going to be an effect. Again, the
18 focus of our study was on scenic resources.
19 But the conclusions in that study, I think, are
20 consistent with what you'd find in a
21 residential area, that, you know, you will
22 increase visibility. Now, I think that
23 increase and its effect is tempered by the fact
24 that you've got a very large, very

1 longstanding, existing transmission corridor.
2 But having said that, I would agree with what
3 you said.

4 Q. Thank you.

5 MR. ASLIN: I do not have any further
6 questions.

7 CROSS-EXAMINATION

8 BY MS. HUARD:

9 Q. Mr. Hecklau, you indicated that you provided
10 oversight to the initial Visual Impact
11 Assessment; is that correct?

12 A. Yes, ma'am.

13 Q. So you merely reviewed it when it was
14 completed?

15 A. No, it was more than that. I helped prepare
16 the report. I helped coordinate the study,
17 visited the site. I basically was involved in
18 every aspect of the analysis that was done.

19 Q. So you actually performed site visits; correct?

20 A. I did.

21 Q. And as a result of the Visual Impact
22 Assessment, you concluded that the project will
23 not have an unreasonable adverse effect on
24 aesthetics, period. Does that say anything

1 about aesthetics from scenic resources?

2 A. The study was --

3 Q. Your conclusion.

4 A. Pardon me?

5 Q. Your conclusion itself. Does your conclusion
6 itself say it does not have an unreasonable
7 adverse effect on aesthetics, period?

8 A. The conclusion is presented in the context of
9 what the study examined, which was its effect
10 on scenic resources.

11 Q. In the VIA, did you not include a
12 characterization of a visual study area that
13 you'd recently spoken about identifying
14 different view groups?

15 A. We did.

16 Q. And did those view groups fall into three
17 categories, not just one, but three, including
18 local residents, commuters, through travelers
19 and recreational users?

20 A. Correct.

21 Q. And did your VIA indicate that local residents
22 are likely to have more frequent, prolonged
23 views of the landscapes from yards, homes,
24 local roads and places of employment than a

1 commuter, through traveler or a recreational
2 user?

3 A. Correct.

4 Q. So, from that statement, would you conclude
5 that the -- would you agree that the residents
6 have the greatest impact out of this project,
7 greatest impact for aesthetics?

8 A. Again, the study looked at the scenic resources
9 within the study area. The viewers who are
10 seeing the line from these scenic resources
11 could fall into any of those three categories.
12 Again, it was in the context of visibility from
13 scenic resources that we drew our conclusions.

14 Q. Are you following the guidelines for the New
15 Hampshire SEC rules or the RSA 162-H?

16 A. I believe it's the SEC rules. I'm not familiar
17 with the second thing you said.

18 Q. Does a law have a greater hierarchy than a
19 rule?

20 MR. NEEDLEMAN: I'll object. That
21 calls for a legal conclusion.

22 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Sustained.

23 BY MS. HUARD:

24 Q. I'd like to walk you through a few examples for

1 the benefit of the Committee. Regardless of
2 whether your focus was on scenic, I'd like to
3 walk through a view examples of the views that
4 the residents will face after this project is
5 completed.

6 I'd like to refer you to Exhibit 25. Do
7 you recognize this map as -- this exhibit as a
8 map from the NH -- I'm sorry -- NRPC, which is
9 the National Regional Planning Commission?

10 A. I don't recognize the map, but --

11 Q. Okay.

12 A. -- I know the location.

13 Q. Okay. Good. So then, you recognize Robinson
14 Pond?

15 A. Yes, ma'am.

16 Q. Do you recognize this as -- do you see David
17 Drive on this map?

18 A. I do.

19 Q. Do you recognize this area as the general area
20 that a person living on David Drive may
21 commute, walk or engage in recreational
22 activity?

23 A. Yes.

24 Q. I'd like to refer you to 34 and 35.

1 (Ms. Huard hands document to witness.)

2 BY MS. HUARD:

3 Q. Do you recognize these maps as being part of
4 the NEP's application? Do you recognize the
5 grouping of high-voltage transmission towers on
6 Exhibit 34 as the point of demarcation for the
7 two Applicants?

8 A. I'm sorry. Could you repeat that question?

9 Q. Sure. Do you recognize the grouping of
10 high-voltage transmission lines -- transmission
11 towers on Exhibit 34 as the point of
12 demarcation?

13 (Witness reviews document.)

14 A. The point of demarcation for what? I'm sorry.

15 Q. I'm sorry. The point of demarcation between
16 the two Applicants where -- the point where the
17 two Applicants' lines come together?

18 A. Okay. Yes.

19 Q. And then if you look at them next to each
20 other, because they continue, do you see the
21 legend at the bottom of the map?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. And do you see the proposed view line and
24 related new poles are marked in yellow?

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. And can you locate Transmission Pole 200?

3 A. Yes, I can.

4 Q. And can you see that this is a three-pole
5 structure?

6 A. That's how it appears, yeah.

7 Q. And can you see from the legend, the key, that
8 the symbol for guy anchors are small, white
9 circles?

10 A. I see that in the legend, yes.

11 Q. Can you see the amount of guy anchors that will
12 be placed around this three-pole structure?

13 A. Yes.

14 Q. Can you see the tennis court on the abutting
15 property?

16 A. I can.

17 Q. And as you go to the next page, you can see
18 that belongs to a resident; correct? There's a
19 house on that property --

20 A. Appears to be.

21 Q. -- or next to it.

22 Can you see that the placement of the
23 three-pole structure will have an unreasonable
24 adverse effect to the owner of this property?

1 A. I'm not really in a position to address that.
2 This isn't something we looked at. I don't
3 know what this would look like at ground level
4 or what it would look like if any sort of
5 mitigation were applied. So I can't really
6 make that conclusion.

7 Q. Can you see what the view -- can you see that
8 the view of anyone walking or commuting on
9 David Drive would have a view of this
10 structure?

11 A. It looks like there would be an open view of
12 the structure, yes.

13 Q. Can you see the symbol for tree removal listed
14 under -- in the legend?

15 (Witness reviews document.)

16 A. Yes, I can. Yes, I can.

17 Q. Would it satisfactory you to know it's these
18 small, white dots?

19 A. Yeah, that's what I'm looking at.

20 Q. Do you see these small, white dots symbolizing
21 proposed tree removal shown on Exhibit 35?

22 A. Yes.

23 Q. Can you see that tree removal will open a brand
24 new view of the two abutters shown on this map?

1 A. Yeah, that is what it appears to indicate.

2 Q. And can you see that this tree removal will
3 open up brand new -- open up brand new views
4 for residents on the portion of David Drive
5 using south of this tree removal on this map?
6 Not necessarily their legend. Is there -- do
7 you see the possibility that, looking at David
8 Drive, going to the south end, that with this
9 tree removal the aesthetics will actually
10 change for that -- the possibility for that end
11 of the road will actually see that ROW now?

12 A. I guess, unless I'm misreading the north arrow,
13 it looks like the view from the south would be
14 the top of the page; is that correct?

15 Q. No, no. I said "looking at the page." I said
16 to ignore that key. Ignore that north arrow.

17 Looking up and down David Drive as it sits
18 in front of you --

19 A. Okay.

20 Q. -- go south on that road, that side of David
21 Drive. Does it appear a possibility that those
22 homes also will have a brand new view of that
23 ROW and the MVRP?

24 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

1 A. Maybe I'm just confused. But if you're talking
2 about houses at the top of the page -- is that
3 what you're asking about?

4 Q. The bottom of the page.

5 A. Okay. I thought you asked me about that
6 previously. But yes --

7 Q. I first asked you about the two that you can
8 see.

9 A. Yes, which are --

10 Q. And now I'm going --

11 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

12 A. The two you're referring to are at the bottom
13 of the page.

14 Q. Initially I asked you about the two at the
15 bottom of the page, and you answered that it
16 appeared they would have a change in aesthetics
17 from the tree removal. Currently I'm trying to
18 determine -- take the page and look at David
19 Drive as it appears to you up and down. The
20 part of the road running close towards you is
21 south.

22 A. So the north arrow was incorrect you're saying.

23 Q. No, I'm not saying that. I'm disregarding --
24 I'm trying to explain it visually as I'm

1 looking at it because I can't actually really
2 follow that.

3 A. I mean, if I'm getting what you're asking,
4 you're saying houses below the ones at the
5 bottom of the page, would they also see a
6 change because of this tree removal? Is that
7 correct?

8 Q. Yes.

9 A. Okay. I mean, it's possible. The reality,
10 though, is there's still trees left right along
11 David Drive, at least according to the clearing
12 mark. And our experience was that, until you
13 are essentially right on the right-of-way, it
14 was very difficult to see much. Long-distance
15 views were very hard to find. So I would not
16 envision that effect extending very far towards
17 the bottom of the page, whatever that direction
18 is.

19 Q. If you look at Pole 88, do you see that's right
20 next to the ROW?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And if you go, again, in that same direction,
23 and you remove -- if you look to the tree
24 removal, it's actually removing all the way to

1 the edge of the ROW. And can you not see that
2 that will eliminate any barrier to views to at
3 least the next couple of homes?

4 A. I'm sorry, ma'am. When you say "the next
5 couple homes," unless you can point to me on
6 the map where you're referring to --

7 Q. The next homes --

8 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

9 THE WITNESS: (Hecklau) To the houses
10 on the map that she's referring to, then I can
11 answer the question.

12 BY MS. HUARD:

13 Q. Well, let me refer you back to the -- it's
14 difficult with this map to get my point across.

15 But if you look back at Exhibit 25, you
16 can maybe see the full ROW a little bit better
17 next to this, and you might be able to
18 understand a little bit better what I'm saying.
19 There are at least 10 ROWs -- 10 additional
20 houses going towards the south besides these
21 two that you can see, which are considered
22 direct abutters.

23 A. Okay. Again, I'm confused on the north and
24 south. But I'll just say this --

1 Q. Oh, go ahead.

2 A. You know, when we were asked to supplement or
3 provide additional information by preparing
4 simulations from residential settings, the ones
5 we selected were right on the right-of-way.
6 And the reason for that -- or right adjacent to
7 the right-of-way. And the reason for that is,
8 once you got away from that right-of-way edge,
9 you could not see enough to do a simulation.
10 So I can't tell you specifically what you would
11 see. I do know we looked at sites on David
12 Drive. I can tell you that, once you get any
13 reasonable distance from the edge of that
14 right-of-way, there's going to probably be
15 significant screening between the viewer and
16 the cleared right-of-way.

17 Q. Would it satisfy you to know that you are
18 completely incorrect, as a person that lives
19 there? Thank you.

20 Can you locate Pole No. 201 on Exhibit 35?

21 A. Yes.

22 Q. And can you see that this is a two-pole
23 structure?

24 A. I can.

1 Q. And can you see that this placement of this
2 structure would not only be seen by these two
3 abutters with the trees removed, but the
4 possibility of the other home that is at the
5 top of the page looking down?

6 A. It looks like there's probably a clear line of
7 sight from David Drive and the shoulders toward
8 that new structure. Between the houses and the
9 structure, there appear to be some substantial
10 trees.

11 Q. Satisfy you to know that four houses up, I can
12 see Structure 88 from my house?

13 A. That's not the question you asked me.

14 Q. I'm providing you with another question.

15 I'd like to refer you to another
16 residential area, Exhibit 36. Would you state
17 for the record what roads you see appear on
18 this exhibit?

19 A. Lenny Lane and, is it pronounced Kienia Road?

20 Q. Correct. And again, can you locate the white
21 dots representing tree removal in this exhibit?

22 A. I can.

23 Q. And can you see the five homes at the bottom of
24 the page that appear to have the tree

1 removal -- trees removed almost right up to
2 their property?

3 A. Yeah, at least four I can see. Yes, five homes
4 down there. Hmm-hmm.

5 Q. And can you see that these five homes will have
6 a brand new view of the entire ROW, a brand new
7 living view?

8 A. It appears their view will change, absolutely.

9 Q. I'd like to refer you to Exhibit 37 and 38.

10 (Ms. Huard hands document to witness.)

11 Q. Can you state for the record what roads you see
12 on this map, these two exhibits?

13 A. Exhibit 37, I see Kienia Road and Marie Lane.

14 Q. And do you see a body of water on this map?

15 A. I see something that's labeled "Howard Brook."

16 Q. And can you locate the white dots that
17 represent tree removal on this exhibit?

18 A. Yes, I can.

19 Q. And can you see -- maybe I should -- how many
20 houses do you see that appear will have a brand
21 new view of the entire ROW on the MVRP?

22 A. Well, again, I'm not sure I can say if they're
23 going to have an entirely new view or if
24 they'll be able to see the entire ROW. But it

1 looks like there's clearing on something. I'm
2 looking at Exhibit 37. Looks like maybe eight,
3 seven or eight lots where there's clearing
4 shown. And not all of those are complete
5 clearing. So, again, I can't say if that's
6 going to open up the view to the right-of-way.
7 But I can see clearing on those lines.

8 Q. A considerable difference in aesthetics,
9 though.

10 A. On some, possibly.

11 Q. And can you see that walkers and commuters
12 traveling from up Kienia, which -- traveling
13 from the east side of Kienia, not the trees,
14 but looking at Kienia, looking at the east side
15 of Kienia, has the potential for a new view as
16 a result of tree removal?

17 A. Well, anyone on Kienia Road is already in a
18 very large, cleared transmission line corridor.
19 So they may see some new structures. But the
20 view is already dominated, defined by the
21 cleared transmission line right-of-way that has
22 multiple existing structures on it. So, can
23 they see a new structure or structures? Yes.
24 But it's in the context of many, many existing

1 structures.

2 Q. Even on the east side of Kienia Road, you
3 consider them to already have -- if they're
4 used to walking on that side, you can see that
5 they actually have a view now.

6 A. Either side of that road, the view in this
7 exhibit that you've presented to me crosses,
8 you know, at an angle right through this
9 existing major transmission corridor. So, yes,
10 they have views of multiple transmission
11 structures from either side of that road.

12 Q. Looking at Exhibit 37, can you see the two
13 houses in the lower right-hand corner?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. And can you see the tree line above them?

16 A. Yes.

17 Q. And can you see that they live on the eastern
18 side of Kienia Road?

19 A. Yes. Actually, they're on the -- again, if I'm
20 looking at the legend correctly, it looks like
21 they're on the western side.

22 Q. I asked you to look at the road itself, left or
23 right, the right side of Kienia. With those
24 trees removed, that portion of Kienia, do you

1 see that portion of the road if you're driving
2 or walking on it having a new view of the
3 right-of-way?

4 A. Yes. I mean, I see the potential for
5 additional views of the right-of-way where that
6 tree screening exists right now.

7 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I'm going to
8 ask that we maybe take a break because we're an
9 hour and a half into this, and I think the
10 stenographer may need one.

11 MS. HUARD: Should I finish this
12 exhibit and then we'll take a break --

13 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Yeah.

14 MS. HUARD: -- 'cause I'm in the
15 middle of an exhibit?

16 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Yeah.

17 That's fine.

18 BY MS. HUARD:

19 Q. Looking at Exhibit 38 --

20 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I think if
21 we're done with 37, why don't we stop here --

22 MS. HUARD: Well, they will go
23 together. I'm just going to finish and have
24 him look at them together.

1 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: All right.

2 MS. HUARD: Just real quick.

3 BY MS. HUARD:

4 Q. Can you see Pole 208?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. Can you see that this is a three-pole
7 structure?

8 A. Yes.

9 Q. Can you see that this -- you see the symbol for
10 the guy anchors that we spoke about before?

11 A. I do.

12 Q. And you see the large number of guy anchors
13 that will be used?

14 A. Yes.

15 Q. Can you see the house just south of the strip
16 of trees?

17 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Could we not
18 use "south," because north is actually down to
19 the right on these.

20 MS. HUARD: I'm using the paper,
21 okay, so --

22 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Can you use
23 "right," "left," and "up" and "down" then.

24 BY MS. HUARD:

1 Q. On the lower part of the paper.

2 A. I can see two homes on the lower part of the
3 paper.

4 Q. All right. So in the middle of paper, in the
5 middle of the exhibit --

6 A. Yes.

7 Q. -- that home, would it satisfy you to know that
8 is on a road that you cannot actually see on
9 this map that runs parallel, runs across this
10 exhibit, called Breakneck?

11 A. Okay.

12 Q. Can you see the potential for other homes on
13 the other side of that road that will actually
14 see up through this opening that would be made
15 from this tree clearing?

16 A. I mean, I can see that the tree clearing as
17 indicated on this exhibit will open the view to
18 some extent above that home. I can't speak to
19 what's happening outside the image.

20 Q. So that's it for that exhibit.

21 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Okay. Thank
22 you. We'll take 15 minutes and come back at 25
23 after three and resume with Ms. Huard's
24 cross-examination.

1 (Whereupon a brief recess taken at 3:07,
2 and the proceedings resumed at 3:25)

3 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: All right.
4 It's 3:25, and we will resume with Ms. Huard's
5 cross-examination.

6 BY MS. HUARD:

7 Q. I'd like to refer you to Exhibit 33 and 43.

8 MR. IACOPINO: Ms. Huard, just for
9 clarity, when you talk about the right-of-way,
10 say "right-of-way," okay, because "ROW" is
11 being, I think, recorded as "road," and it
12 might not be accurate.

13 MS. HUARD: I will do my best to
14 re-program my mind.

15 MR. IACOPINO: Thank you.

16 BY MS. HUARD:

17 Q. Mr. Hecklau, continuing along, do you see a
18 road name on this exhibit?

19 A. Which exhibit are you referring to?

20 Q. I'm sorry. Exhibit 43.

21 A. Oh, yes. Jason Drive.

22 Q. Yeah. Thank you. Do you see a town name on
23 this?

24 A. Londonderry.

1 Q. Thank you.

2 Looking at Exhibit 33, do you recognize
3 this as -- can you see the area called Wiley
4 Hill area?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And can you locate Jason Drive on that map?

7 A. I can.

8 Q. And can you locate the white dots on Exhibit 43
9 representing tree removal?

10 A. Yes.

11 Q. And can you see the three or four houses just
12 south of that tree line, or just down below
13 that tree line that have potential for new
14 views?

15 A. Yes.

16 Q. And looking at Exhibit 33, is it possible that
17 you could possibly compare the two maps and see
18 that Jason Drive is a cul-de-sac?

19 A. I see that.

20 Q. And these houses appear to be potentially the
21 last two houses on the cul-de-sac. Can you see
22 that? I'm sorry. The two houses on either
23 side of the word "Jason Drive."

24 A. Yes.

1 Q. With that area of full tree removal, can you
2 see the potential for additional other houses
3 on Jason Drive to have new views of the
4 right-of-way and the MVRP?

5 A. Again, the only thing I can see here is those
6 two houses. What's happening outside the
7 image, I don't know. There could be screening
8 or it could be open. I can't speak to that.

9 Q. Is there a potential?

10 A. There is a potential.

11 Q. And the same with the other two cul-de-sacs on
12 Exhibit 33. Looking at Exhibit 33, on either
13 side, is there a potential that additional
14 homes up the road may have new views as a
15 result of that tree removal?

16 A. Possibly. It's less clear on there because it
17 looks like there still would be remnant
18 vegetation outside of those clearing limits.

19 Q. I'd like to refer you to Exhibit 44. And do
20 you see the name of a town on this map?

21 A. Londonderry.

22 Q. And can you see this is an area where the tree
23 removal now will come off of the middle of the
24 right-of-way?

1 A. I see that.

2 Q. And can you see that this line of trees blocks
3 the other two lines of this right-of-way, the
4 top of the page?

5 A. You mean from views to at the bottom of the
6 page?

7 Q. Yes.

8 A. I could see it would have at least a partial
9 screening effect, yes.

10 Q. And so with the removal of this full line of
11 trees in the middle of this right-of-way, do
12 you see at least maybe three homes that will
13 have brand new views of an additional three
14 lines?

15 A. Looks like there is one home directly on the
16 existing, cleared right-of-way that appears
17 would have an expanded view. The other two,
18 it's hard to say. There does appear to be
19 trees that would still block or focus the view,
20 which, you know, might or might not include the
21 structures on that right-of-way to the north.

22 Q. And the existing line, if you could locate the
23 existing line, the two lower lines on the
24 page --

1 A. Yes.

2 Q. -- do those appear to be single-pole
3 structures?

4 A. You know, based on the shadows that they're
5 casting, I would say yes.

6 Q. Would it satisfy you to know that those blocks
7 actually indicate how many poles, and the new
8 line 241 and 242 appear to be two-pole
9 structures?

10 A. Correct.

11 Q. So these homes would have a brand new view of
12 these poles in addition to brand new lines;
13 correct?

14 A. Again, they might or might not. I mean, the
15 one that appears to be wide open right now
16 looks likely it would. The others, I don't
17 know if the line of sight is going to be toward
18 a structure or whether it would be toward just
19 a cleared right-of-way.

20 Q. Actually going to refer you to 45 and 46, which
21 should be the end of them.

22 MR. IACOPINO: Ms. Huard, there was
23 no 46.

24 MS. HUARD: Okay, so then we'll just

1 do 45.

2 BY MS. HUARD:

3 Q. So, again, can you locate the line of tree
4 removal?

5 A. Yes.

6 Q. And that would be in the center or inside of
7 the right-of-way?

8 A. Correct.

9 Q. And again, do you see the potential for these
10 three homes to have a potential new view of an
11 additional three lines, along with new double
12 poles?

13 A. I see what appear to be the last two homes on
14 Mayflower Drive, which appear to have an open
15 view to the existing right-of-way. And I could
16 see how those would have possible views of a
17 wider right-of-way and possibly new structures.

18 Q. And you can't see that the house on the very
19 bottom of the page, on Mayflower, looking away
20 from the home, would have a potential new view
21 as well?

22 A. If the one you're referring to is directly left
23 of the M in the word "Mayflower," it looks like
24 there's a wooded hill between that house and

1 the house closer to the line, which I
2 suspect -- it looks forested, and I suspect it
3 will have at least probably fairly
4 significantly screened views.

5 Q. And, of course, we don't know without pulling
6 out the measurements of the poles.

7 Let me see. I'd like to refer you back to
8 Counsel for the Public's Exhibit 1. And there
9 is no Pole 49 on this exhibit. But if we go
10 back to Pole 47 -- 48 --

11 MR. IACOPINO: Two forty-nine.

12 MS. HUARD: Two forty-nine. What
13 page is that on?

14 (Discussion off the record)

15 MS. HUARD: All right. We'll scratch
16 that then.

17 BY MS. HUARD:

18 Q. Are you aware that generally there will be
19 three- to four-foot stumps left where these
20 trees will be removed?

21 A. That sounds high. But I have no reason to
22 question it.

23 Q. Would you agree, for those that will have a new
24 and increased view of the existing

1 right-of-way --

2 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

3 Q. -- on the new MVRP, these views will be for a
4 frequent, prolonged period from yards, homes
5 and local roads?

6 MR. NEEDLEMAN: I'm going to object
7 to the characterization of the question.

8 MS. HUARD: It is based on a
9 statement right from his VIA.

10 MR. NEEDLEMAN: Can you identify the
11 page, please?

12 MS. HUARD: Page 14. I'm sorry.
13 Wait, wait. Yeah, Page 14 of the VIA.

14 MR. NEEDLEMAN: John, would you look
15 at that.

16 MS. HUARD: It states, "Local
17 residents are likely to have more frequent,
18 prolonged views of the landscape from the
19 yards, homes, local roads and places of
20 employment." And if they were able to make
21 that generalization in their VIA, I think they
22 would be able to determine whether these homes
23 would have this specific view.

24 A. I'm not totally sure I understand the question.

1 But if you're asking are those statements made
2 in the VIA true in regard to residents, I would
3 say yes.

4 BY MS. HUARD:

5 Q. Okay. But my question now is, for those that
6 will have new and increased views of the
7 existing ROW, the ones that we identified that
8 will, and the new MVRP, will these views be for
9 frequent and prolonged periods from the yards,
10 homes and local roads?

11 A. Assuming that there is an open view that didn't
12 exist before, then I'd say yes.

13 Q. Would you agree that for a good amount of these
14 homes that were established to have new views,
15 those change in aesthetics are drastic?

16 MR. NEEDLEMAN: I'll object to the
17 form of the question.

18 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: The witness
19 can respond if he's able.

20 A. I can't say that, because we didn't evaluate
21 it. I mean, is there a potential that the view
22 is going to be different? I think absolutely
23 the view could be different. To characterize
24 the impact, you'd have to go through some sort

1 of a formal evaluation. And the focus of our
2 study was on scenic resources. That was the
3 focus. And I can't really speak about the
4 degree of impact on things other than those.

5 Q. So you spent all of that time and all of that
6 money using your expertise to spit out
7 computer-generated information and analyze the
8 view of this project from scenic views but
9 ignored the residents that have to live with it
10 every single day of their friggin' life.

11 MR. NEEDLEMAN: I'll object to the
12 form of the question.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Sustained.
14 You don't need to answer that.

15 MS. HUARD: I'm all set. Thank you.

16 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Thank you.

17 Members of the Subcommittee, any
18 questions? Yes, go ahead.

19 BY DR. BOISVERT:

20 Q. How were they selected, the KOPs?

21 A. So I ran through that in sort of an awkward
22 manner earlier. But it's basically sort of a
23 winnowing process starting with all of the
24 resources that we typically identify as

1 potentially sensitive or significant within the
2 study area. And then, looking at the
3 visibility of those resources, based on the
4 different analyses we did, whether it was a
5 viewshed analysis or a field review, to
6 actually narrow that down to the ones that,
7 one, met the definition of a "scenic resource"
8 as the SEC rules defined, which, as I said
9 earlier, either had a scenic designation or
10 scenic quality, and had public accessibility;
11 and then, two, they actually had a view of the
12 proposed project.

13 Q. So they had to be seen from the scenic place --
14 they had to be able to see the transmission
15 line from that place.

16 A. That's correct.

17 Q. And alternatively, the other way around.

18 A. That's correct.

19 Q. How do you account for potential views after
20 clearing of vegetation? When you have
21 vegetation in the way, an area might not be
22 seen from the transmission line because of
23 screening vegetation. But if that vegetation
24 is to be removed, how do you account for that?

1 A. So the determination about potential visibility
2 was based on sort of the boundaries of the
3 resources we were looking at. Most of these
4 weren't point locations; they were some areas,
5 whether a scenic drive or a conservation area
6 or park, something like that. So, what we did
7 was we identified those locations on that
8 resource where there was a view that at least
9 included a portion of the project. We were
10 then, when we did the simulations, able to show
11 what that project would look like, both by
12 adding the structures and removing the trees.

13 Q. So you did simulations, at least hypothetical
14 simulations, with the vegetation removed.

15 A. Absolutely.

16 Q. Okay. Can you give me an example of an
17 "unreasonable adverse effect on aesthetics"?
18 What would constitute an "unreasonable adverse
19 effect" by a transmission line on aesthetics?
20 Can you give me an example?

21 A. Yeah. I think the VIA runs through sort of the
22 criteria we use to reach the conclusion that
23 this was not an unreasonable effect. But an
24 unreasonable effect, in my mind, would be if

1 there wasn't a reasonable effort made to site
2 the line properly. In this case, it's
3 co-located with other transmission facilities,
4 which has a mitigating effect on its impact.
5 It would be unreasonable if there was a clear
6 public policy statement or management goal
7 within one of the communities that basically
8 protected an area for its aesthetics and, you
9 know, so would preclude by definition this kind
10 of action being --

11 Q. So it would have to be previously --

12 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

13 A. So would preclude by definition this kind of
14 action.

15 Q. So this community or some other entity would
16 have to identify something as being
17 aesthetically very important before you
18 consider it to be important? It would have to
19 be defined by third parties?

20 A. Well, that would be one example, again, to
21 answer your question about what would be
22 unreasonable -- or unreasonably adverse, or if
23 it was affecting large numbers of scenic
24 resources. Again, one of the things we found

1 on this project was that, despite the fact
2 there were, you know, over a hundred of these
3 resources that we identified within the study
4 area, when it came down to it, there were
5 really very few that actually could see the
6 project. And in those instances where you
7 could see the project, it was generally from a
8 very small portion of that resource, you know,
9 basically where it either crossed the resource
10 or was directly adjacent. So, this wasn't a
11 project that was affecting huge numbers of
12 highly significant areas.

13 Q. I was actually going back to some basic
14 concepts of what would be unreasonable adverse
15 effects just in the general statement for
16 transmission projects, say in New Hampshire.
17 Let's limit it to that so we don't pull out
18 hypotheticals from very far away. But I want
19 to know from you what would constitute that
20 kind of unreasonable adverse effect. What
21 would it need to have as its defined criteria?
22 I'm not quite clear on your answer yet.

23 A. So, again, if I go back to sort of the guidance
24 that the SEC rules provide, another example

1 would be a prominent, developed feature in a
2 largely undeveloped landscape or a project
3 where the Applicant didn't take -- or make
4 efforts to provide reasonable and feasible
5 mitigation.

6 Q. Well, mitigation would come after the
7 identification of the adverse effect. It's
8 somewhat getting the cart before the horse.
9 You say that you've mitigated it, meaning that
10 it wasn't unreasonable. I'm looking for
11 examples that could be mitigated.

12 A. Well, I think the example I used earlier about
13 siting the project, you know, that is a
14 mitigating effect. Siting the project within
15 an existing transmission corridor helps
16 mitigate the adverse visual impact.

17 Q. But I'm thinking in that context, where there's
18 vegetation being removed to expose new views,
19 that is another aspect; is it not?

20 A. It is. But I can't see how you could build any
21 transmission line without removing vegetation.

22 Q. Not in New Hampshire, right.

23 A. Right. So I'm not sure if there's more I can
24 say there or not. I mean, the fact that --

1 using this project as an example, I mean, the
2 fact that it's following an existing corridor I
3 think helps make it -- helps us come to the
4 conclusion that it's not an unreasonably
5 adverse effect. I'm trying to think about what
6 would be sort of a general statement about
7 what's "unreasonable."

8 Again, if the Applicant didn't try to do
9 things to minimize the impact -- for instance,
10 here they're using H-frame structures, Corten
11 steel, both things that generally would either
12 reduce the impact by either lowering the height
13 or helping the structures blend. You know, if
14 they weren't doing that, those sort of things
15 that they can do, then that to me would be
16 unreasonable. But they are doing those sort of
17 things. They are trying to site the line
18 appropriately. I know they are working with
19 landowners to address the impacts, which some
20 utilities don't do. So, all of those I think
21 go towards the conclusion that we arrived at.
22 For it to be unreasonable, I could just read
23 through the things here, if you'd like. I
24 mean --

1 Q. No, I wanted your professional take on it to
2 elaborate for the Committee, as a person who
3 does these visual impact studies, a
4 professional who looks to discover it and so
5 forth. We can read the criteria. But you have
6 the expertise to explain to us what it really
7 looks like on the ground, metaphor, pun
8 intended.

9 A. Again, you know, I mean, we can go with
10 different structures. I mean, if the Applicant
11 was coming before you and proposing something,
12 when he had the option of going on an existing
13 right-of-way and was proposing a brand new
14 right-of-way, you know, using much taller
15 structures, ones where there was no attempt
16 made to blend in, going through a highly scenic
17 area, I mean, all of those things could
18 contribute to a finding of unreasonable adverse
19 effect.

20 Q. There's also the issue of cumulative effects
21 which apply to wind farm situations. So,
22 there's the aspect of cumulative effects, but
23 we're not quite there yet. But this could be
24 the step that goes over the line.

1 But shifting just a little bit, you have
2 done a number of these kinds of studies in New
3 England?

4 A. Yes. Yes.

5 Q. Over the northeast?

6 A. Yeah. No. In New England, absolutely. Yeah.

7 Q. Have you ever identified an unreasonable
8 adverse effect or that equivalent in another
9 state on a project? Have you done the survey
10 and reported back to the client that there is
11 this unreasonable adverse effect in Maine or
12 Vermont, or an equivalent thereof present on
13 that project? Have you ever had that
14 situation?

15 A. I mean, we've been fortunate on our
16 transmission line projects to work with clients
17 who generally try to, I'll use the word
18 "mitigate" the impacts as part of the siting
19 and design of the line. And I don't believe
20 we've ever worked on one where there was a
21 brand new right-of-way. It's always been a
22 co-location-type project. So there's been
23 active efforts made to try to site the line
24 properly, to try to choose the structure types

1 and materials and color appropriately. And in
2 general, I think that kind of activity leads to
3 a conclusion that, yes, there is an effect, but
4 it's not an unreasonable effect.

5 The other types of projects we've worked
6 on, including in New England, are substation
7 projects. And on those, it's a little
8 different, in that sometimes that's a brand new
9 addition into an area that didn't have a
10 substation before, and we have come to
11 conclusions that the visual effect is
12 unacceptable. The advantage with the
13 substation is that you can screen it, and
14 that's oftentimes what our clients end up doing
15 when we've come to that conclusion, whether
16 it's to build a wall, earth berm or plantings.
17 So, substations, where it's sort of a brand new
18 addition of an industrial feature into the
19 landscape, we have come to that conclusion.
20 With the transmission lines, where they've been
21 co-located, we have not.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you.

23 A. You're welcome.

24 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Any other

1 Committee members?

2 BY MS. WHITAKER:

3 Q. Mr. Hecklau, I'm not sure if you'll be able to
4 answer this, but I'm hoping somebody can.

5 Ms. Huard made the comment that when
6 vegetation is removed, three- to four-foot
7 stumps will be left behind. Is that accurate?
8 I mean, are you guys boots on the ground
9 removing vegetation or --

10 A. I've never seen that before. I mean, on the
11 projects we've been involved in, stumps are
12 generally cut flush to the ground. But I'd
13 have to defer to somebody else.

14 MR. NEEDLEMAN: The witnesses on our
15 environmental panel will be able to speak to
16 that, and they're coming up either later today
17 or tomorrow morning.

18 BY MS. WEATHERSBY:

19 Q. Concerning mitigation with transmission lines,
20 I know the Applicant made some effort to
21 address mitigating factors: Siting it in an
22 existing corridor, the color, types, spacing of
23 the poles, height. But what other mitigation
24 measures could be used to reduce visibility?

1 A. Well, the most obvious one is to put it
2 underground. But that -- and that's normally
3 something that is taken into consideration by
4 an Applicant. But it's oftentimes got problems
5 primarily from a cost standpoint. But my
6 understanding is also reliability and other
7 things. That's really the -- other than the
8 things you mentioned, it's either that or the
9 siting of the project I think are the two
10 things that -- you know, alternate routes,
11 basically.

12 Q. Thank you.

13 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Any other
14 questions?

15 Is there any redirect?

16 MR. NEEDLEMAN: Yes, just a couple of
17 questions. Thank you.

18 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

19 BY MR. NEEDLEMAN:

20 Q. Mr. Hecklau, referring generally to the various
21 photograph exhibits that Ms. Huard took you
22 through, with respect to any of the places that
23 she identified in any of those exhibits, were
24 any of those scenic resources as you defined in

1 the VIA?

2 A. No, they were not.

3 Q. And is that significant to you in any way?

4 A. Well, it is, in that on this project we were
5 directed to follow the SEC guidelines, which
6 are very specific in what they ask the Visual
7 Impact Assessment to evaluate, and that is
8 scenic resources as they define them.

9 Q. Now, with respect to the other things that she
10 identified, mostly had to do with private
11 homes, are you familiar at all with the
12 outreach efforts that the Applicants have
13 engaged in to contact abutters, for example, on
14 the corridor?

15 A. I understand that that has been done, that the
16 Applicants reached out to talk about possible
17 mitigation measures.

18 Q. And in fact, would you expect Applicants in a
19 situation like this to try to reach out to
20 those abutters and address concerns they might
21 have?

22 A. It doesn't always happen. But I think, you
23 know, it should happen. And my understanding
24 is that it is happening on this project. And

1 again, that goes towards the conclusion that
2 the Applicants are proposing reasonable
3 mitigation, which supports the finding of, you
4 know, not an unreasonable adverse visual
5 effect.

6 Q. One of the exhibits Ms. Huard referred to is
7 Exhibit 43 which talked about a road called
8 Jason Drive, and identified some homeowners in
9 that area. Are you familiar at all with the
10 outreach that's been done to those specific
11 homeowners?

12 A. I don't know the specifics of that.

13 Q. So if the Applicants had been speaking
14 specifically to those homeowners and had
15 addressed concerns they might have about the
16 clearing, would that be significant to you?

17 A. Oh, absolutely. I mean, I think, you know, the
18 images made clear there's going to be
19 vegetation removal behind those homes. To the
20 extent the Applicants are willing to provide
21 some landscaping or screening to help offset
22 that impact, I think that's very significant.

23 Q. Thank you.

24 MR. NEEDLEMAN: Nothing further.

1 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Will there
2 be a witness available who could, for example,
3 give the Committee that information on the
4 outreach discussions?

5 MR. NEEDLEMAN: That would be Mr.
6 Plante, and I'd be happy to have him come back
7 in if you'd like him to.

8 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Why don't we
9 do it. I don't think it will take too long,
10 and maybe it can at least give us a flavor for
11 what kind of work is being done with abutters.

12 MR. NEEDLEMAN: Absolutely.

13 Dave, do you want to come back
14 up?

15 Are we done? Should we leave
16 Mr. Hecklau up there?

17 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Yes, you're
18 finished. Thank you.

19 And then we will be going next
20 to the System Impact witnesses, Mr. Martin and
21 Mr. Andrew.

22 (WHEREUPON, DAVID PLANTE, who was
23 previously duly sworn and cautioned by
24 the Court Reporter, returns to the

1 witness table.)

2 (Mr. Plante returns to the witness
3 table.)

4 REDIRECT EXAMINATION

5 BY MR. NEEDLEMAN:

6 Q. So, Mr. Plante, having in mind the sort of
7 discussion that Ms. Huard had with Mr. Hecklau,
8 identifying various homes along the
9 right-of-way that might experience increased
10 visibility, and also specifically focusing on
11 Jason Drive, can you speak about the outreach
12 efforts that have happened and some of the
13 resolutions of concerns that abutting
14 homeowners have had and that Eversource has
15 undertaken?

16 A. Certainly. With respect to the area in the
17 Jason Drive vicinity, there's a few roads
18 there, but those particular property owners,
19 the folks at the end of Jason Drive and the
20 next road to the north, have come to us. And
21 we've had several meetings with them on their
22 property to discuss the proposed project and
23 the impacts of the proposed right-of-way
24 clearing. And we worked out some collaborative

1 solutions with them to try to co-exist with our
2 project and their homes.

3 So we've brought in a landscape architect
4 to specifically look at the Wangs' home, which
5 is the one on the south end of the cul-de-sac.
6 Their home -- actually, their sunroom looks
7 kind of diagonally at the right-of-way and over
8 a portion of their yard that has no trees
9 remaining on their side of the property line.
10 So when we do our work, it would expose their
11 favorite viewing angle to the corridor. So we
12 worked out an arrangement with them to put some
13 additional plantings in, some more ornamental,
14 architectural-type treatments. We're actually
15 going to add a berm on another section of their
16 property to raise the elevation of the land and
17 put some more ornamentals on top of there and
18 relocate their driveway a little bit to create
19 some space in order to do that, because their
20 driveway is very, very close to the property
21 line as well. So those are not insignificant
22 construction efforts in order to do that, but
23 it's something that we worked out with them.
24 And they feel it will be, you know, a

1 reasonable accommodation for what we're
2 actually planning to do. And we are going to
3 leave perhaps a strip of trees on our side of
4 the right-of-way there, to the extent that
5 there are trees that would provide any value
6 from a screening perspective. You know,
7 obviously, a hundred-foot-tall white pine isn't
8 going to provide any screening value. But if
9 there are lower-growing, deciduous or
10 conifer-type trees that have some breadth to
11 them, then that might provide some value as
12 well.

13 At the end of Jason Drive there's also --
14 there was a concern that Jason Drive is maybe,
15 I don't know, 400 or 500 yards long, and it's
16 straight, kind of goes up the hill towards the
17 corridor. And at the very end of the public
18 right-of-way of Jason Drive cul-de-sac abuts
19 our property line. So if we were to remove all
20 those trees, there's one section that would be
21 opened up. And they felt that would be kind
22 of -- for anybody driving up the road, it would
23 be very obvious. So, again, we worked with
24 arborists to identify the trees that are

1 hazardous to the -- to our business as a
2 transmission company, identified the ones that
3 can remain, and then fill in the gaps with
4 desirable species that would, again, provide
5 some broadness or breadth -- tough word to say
6 on a microphone -- but to obscure the view from
7 Jason Drive of the right-of-way.

8 And then, continuing to the north, the
9 Barthelms property is not quite in the same
10 situation as the Wangs because they do have
11 quite a bit of foliage and forest remaining on
12 their side of the property line. So we walked
13 the property with them and identified what we
14 feel are the trees that would come down as part
15 of the project, what would be remaining, and
16 how, again, we would fill in the gaps with
17 desirable species to mitigate their view of the
18 right-of-way. In that particular section, it's
19 the end of their house that points directly at
20 the right-of-way. So it's not really a value
21 view for them. It's more the view from the
22 front of their house that looks out over the
23 cul-de-sac that they were more concerned with,
24 and that's being addressed with the same

1 planting plan that's addressing the view up
2 Jason Drive. So, that's a helpful solution for
3 them.

4 And the last one in that area was actually
5 at the end of Shadow Ridge Road. And that's,
6 again, a home that doesn't have any significant
7 foliage between -- on their side of the
8 property line. So, again, we're agreeing to
9 leave some amount of trees on our side of the
10 property line that are not a danger to the
11 project and establish a pretty significant row
12 of desirable species to fill in the gaps, and
13 also add some ornamentals on their side of the
14 property line. So, you have almost two layers
15 of plantings to help soften the view.

16 So, that's kind of what we've done in that
17 area -- or we haven't done anything yet,
18 obviously. I mean, there really haven't been a
19 lot of other folks who have come to us looking
20 specifically for how can we help. We certainly
21 are willing to entertain any of those questions
22 if they do come.

23 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Thank you.
24 Do any other Committee members have questions?

1 BY CMSR. ROSE:

2 Q. Thank you for the explanation. I was
3 wondering -- you spoke very specific with
4 regards to Jason Drive -- is that the general
5 company philosophy in working with other
6 abutters, to try to find mitigating measures to
7 try to alleviate immediate concerns that they
8 might have, or is that just sort of one
9 example?

10 A. That's one example where the neighbor came to
11 us with concerns, and we worked with them to
12 come up with an applicable solution. Am I
13 answering your question?

14 Q. Are you making other efforts to outreach to
15 abutters having similar concerns with regards
16 to the visual impact?

17 A. We have outreached to all of the direct
18 neighbors of the project. We didn't knock on
19 everybody's door and say, "Would you like us to
20 landscape your yard?" So we're expecting that,
21 if some of our neighbors have legitimate
22 concerns that their view or the aesthetics of
23 their property is being unreasonably affected
24 by our proposal, if they come to us, we're

1 willing to work with them and consider
2 solutions that might work.

3 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I guess I
4 should offer the intervenors an opportunity, if
5 you do have any questions of this witness,
6 since we did bring him back.

7 MS. HUARD: Sure.

8 RECROSS-EXAMINATION

9 BY MR. ASLIN:

10 Q. Just one quick question, Mr. Plante. You were
11 just speaking about other property owners that
12 have approached you. And I guess the bulk --
13 do you have a rough estimate of the number of
14 property owners who have had direct discussion
15 with the Company about mitigation efforts?

16 A. I want to -- I should have brought everything
17 up with me. But probably in the six or seven
18 range.

19 MR. ASLIN: Thank you.

20 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Ms. Huard,
21 do you have any questions?

22 RECROSS-EXAMINATION

23 BY MS. HUARD:

24 Q. Do you remember speaking with anyone on David

1 Drive?

2 A. I do not.

3 Q. Do you remember working specifically with
4 anyone on Lenny Lane?

5 A. I do not.

6 Q. Do you remember working specifically with
7 anyone on Kienia Road?

8 A. I do not.

9 Q. Do you remember working specifically with
10 anyone on Breakneck Road?

11 A. I do not.

12 Q. Do you remember working specifically with
13 anyone on Griffin Road?

14 A. Can't remember where Griffin Road is, off the
15 top of my head.

16 Q. It's before David Drive. It's the road at the
17 tail end -- or probably not because it's New
18 England Power's side.

19 Do you remember working --

20 A. I didn't specifically work with each and every
21 one of these abutters, so I may or may not know
22 every detail.

23 Q. Do you remember working with anyone
24 specifically on Boyd Road?

1 A. Yes.

2 MS. HUARD: I think that's it.

3 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Thank you.

4 Any --

5 MR. IACOPINO: Question.

6 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Oh, okay.

7 Sorry.

8 BY MR. IACOPINO:

9 Q. Mr. Plante, I'm looking at Ms. Huard's Exhibit
10 35, which pretty clearly shows what appears to
11 be a tennis court. Are you familiar with that
12 property up on David Drive?

13 A. I am.

14 Q. At least in the exhibit, the tennis court
15 appears to be, at least half of it, in your
16 right-of-way. Is that in fact the case?

17 A. That tennis court does not exist anymore. It
18 was removed sometime last year by the property
19 owner.

20 Q. Okay.

21 A. Not at our request. It just was removed.

22 Q. Okay. Thank you.

23 BY MS. WEATHERSBY:

24 Q. Concerning the abutters on the streets just

1 referenced by Ms. Huard, you indicated you
2 hadn't had any contact with folks there. Have
3 any people on those streets approached you
4 requesting mitigation?

5 A. That's what I was referring to. We have had
6 contact with them. We reached out. We haven't
7 had anything come back asking us for any sort
8 of mitigating assistance.

9 MS. WEATHERSBY: Thank you.

10 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: All right.
11 Thank you very much for coming back up.

12 Our next witnesses -- we have
13 about 20 minutes, so we'll at least get started
14 with the System Impacts, and then we'll have to
15 stop at 4:30 today. But we will resume
16 tomorrow at 10:00.

17 (WHEREUPON, JOHN MARTIN and BOB ANDREW
18 were duly sworn and cautioned by the
19 Court Reporter.)

20 DIRECT EXAMINATION

21 BY MR. NEEDLEMAN:

22 Q. Would you each identify yourself, please.

23 A. (Martin) My name is John Martin. I'm a
24 consulting engineer at National Grid in

1 transmission planning.

2 A. (Andrew) My name is Bob Andrew. I'm director
3 of system planning at Eversource Energy.

4 Q. And you submitted joint testimony in this
5 docket; is that correct?

6 A. (Martin) Yes.

7 A. (Andrew) Yes.

8 Q. And could you briefly explain the purpose of
9 the testimony.

10 A. (Martin) The purpose of the testimony, my
11 testimony, is to support New England Power's
12 petition for this transmission line, in terms
13 of its need of the solution process and the
14 general planning issues.

15 Q. And Mr. Andrew, is your purpose similar here
16 for Eversource?

17 A. (Andrew) Yes, it is.

18 Q. And the testimony you have in front of you, do
19 you have any changes to it?

20 A. (Martin) I do not.

21 A. (Andrew) I do not.

22 Q. And do you swear to it and adopt it here today?

23 A. (Martin) I do.

24 A. (Andrew) Yes, I do.

1 MR. NEEDLEMAN: The witnesses are
2 available for questioning.

3 CROSS-EXAMINATION

4 BY MR. ASLIN:

5 Q. Good afternoon. We've heard before, and I'm
6 going to ask you both specifically about this
7 project's selection by ISO-New England to meet
8 the reliability needs of the regional
9 transmission network.

10 In your testimony, you stated that --
11 well, you gave a number of factors that go into
12 the ISO selection process. Could you give a
13 summary of what those factors are?

14 A. (Martin) In terms of selecting the project, the
15 ISO looks at cost, constructability,
16 flexibility for future expansion, impact on
17 reliability and stability. I'm sure there's
18 others I'm forgetting.

19 A. (Andrew) Yeah, I think in the order of the
20 process, first is the solution must effectively
21 solve the problem: Reliability. It must
22 address the needs and solve it. The next major
23 factor is cost. And then, if there's no really
24 clear, superior project, then they delve down

1 into operability, maintainability, longevity of
2 the project to support load growth in the
3 longer term, other factors.

4 Q. Thank you. And in this case, I understand
5 there are two projects that kind of got through
6 the first hurdle and then were considered for
7 meeting the reliability needs in this part of
8 the grid. Is that correct?

9 A. (Martin) Can you be more specific with when you
10 say "two projects"?

11 Q. Sure. In addition to the -- well, I guess, let
12 me back up a little bit.

13 This specific project is part of a broader
14 sweep of improvements that were proposed by the
15 Applicants; is that correct?

16 A. (Martin) Of the suite that was assembled by the
17 ISO-New England working group.

18 Q. Okay. And my understanding from your testimony
19 is that there were two different projects that
20 were considered, one of which was MVRP,
21 probably within the context of a larger suite,
22 and another was an undersea cable?

23 A. (Martin) Yes. That was the main component of
24 the other suite of projects that was

1 considered.

2 Q. And I believe in your testimony, and also what
3 you just said, in this case, cost appeared to
4 be the primary, distinguishing factor for the
5 ISO in determining which project they selected?

6 A. (Andrew) Well, I think more than a quarter of a
7 billion dollars in price difference between the
8 two. So, cost was a very big factor, yes.

9 Q. And we heard earlier a little bit about cost
10 recovery. Am I correct that there would be no
11 difference in cost recovery between different
12 projects; they both would be recovered through
13 the FERC tariff?

14 A. (Martin) Yes. These projects were in response
15 to regional needs which the ISO saw, and as
16 such, the recommended or selected project, or
17 suite of projects, if they were regional
18 transmission to meet regional needs, they would
19 be recovered over the New England region using
20 the FERC-filed tariffs.

21 Q. Okay. Thank you. And under the FERC tariff,
22 the cost that's recovered is whatever the cost
23 of the project ends up being at the end of day;
24 is that correct?

1 A. (Andrew) Well, I think it's prudently incurred
2 costs, yes, and it isn't a total blank check.

3 Q. Understood. But is it the ISO that makes that
4 final determination of prudence with regard to
5 these projects?

6 A. (Martin) The ISO's determination is more on
7 were certain costs of strictly local benefit or
8 were they regional benefit. The expectation is
9 that they're prudent costs.

10 Q. Understood. But with regard to construction,
11 presumably you could envision -- and I'm not
12 suggesting that's the case here -- but you
13 could envision a project where there were
14 non-prudent construction costs that were
15 incurred during construction and maybe
16 exceeding the regional project's budget.

17 Is there an entity, whether it's the FERC
18 or ISO, that actually reviews those costs and
19 makes a prudence determination prior to cost
20 recovery, or after cost recovery is initiated
21 and recoups it?

22 A. (Andrew) Well, we do file with the ISO what's
23 called a "Transmission Cost Allocation Form,"
24 which they review and approve. And part of

1 that allocation is the regional versus
2 localization, you know, split of costs that are
3 in there. And ultimately, FERC is the ultimate
4 authority. There have been cases where, you
5 know, people filed at FERC that are different
6 entities, that costs were not prudently
7 incurred. And FERC, I believe, has the
8 ultimate authority.

9 Q. So, if I'm understanding, then, it's a
10 after-the-fact review that's initiated by a
11 third party rather than a pre-project
12 submission for prudence purposes?

13 A. (Andrew) Yes.

14 Q. Okay. Thank you.

15 And in this project, we've heard earlier
16 that the total cost in the New Hampshire
17 section of the project is now estimated at
18 \$72 million. Is there any review of the final
19 project costs by any entity? If you were
20 perhaps to go back up to your \$82 million due
21 to whatever factors may arise during
22 construction, is there an entity that reviews
23 that final cost to determine whether it's
24 prudent?

1 A. (Martin) Well, when we file our Transmission
2 Cost Allocation Application, there is an
3 expectation that we've made estimates already,
4 presented them to ISO when these projects were
5 evaluated. There would be an explanation as to
6 why those costs had changed from the time they
7 were submitted to what gets reported in the
8 Transmission Cost Allocation Application.

9 Q. And have the Applicants on this project put any
10 cap on the total cost?

11 A. (Martin) No.

12 Q. So, in a scenario where it ends up costing
13 50 percent more than the projected cost, if I
14 understand what you just testified to, there
15 would be a submission to the ISO for cost
16 allocation purposes and an explanation of why
17 the costs were higher. Would there be any
18 other review if the cost changed?

19 A. (Andrew) Well, I think that explanation of what
20 the cost changes were, what the drivers are,
21 take place in public meetings in the ISO's open
22 stakeholder process. Usually present in that
23 room are representatives from different
24 government agencies, you know, who, if they ask

1 questions, they either get the answer then or
2 at the next meeting. We are tasked with
3 answering, you know, those questions through
4 the entire process.

5 In terms of a cost cap, the current tariff
6 that we operate under in New England doesn't
7 have that provision. So, we're simply -- what
8 we do is follow the rules that are in place.

9 Q. Okay. Thank you.

10 And under the tariff, then, if costs were
11 higher or lower, those costs would flow through
12 to customers, pursuant to the FERC tariff?

13 A. (Andrew) That's true, yes. And costs don't
14 always go up. When they go down, there's very
15 little publicity with that, but...

16 Q. I understand. I want to shift gears to the
17 question of decommissioning. As I understand
18 the filing so far, under the FERC rules and
19 under the ISO process, there's no obligation to
20 decommission or retire these assets; is that
21 correct?

22 A. (Martin) Yes, that's correct.

23 Q. And that is why it's not -- the projected cost
24 of decommissioning is not part of the budget

1 for this project?

2 A. (Martin) That's right.

3 Q. If retirement of the project were to become a
4 requirement at some time in the future, what
5 entity would make that decision, or entities
6 could make that decision?

7 A. (Martin) Well, I'll start. I think Bob has a
8 few things to say afterwards.

9 I mean, the need for
10 decommissioning would, in the case of a
11 transmission line, typically result as an asset
12 condition issue that the owner determined
13 wasn't feasible or economic to fix. But the
14 reliability of the system would still need to
15 be evaluated, and whatever was required to take
16 its place would have to be considered all as
17 part of the project, because ISO New England
18 weighs in even on asset-condition replacement
19 projects. They have to be presented as well to
20 the various stakeholder groups that Bob
21 mentioned.

22 Q. So if I understand that, even if the Applicants
23 at some point decide they did not want to
24 maintain this line or a similar line, the ISO

1 would still have a say on that decision on a
2 reliability basis?

3 A. (Martin) Yes. If an owner decided they wanted
4 to take their line out, just completely take it
5 out, they'd have to file studies with the ISO
6 to demonstrate that there's no adverse impact
7 to the power system in doing that.

8 Q. Are you aware of any instances of transmission
9 lines being decommissioned or abandoned by an
10 owner?

11 A. (Martin) I'm not aware of any being abandoned.
12 I'm aware of one in New England Power Company's
13 territory that is being dismantled because it's
14 no longer needed.

15 Q. And was that a decision of the Company or of
16 ISO?

17 A. (Martin) That was a non-Pool Transmission
18 Facility. So it's a local facility. It was a
19 decision of the facility owner. And that
20 had -- even that has to have, it's called a
21 "Proposed Plan Application." That has to be
22 reviewed by ISO and approved.

23 Q. Okay. Thank you.

24 MR. ASLIN: I don't have any further

1 questions.

2 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Ms. Huard,
3 do you have any questions?

4 MS. HUARD: I do.

5 CROSS-EXAMINATION

6 BY MS. HUARD:

7 Q. Mr. Martin, were you National Grid's
8 transmission planning engineer in the ISO-led
9 Greater Boston working group that led to the
10 selection of MVRP?

11 A. (Martin) Yes, I was.

12 Q. And Mr. Andrew, were you part of that group?

13 A. (Andrew) People that work for me were part of
14 the study group. I was involved in and out of
15 the study group and various meetings over the
16 years.

17 Q. I'll pretty much direct these questions at Mr.
18 Martin, then.

19 The Greater Boston Area Study Group began
20 a needs assessment of the Boston area
21 transmission system in 2008; correct?

22 A. (Martin) Yes.

23 Q. And ISO-New England just finally issued its
24 Greater Boston Solution Report in August of

1 2015; correct?

2 A. (Martin) Yes.

3 Q. And was this the report that officially named
4 the MVRP as the preferred solution?

5 A. (Martin) It named the suite of projects, which
6 includes the MVRP, yes.

7 Q. All right. So you are admitting that the
8 preferred solution included a number of other
9 projects and upgrades besides the MVRP;
10 correct?

11 A. (Martin) Yes.

12 Q. And was one of those upgrades the
13 reconditioning of a number of existing lines,
14 including the Y151 line in Hudson, New
15 Hampshire?

16 A. (Martin) No, that's part of the MVRP.

17 Q. Right. Part of the MVRP or part of the Greater
18 Boston Solutions?

19 A. (Martin) The Greater Boston Solution includes
20 MVRP --

21 Q. Could you explain --

22 A. (Martin) -- plus many other projects.

23 Q. Could you explain to me how you could have
24 worked on the Y151 line upgrade already if it

1 was part of the MVRP that hasn't even been
2 approved yet?

3 A. (Martin) Could you be specific as to what part
4 we've worked on?

5 Q. Yeah. You worked on it over the winter, from
6 Power Street to the point of demarcation. I
7 don't know exactly what work you were doing,
8 but I was told --

9 A. (Martin) You might be referring to the
10 Eversource part of the line. Eversource owns
11 the Power Street Substation.

12 Q. With the Y151 --

13 (Court Reporter interrupts.)

14 Q. The reconductor Y151, Power Street, Eversource
15 and National Grid, fourth quarter, was that
16 part of the preferred solution common upgrade?

17 A. (Martin) Yes. When I said that the Y151 was
18 part of MVRP, I was referring to the National
19 Grid portion that needs to be relocated.

20 Q. Okay. You're claiming that there were a number
21 of other projects and upgrades as part of this
22 Greater Boston Area Solution. Seacoast
23 Reliability or the Northern Pass, either of
24 those projects fall out of the Greater Boston

1 Needs Assessment Study?

2 A. (Martin) No.

3 Q. Does MVRP also address needs in the New
4 Hampshire-Vermont Needs Assessment?

5 A. (Andrew) I can take this one.

6 Q. Okay. Go ahead.

7 A. (Andrew) Okay. Both studies showed problems in
8 the Southern New Hampshire, Merrimack Valley
9 area. And this is fairly common within -- the
10 way the ISO structures their studies, New
11 England is broken up into different areas. And
12 where two areas come together, then they will
13 make a decision about which study will handle
14 the problem, all right. The New
15 Hampshire-Vermont 2023 and the 2026 study
16 that's going on now show there are issues in
17 this area, all right. The Greater Boston
18 Solution addresses these issues in a similar
19 way. Greater Boston showed some problems with
20 the Southeast Massachusetts area, and they were
21 assigned to be resolved in the Southeast
22 Massachusetts study. So, the fact that they're
23 here is just part of the ISO study group
24 decision-making process to allocate the

1 solution to one of the studies.

2 Q. But it also did show up in the New
3 Hampshire-Vermont Needs Assessment Study;
4 correct?

5 A. (Andrew) Yes.

6 Q. And is the Seacoast Reliability or the Northern
7 Pass part of the New Hampshire-Vermont
8 assessment?

9 A. (Andrew) Northern Pass is what's referred to as
10 "elective transmission upgrade," so it is not a
11 reliability upgrade. So, Northern Pass cannot
12 come out as a consequence from a reliability
13 study. The Seacoast Reliability Project did.

14 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Ms. Huard,
15 I'm not sure -- I'm not seeing how this is
16 relevant to this project.

17 MS. HUARD: This question?

18 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Yeah. We
19 are also at 4:30, so --

20 MS. HUARD: It's not going to take me
21 that long. I'll try and -- but the relevance
22 is they were -- this was a study done that the
23 MVRP evolved out of, and there were a number of
24 other projects. I'm trying to determine the

1 relevance to those projects and the assumptions
2 to the final decision as to why the MVRP was
3 chosen. So I'll try and speed it up.

4 BY MS. HUARD:

5 Q. On the redacted copy of the Greater Boston Area
6 Updated Transmission Needs Assessment I was
7 provided, there is an upgrade list called
8 "Seacoast New Hampshire Solutions." Would that
9 be the same as the Seacoast Reliability?

10 A. (Martin) Would you have a page reference to
11 that study?

12 Q. Page 119, Appendix B, Section 8, Upgrades --

13 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I'm still
14 having difficulty. We've established that this
15 project is a reliability project that was
16 approved by ISO-New England. What is the
17 relevance of other unrelated projects, and why
18 do we need to explore them in this application?

19 MS. HUARD: I fail to see how they're
20 unrelated if they were all part of one large
21 Greater Boston Area Solution, and I'm trying to
22 determine the correlation.

23 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I don't --
24 I'm going to stop this line of questioning. I

1 don't believe it's relevant. We are not the
2 authority tasked with establishing the needs;
3 that is ISO-New England and FERC.

4 MS. HUARD: I think my questions have
5 a great bearing on whether this MVRP provides
6 stability or reliability if there's another
7 actual purpose to the selection of this
8 project.

9 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: I guess
10 we'll wait until tomorrow. And if you can give
11 me a little better offer of proof tomorrow,
12 I'll reconsider. But right now, it does not
13 appear to be relevant to me.

14 Thank you. We will adjourn for
15 today. We will begin at 10:00 tomorrow with a
16 continuation of Ms. Huard's cross-examination
17 of these witnesses.

18 Are there any other matters we
19 need to cover before we close today?

20 [No verbal response]

21 PRESIDING OFFICER ROSS: Okay. We
22 will see you at 10:00 tomorrow. Thank you all.

23 (Whereupon the Day 1 Hearing, Afternoon
24 Session ONLY, was adjourned at 4:33 p.m.)

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

	105:6,15;107:21; 108:24	41:18;98:15; 103:24	agencies (4) 26:5;35:13,21; 116:24	116:19;117:13; 120:12,13;123:5,7; 124:5,9
\$	abutting (2) 62:14;100:13	addresses (1) 123:18	agency (2) 21:17,19	angle (2) 72:8;101:11
\$11 (2) 6:19;9:20	accessibility (1) 86:10	addressing (1) 104:1	agree (14) 19:2,24;22:5,11, 15;28:20;51:10,21; 56:1,12;57:2;59:5; 82:23;84:13	answered (1) 65:15
\$150 (1) 19:11	accessible (1) 47:18	adequately (2) 39:19;49:24	agreeing (1) 104:8	anymore (1) 108:17
\$2 (1) 32:10	accommodation (1) 102:1	adjacent (2) 68:6;89:10	ahead (3) 68:1;85:18;123:6	A-plus (1) 26:4
\$3.7 (1) 28:21	according (3) 38:15;48:5;66:11	adjourn (1) 126:14	alleviate (1) 105:7	apologize (1) 48:1
\$300 (1) 19:13	account (4) 37:18,21;86:19,24	adjourned (1) 126:24	allocated (2) 13:1,19	appear (12) 64:21;69:9,17,24; 70:20;77:20;79:18; 80:2,8;81:13,14; 126:13
\$35 (2) 6:19;10:15	accountant (1) 21:22	admitting (1) 121:7	allocation (9) 10:12;12:16;44:3, 4;114:23;115:1; 116:2,8,16	appears (9) 62:6,20;64:1; 65:19;70:8;79:16; 80:15;108:10,15
\$36 (1) 10:14	accounting (5) 20:11,11;21:16; 29:24;37:14	adopt (5) 7:3;8:13;9:9;46:5; 110:22	allow (2) 33:22;55:8	Appendix (1) 125:12
\$37 (1) 10:14	accumulates (1) 18:14	advance (3) 17:14,16;32:9	almost (2) 70:1;104:14	Appleway (1) 49:20
\$46 (1) 10:13	accurate (6) 7:6;8:15;9:11; 20:4;76:12;95:7	advantage (1) 94:12	along (7) 52:4;53:22;54:22; 66:10;76:17;81:11; 100:8	applicable (1) 105:12
\$72 (5) 6:17;8:5;14:5; 15:24;115:18	acres (1) 56:10	adverse (16) 57:23;58:7;62:24; 87:17,18;88:22; 89:14,20;90:7,16; 91:5;92:18;93:8,11; 98:4;119:6	alternate (1) 96:10	Applicant (6) 42:7;90:3;91:8; 92:10;95:20;96:4
\$8 (2) 36:10,24	across (2) 67:14;75:9	aesthetically (1) 88:17	alternatively (1) 86:17	Applicants (13) 41:20,21;61:7,16; 97:12,16,18;98:2,13, 20;112:15;116:9; 118:22
\$82 (3) 6:17;8:4;115:20	action (2) 88:10,14	affect (2) 6:21;8:6	Although (1) 49:10	Applicants' (1) 61:17
[active (1) 93:23	affected (3) 56:12,14;105:23	always (3) 93:21;97:22; 117:14	Application (14) 6:5,8;7:14,16,19; 8:23;9:1;14:21; 38:23;61:4;116:2,8; 119:21;125:18
[No (2) 45:4;126:20	activity (2) 60:22;94:2	Aesthetics (13) 45:7;57:24;58:1,7; 59:7;64:9;65:16; 71:8;84:15;87:17,19; 88:8;105:22	among (1) 46:16	applied (1) 63:5
[sic] (1) 34:9	actual (5) 17:14,17;48:19; 55:2;126:7	affiliates (1) 32:9	amount (5) 27:8;32:5;62:11; 84:13;104:9	apply (1) 92:21
A	actually (27) 6:23;33:16,19; 35:13;47:19;51:2; 57:19;64:9,11;66:1, 24;72:5,19;74:18; 75:8,13;80:7,20;86:6, 11;89:5,13;101:6,14; 102:2;104:4;114:18	affirm (3) 7:4;8:14;9:10	amounts (1) 30:15	approached (2) 106:12;109:3
A3 (1) 34:9	add (4) 25:20;35:12; 101:15;104:13	affecting (2) 88:23;89:11	analyses (1) 86:4	appropriately (2) 91:18;94:1
abandoned (2) 119:9,11	added (1) 33:7	affiliated (1) 32:9	analysis (8) 7:12;49:8;52:17, 18;53:1;55:2;57:18; 86:5	approval (2) 16:16;36:20
ability (1) 30:20	adding (3) 49:8;54:23;87:12	affirm (3) 7:4;8:14;9:10	anchors (4) 62:8,11;74:10,12	approve (1) 114:24
able (17) 6:1;14:4;17:16; 21:20;31:11,13; 33:10;34:19;67:17; 70:24;83:20,22; 84:19;86:14;87:10; 95:3,15	addition (6) 38:2;50:6;80:12; 94:9,18;112:11	afternoon (7) 9:17;18:10;45:12; 46:13,14;111:5; 126:23	Andrew (22) 99:21;109:17; 110:2,2,7,15,17,21, 24;111:19;113:6; 114:1,22;115:13;	approved (5) 11:2;36:23;119:22; 122:2;125:16
above (4) 48:22;54:12;72:15; 75:18	additional (10) 40:15;51:15;67:19; 68:3;73:5;78:2,13; 79:13;81:11;101:13	after-the-fact (1) 115:10		approximate (2) 12:16;52:8
Absolutely (8) 36:11;39:23;70:8; 84:22;87:15;93:6; 98:17;99:12	address (6) 63:1;91:19;95:21; 97:20;111:22;123:3	afterwards (1) 118:8		approximately (10)
abuts (1) 102:18	addressed (3)	again (28) 8:4;13:23;16:19; 44:1;56:17;59:8,12; 66:22;67:23;69:20; 70:22;71:5;72:19; 78:5;80:14;81:3,9; 88:20,24;89:23;91:8; 92:9;98:1;102:23; 103:4,16;104:6,8		
abutters (10) 63:24;67:22;69:3; 97:13,20;99:11;				

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

9:20;12:22,24; 13:13;27:13,15; 28:14,18,21;41:24 arborists (1) 102:24 architect (1) 101:3 architectural-type (1) 101:14 area (38) 47:6;49:24;50:15, 20,22;52:21;53:6; 54:16,17;56:21; 58:12;59:9;60:19,19; 69:16;77:3,4;78:1, 22;86:2,21;87:5; 88:8;89:4;92:17; 94:9;98:9;100:16; 104:4,17;120:19,20; 122:22;123:9,17,20; 125:5,21 areas (9) 50:22,24;51:13; 52:20;55:11;87:4; 89:12;123:11,12 argument (1) 6:23 arise (1) 115:21 around (5) 26:23;34:14;47:7; 62:12;86:17 arrangement (1) 101:12 arrived (1) 91:21 arrow (3) 64:12,16;65:22 ASLIN (10) 9:16;18:6;44:24; 46:12;53:18;57:5; 106:9,19;111:4; 119:24 aspect (4) 9:1;57:18;90:19; 92:22 aspects (1) 37:22 assembled (1) 112:16 assess (1) 35:16 Assessment (14) 45:23;46:15;47:3; 52:13,14;57:11,22; 97:7;120:20;123:1,4; 124:3,8;125:6 asset (2) 16:20;118:11 asset-condition (1) 118:18 assets (21) 22:12,24;23:6,7,10,	12,14,24;24:1,3,4,7, 18,21;25:16;28:4; 37:11,15,17,19; 117:20 assigned (1) 123:21 assistance (1) 109:8 associated (1) 43:15 assumed (2) 21:21;44:4 Assuming (1) 84:11 assumptions (1) 125:1 attempt (1) 92:15 attempting (1) 24:17 attention (1) 53:19 attorneys (1) 53:11 attributed (1) 28:17 atypical (1) 15:19 August (1) 120:24 authority (3) 115:4,8;126:2 authorized (1) 11:2 automatically (1) 35:23 available (6) 34:20;46:9;49:11; 51:3;99:2;111:2 average (2) 39:13;52:10 aware (5) 31:19;82:18;119:8, 11,12 away (4) 24:13;68:8;81:19; 89:18 awful (1) 27:4 awkward (1) 85:21	24:16 balance (7) 19:2;23:24;27:12; 29:13;32:2;38:10; 40:21 bank (2) 37:18,19 bankruptcy (2) 25:22;26:6 barrier (1) 67:2 Barthelms (1) 103:9 based (8) 10:19;17:4;47:18; 52:22;80:4;83:8; 86:3;87:2 basic (3) 35:8;37:16;89:13 basically (7) 17:4;48:21;57:17; 85:22;88:7;89:9; 96:11 basis (2) 43:19;119:2 bearing (1) 126:5 become (2) 16:3;118:3 becomes (1) 42:23 began (1) 120:19 begin (2) 17:16;126:15 beginning (1) 16:17 behind (2) 95:7;98:19 belongs (1) 62:18 below (2) 66:4;77:12 benefit (3) 60:1;114:7,8 benefiting (1) 31:6 berm (2) 94:16;101:15 besides (3) 24:17;67:20;121:9 best (6) 7:6;8:15;9:11; 25:2;47:4;76:13 better (9) 7:1;38:5;42:23; 48:11;49:16,16; 67:16,18;126:11 beyond (1) 47:8 big (1) 113:8 billion (13)	22:6,12;27:14; 32:7,8,10;36:10,24; 39:9,9,13,14;113:7 binder (1) 53:11 bit (8) 50:2;67:16,18; 93:1;101:18;103:11; 112:12;113:9 blank (1) 114:2 blend (2) 91:13;92:16 block (1) 79:19 blocks (2) 79:2;80:6 BOB (4) 109:17;110:2; 118:7,20 Bockes (1) 50:1 body (1) 70:14 BOISVERT (1) 85:19 bond (1) 30:23 bonds (3) 30:14,19;31:10 book (1) 16:20 booked (1) 16:24 boots (1) 95:8 borne (2) 13:14;44:13 borrowing (4) 18:13;26:19,23; 35:3 borrowings (3) 19:16;27:21;29:3 Boston (12) 120:9,19,20,24; 121:18,19;122:22,24; 123:17,19;125:5,21 both (13) 11:15;16:9;34:8; 36:14;39:16;42:3; 51:4;53:1;87:11; 91:11;111:6;113:12; 123:7 bottom (10) 19:21;61:21;65:4, 12,15;66:5,17;69:23; 79:5;81:19 boundaries (1) 87:2 Boyd (1) 107:24 brand (14) 63:23;64:3,3,22;	70:6,6,20;79:13; 80:11,12;92:13; 93:21;94:8,17 breadth (2) 102:10;103:5 break (2) 73:8,12 Breakneck (2) 75:10;107:10 Brian (4) 28:16;42:11,15,19 brief (1) 76:1 briefly (2) 10:1;110:8 bring (2) 42:10;106:6 broader (1) 112:13 broadness (1) 103:5 Broken (2) 43:4;123:11 brokerage (1) 31:14 Brook (1) 70:15 brought (2) 101:3;106:16 budget (4) 11:22;15:17; 114:16;117:24 build (2) 90:20;94:16 bulk (1) 106:12 business (16) 7:12;8:19;12:3; 29:7;34:6,22;35:10; 36:8,12,14,16,17; 37:23;38:17;39:3; 103:1 businesses (1) 31:24 buy (1) 34:22 byway (1) 49:15
				C
	B			cable (1) 112:22 caisson (2) 43:11;44:7 calculate (2) 25:6,14 calculated (1) 22:22 calculating (1) 24:20 calculation (2) 24:19;25:9

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

call (1) 54:12	16:8;18:12;25:3,4,7; 10,13,19;29:6,8;35:4; 38:1,8,9,12;39:1,3, 10,14,19	clarifies (1) 44:24	60:9	22
called (10) 21:23;24:6;30:20; 45:19;75:10;77:3; 98:7;114:23;119:20; 125:7	casting (1) 80:5	clarify (2) 13:6;50:5	Committee (7) 37:5;53:15;60:1; 92:2;95:1;99:3; 104:24	conclude (1) 59:4
calls (1) 59:21	categories (2) 58:17;59:11	clarifying (1) 27:7	common (2) 122:16;123:9	concluded (1) 57:22
came (3) 14:24;89:4;105:10	cause (2) 10:1;73:14	clarity (1) 76:9	communities (1) 88:7	conclusion (13) 58:3,5,5,8;59:21; 63:6;87:22;91:4,21; 94:3,15,19;98:1
can (104) 8:18;21:7;25:24; 26:8,18;27:19;30:14; 31:14;33:1,13,15; 35:22;36:19;38:6,24; 39:1,6;40:12;41:16; 42:19;47:4,21;54:19; 62:2,3,4,7,11,14,16, 17,22;63:7,7,13,16, 16,23;64:2,65:7; 67:1,5,10,16,21; 68:12,20,22,24;69:1, 11,20,22,23;70:3,5, 11,16,18,19,22;71:7, 11,22;72:4,12,15,17; 74:4,6,9,15,22;75:2, 12,16;77:3,6,7,8,11, 21;78:1,5,22;79:2; 81:3;83:10;84:19; 87:16,20;90:23; 91:15;92:5,9;94:13; 95:4;99:10;100:11; 103:3;104:20;112:9; 123:5;126:10	cautioned (3) 45:9;99:23;109:18	clear (8) 40:12;49:10;69:6; 78:16;88:5;89:22; 98:18;111:24	community (1) 88:15	conclusions (6) 6:21;8:6;51:17; 56:19;59:13;94:11
	Center (2) 49:2;81:6	cleared (6) 56:7;68:16;71:18, 21;79:16;80:19	commute (1) 60:21	concrete (1) 43:11
	certain (1) 114:7	clearing (19) 51:14,18;54:18,21; 55:6,22;56:3,10; 66:11;71:1,3,5,7; 75:15,16;78:18; 86:20;98:16;100:24	commuter (1) 59:1	condition (1) 118:12
	certainly (5) 26:5,10,11;100:16; 104:20	clearly (1) 108:10	commuters (2) 58:18;71:11	confirm (1) 28:12
	CFO (1) 30:1	client (1) 93:10	commuting (1) 63:8	confused (3) 40:3;65:1;67:23
	CFPI (1) 51:24	clients (2) 93:16;94:14	companies (5) 16:12;18:2;31:22; 35:14;40:19	confusing (1) 50:3
	Chair (1) 46:10	close (4) 51:1;65:20;101:20; 126:19	companies' (1) 39:16	confusion (1) 40:12
	challenge (1) 36:8	closely (1) 30:24	Company (14) 16:5;18:20;22:7; 28:11;29:5;30:10; 32:11,13;34:7,12; 103:2;105:5;106:15; 119:15	conifer-type (1) 102:10
	challenged (1) 54:12	closer (2) 45:15;82:1	Company's (1) 119:12	consequence (1) 124:12
	change (15) 6:15,21;7:3;8:3,6, 13;9:9;28:10;42:10; 51:9;64:10;65:16; 66:6;70:8;84:15	CMSR (1) 105:1	compare (2) 21:9;77:17	Conservation (2) 49:24;87:5
	changed (6) 6:17;8:9,12;10:10; 116:6,18	co-exist (1) 101:1	compared (1) 51:16	consider (5) 27:3;36:10;72:3; 88:18;106:1
	changes (8) 6:13;8:1;9:6;46:3; 51:6,19;110:19; 116:20	coincide (1) 35:17	compares (1) 37:15	considerable (1) 71:8
	character (1) 50:19	collaborative (1) 100:24	comparison (1) 53:4	consideration (3) 25:20;35:22;96:3
	characterization (2) 58:12;83:7	collect (2) 11:17;17:6	complete (1) 71:4	considered (7) 48:6;52:12;67:21; 112:6,20;113:1; 118:16
	characterize (1) 84:23	collected (1) 50:17	completed (2) 57:14;60:5	consistent (1) 56:20
Capitalization (3) 29:15;30:5;36:15	charged (1) 14:3	co-located (2) 88:3;94:21	completely (2) 68:18;119:4	Consolidated (1) 30:4
capture (1) 26:11	charges (2) 13:9;14:17	co-location-type (1) 93:22	component (2) 16:23;112:23	constantly (1) 26:14
carrying (1) 14:17	cheap (1) 31:5	color (2) 94:1;95:22	components (4) 17:6;21:6,10;32:22	constitute (2) 87:18;89:19
cart (1) 90:8	check (2) 47:21;114:2	combination (1) 12:2	computer-generated (1) 85:7	constructability (1) 111:15
case (10) 11:1;27:24;40:8; 54:20;88:2;108:16; 112:4;113:3;114:12; 118:10	choose (2) 50:11;93:24	coming (8) 33:9;34:17;39:3, 12,14;92:11;95:16; 109:11	concepts (1) 89:14	construction (8) 18:11;29:2;33:6; 101:22;114:10,14,15; 115:22
cases (2) 52:10;115:4	chosen (1) 125:3	comment (2) 37:24;95:5	concern (1) 102:14	consulting (1) 109:24
cash (23) 8:21;11:18;12:2;	circles (1) 62:9	commercial (1) 19:17	concerned (2) 26:18;103:23	consumers (1) 31:16
	claiming (1) 122:20	Commission (1)	Concerning (2) 95:19;108:24	contact (3) 97:13;109:2,6
			concerns (7) 97:20;98:15; 100:13;105:7,11,15,	contained (1) 7:5

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

context (5) 58:8;59:12;71:24; 90:17;112:21	19:15;33:7;43:3,15; 19,20,21;44:3,8,17; 18;114:2,7,9,14,18; 115:2,6,19;116:6,17; 117:10,11,13	cul-de-sacs (1) 78:11	119:3	47:16;86:9
contingent (1) 27:21	Counsel (5) 40:4;41:1,18; 44:22;82:8	cumulative (2) 92:20,22	decides (1) 27:18	desirable (3) 103:4,17;104:12
continuation (1) 126:16	couple (5) 26:7;52:9;67:3,5; 96:16	current (21) 7:10;15:7;22:5,9, 11,23,24;24:1,18,18, 21,22;25:15,16; 27:14;37:11,15,16; 42:16;52:6;117:5	deciduous (1) 102:9	despite (1) 89:1
continue (1) 61:20	course (1) 82:5	currently (4) 15:16;55:8,11; 65:17	decision (7) 118:5,6;119:1,15, 19;123:13;125:2	detail (3) 44:12;48:8;107:22
continuing (2) 76:17;103:8	Court (24) 6:6;8:10;12:19,21; 21:18;23:21;31:12; 33:3;34:4;37:12; 45:9;49:13;62:14; 64:24;65:11;67:8; 83:2;88:12;99:24; 108:11,14,17;109:19; 122:13	customers (12) 13:2,3,9,11,15,20; 14:3;26:18;35:6; 40:11,16;117:12	decision-making (1) 123:24	details (1) 42:24
Contracts (1) 23:18	cover (6) 18:3;26:10;50:18; 52:24;53:13;126:19	customers' (1) 40:7	decisions (1) 11:24	determination (4) 87:1;114:4,6,19
contribute (5) 20:13,14,15;31:11; 92:18	coverage (1) 34:14	cut (1) 95:12	decommission (4) 16:15;17:10,13; 117:20	determine (9) 21:5;27:23;32:21; 47:13;65:18;83:22; 115:23;124:24; 125:22
contribution (2) 32:15,18	CP1-4 (1) 41:17	cycle (1) 42:22	decommissioned (2) 15:21;119:9	determined (5) 27:24;47:8;48:7; 49:20;118:12
contributions (4) 12:4;18:20;29:4; 32:12	create (1) 101:18	cyclical (3) 34:22;38:13,17	decommissioning (10) 14:20,23;15:14; 16:3;17:15,19;41:3; 117:17,24;118:10	determining (1) 113:5
controls (3) 43:7,9;44:5	created (1) 52:3	D	decrease (3) 42:20;43:5,23	developed (1) 90:1
coordinate (1) 57:16	creating (1) 56:7		decreased (1) 43:21	developing (1) 14:9
copy (5) 6:3,7;7:17;25:10; 125:5	credit (3) 26:2;34:6,11	danger (1) 104:10	defer (2) 10:3;95:13	development (2) 7:12;49:6
corner (1) 72:13	credit-card (1) 37:20	Data (2) 41:17;52:11	deferred (7) 22:19;23:2,3,4,11, 23;24:6	diagonally (1) 101:7
corporate (1) 8:21	credits (2) 22:20;23:2	Dataset (1) 52:24	define (3) 20:10;47:15;97:8	differ (1) 12:7
correctly (2) 9:21;72:20	criteria (7) 47:14,20;48:6,16; 87:22;89:21;92:5	Dave (1) 99:13	defined (5) 71:20;86:8;88:19; 89:21;96:24	difference (9) 12:13;22:23;37:10; 40:16;52:4;55:23; 71:8;113:7,11
correlation (1) 125:22	critical (1) 39:3	David (16) 28:16;60:16,20; 63:9;64:4,7,17,20; 65:18;66:11;68:11; 69:7;99:22;106:24; 107:16;108:12	definition (4) 48:4;86:7;88:9,13	different (19) 24:8;30:11;38:21; 41:11;44:10;50:16, 19;55:19;58:14; 84:22,23;86:4;92:10; 94:8;112:19;113:11; 115:5;116:23;123:11
corridor (9) 57:1;71:18;72:9; 90:15;91:2;95:22; 97:14;101:11;102:17	critically (1) 34:18	day (3) 85:10;113:23; 126:23	degree (1) 85:4	difficult (2) 66:14;67:14
Corten (1) 91:10	crossed (1) 89:9	Debits (3) 23:11,23;24:7	delve (1) 111:24	difficulty (1) 125:14
cost (57) 6:16,24;9:19;10:2, 5,9,20;12:7,17,18; 13:1,14,18;14:16,23; 15:7,13,16;16:4,11, 13;17:16,21;18:1; 26:12;28:10;38:13; 41:4,22;43:7,23;44:2, 15,20;96:5;111:15, 23;113:3,8,9,11,22, 22;114:19,20,23; 115:16,23;116:2,8, 10,13,15,18,20; 117:5,23	CROSS-EXAMINATION (9) 9:15;18:8;46:11; 57:7;75:24;76:5; 111:3;120:5;126:16	debt (47) 11:13,14,15;12:3, 5;16:8,10;18:14,15; 19:3;20:16,16;26:4,9, 14,16,16;27:8,13,14, 18,20;29:14;30:5,22; 31:1,4,5;32:1,5;33:7, 9,15,21;34:15,19; 35:14;36:7,10,15,17, 19,21,24;37:2,20; 38:7	demarcation (5) 61:6,12,14,15; 122:6	DIRECT (9) 45:10;52:21;53:19; 54:3;67:22;105:17; 106:14;109:20; 120:17
cost-effective (1) 36:7	cross-section (1) 51:8	debts (2) 23:3,5	demonstrate (1) 119:6	directed (1) 97:5
costing (1) 116:12	crude (1) 38:5	decide (1) 118:23	depicted (1) 53:22	direction (2) 66:17,22
costs (31) 12:11;13:24;14:9; 15:5;16:6,18;18:11;	cul-de-sac (5) 77:18,21;101:5; 102:18;103:23	decided (1)	depreciate (1) 16:22	directionally (1) 54:11
			depreciation (3) 14:12;17:7;28:5	directly (4) 79:15;81:22;89:10; 103:19
			Derivative (1) 23:18	director (2) 8:21;110:2
			describe (1) 10:1	disagree (2)
			described (2) 9:7;48:22	
			Design (2) 45:19;93:19	
			designated (1) 49:18	
			designation (2)	

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

19:23;36:2 discount (1) 17:4 discover (1) 92:4 discovery (1) 15:10 discuss (1) 100:22 discussed (1) 51:24 Discussion (3) 82:14;100:7; 106:14 discussions (1) 99:4 dismantled (1) 119:13 disregarding (1) 65:23 distance (3) 55:13,24;68:13 distant (1) 48:24 distinction (1) 48:14 distinguishing (1) 113:4 dividends (1) 39:5 docket (1) 110:5 document (12) 6:11;9:4;18:24; 19:22;20:3;22:18; 29:10;47:24;61:1,13; 63:15;70:10 documents (1) 41:15 dollars (6) 15:1,7,12;31:10; 41:23;113:7 dominated (1) 71:20 done (11) 57:18;73:21;93:2, 9:97:15;98:10;99:11, 15;104:16,17;124:22 door (2) 39:14;105:19 dots (5) 63:18,20;69:21; 70:16;77:8 double (1) 81:11 doubtful (1) 36:9 down (19) 19:21;26:17;43:4; 47:19;48:1;49:9; 50:3;64:17;65:19; 69:5;70:4;74:18,23; 77:12;86:6;89:4;	103:14;111:24; 117:14 DR (1) 85:19 dramatically (1) 55:19 drastic (1) 84:15 drew (1) 59:13 Drive (31) 60:17,20;63:9; 64:4,8,17,21;65:19; 66:11;68:12;69:7; 76:21;77:6,18,23; 78:3;81:14;87:5; 98:8;100:11,17,19; 102:13,14,18;103:7; 104:2;105:4;107:1, 16;108:12 driven (1) 10:6 drivers (1) 116:20 driveway (2) 101:18,20 driving (2) 73:1;102:22 due (4) 19:12,14;43:23; 115:20 duly (4) 42:15;45:8;99:23; 109:18 during (2) 114:15;115:21 E earlier (9) 51:23;53:8;54:6; 56:9;85:22;86:9; 90:12;113:9;115:15 early (1) 42:9 earth (1) 94:16 ease (1) 46:19 east (3) 71:13,14;72:2 eastern (1) 72:17 economic (1) 118:13 edge (3) 67:1;68:8,13 EDR (1) 45:20 effect (28) 49:17;51:20;55:6, 7;56:17,23;57:23; 58:7,9;62:24;66:16;	79:9;87:17,19,23,24; 88:4;89:20;90:7,14; 91:5;92:19;93:8,11; 94:3,4,11;98:5 effective (1) 31:5 effectively (1) 111:20 effects (3) 89:15;92:20,22 effort (2) 88:1;95:20 efforts (8) 11:19;90:4;93:23; 97:12;100:12; 101:22;105:14; 106:15 Eight (6) 32:7,8;48:10;50:4; 71:2,3 either (16) 47:16;48:11;54:9; 56:6;72:6,11;77:22; 78:12;86:9;89:9; 91:11,12;95:16;96:8; 117:1;122:23 elaborate (1) 92:2 elective (1) 124:10 electric (1) 51:12 electricity (1) 40:19 electronically (1) 53:16 elevation (1) 101:16 eliminate (1) 67:2 else (3) 14:17;25:11;95:13 Emilie (1) 8:20 employ (1) 34:10 employment (2) 58:24;83:20 end (15) 22:10,13;55:4; 64:8,10;80:21;94:14; 100:19;101:5; 102:13,17;103:19; 104:5;107:17;113:23 ended (3) 43:12,17;51:1 ending (1) 22:16 ends (2) 113:23;116:12 Energy (2) 26:1;110:3 engage (1)	60:21 engaged (1) 97:13 engineer (2) 109:24;120:8 engineers (4) 15:3;51:24;52:3; 53:8 England (30) 6:18;11:3;12:1,9, 10;13:10;14:7;30:10; 32:19;36:13;39:8,15; 41:6,8;42:4;93:3,6; 94:6;107:18;110:11; 111:7;112:17; 113:19;117:6; 118:17;119:12; 120:23;123:11; 125:16;126:3 enjoyed (1) 47:16 enough (1) 68:9 entertain (1) 104:21 entire (7) 26:2;41:5;44:2; 70:6,21,24;117:4 entirely (1) 70:23 entities (3) 31:23;115:6;118:5 entity (5) 88:15;114:17; 115:19,22;118:5 environmental (4) 43:7;44:5;45:19; 95:15 envision (3) 66:16;114:11,13 Equipment (1) 24:6 equity (13) 11:15;12:4;14:13; 16:10;18:16,18;24:2; 29:4;32:11,13,15,18; 36:14 equivalent (3) 48:12;93:8,12 essentially (3) 47:9;52:17;66:13 establish (1) 104:11 established (2) 84:14;125:14 establishing (1) 126:2 estimate (16) 6:17;10:6;14:4; 15:5,7;16:18;41:3,7, 11;42:10,20,23;43:1, 2;44:8;106:13 estimated (3)	41:9,21;115:17 estimates (1) 116:3 estimating (1) 10:7 estimation (2) 12:15;14:22 evaluate (4) 34:11;35:19;84:20; 97:7 evaluated (2) 116:5;118:15 evaluation (3) 34:16;52:15;85:1 Even (5) 72:2;118:18,22; 119:20;122:1 event (1) 33:10 Eversource (21) 7:13;8:22;10:14; 11:10;13:13;19:4; 22:7,8,12,15;26:1; 27:10,11;37:2;41:11; 100:14;110:3,16; 122:10,10,14 Eversource's (2) 8:8,11 everybody's (1) 105:19 evolved (1) 124:23 exactly (2) 37:8;122:7 EXAMINATION (5) 42:17;45:10;96:18; 100:4;109:20 examined (1) 58:9 example (12) 53:7,9;87:16,20; 88:20;89:24;90:12; 91:1;97:13;99:2; 105:9,10 examples (3) 59:24;60:3;90:11 exceeding (1) 114:16 excused (1) 45:6 Exhibit (47) 18:23;19:9;24:11, 13;29:9;30:4;51:24; 52:2;54:6;60:6,7; 61:6,11;63:21;67:15; 68:20;69:16,18,21; 70:9,13,17;71:2;72:7, 12;73:12,15,19;75:5, 10,17,20;76:7,18,19, 20;77:2,8,16;78:12, 12,19;82:8,9;98:7; 108:9,14 exhibits (6)
--	--	---	---	---

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

19:2;29:13;70:12; 96:21,23;98:6 exist (3) 21:14;84:12; 108:17 existing (23) 51:12,16;52:6,22; 53:1;54:10;55:1,10; 57:1;71:22,24;72:9; 79:16,22,23;81:15; 82:24;84:7;90:15; 91:2;92:12;95:22; 121:13 exists (2) 55:8;73:6 expanded (1) 79:17 expansion (1) 111:16 expect (2) 24:13;97:18 expectation (2) 114:8;116:3 expected (1) 33:6 expecting (1) 105:20 expenditures (1) 39:5 expense (7) 16:24;17:3,8,17; 26:11;27:2;39:20 expenses (3) 14:12;36:4,6 expensive (2) 43:11,17 experience (2) 66:12;100:9 expertise (2) 85:6;92:6 explain (9) 33:2,14;37:8; 42:20;65:24;92:6; 110:8;121:21,23 explanation (4) 105:2;116:5,16,19 explore (1) 125:18 expose (2) 90:18;101:10 exposing (1) 56:6 extending (1) 66:16 extensive (1) 43:8 extent (4) 51:5;75:18;98:20; 102:4 extraordinarily (1) 27:1 extreme (1) 52:9	extremely (1) 31:1 F face (1) 60:4 facilities (1) 88:3 Facility (3) 119:18,18,19 fact (8) 35:22;56:23;89:1; 90:24;91:2;97:18; 108:16;123:22 factor (3) 111:23;113:4,8 factors (7) 26:7;44:10;95:21; 111:11,13;112:3; 115:21 fail (1) 125:19 fairly (2) 82:3;123:9 fall (3) 58:16;59:11; 122:24 familiar (13) 21:3,8,16,23;22:2; 3;30:2;32:20;34:2; 59:16;97:11;98:9; 108:11 far (4) 55:12;66:16;89:18; 117:18 farm (1) 92:21 favorite (1) 101:11 feasible (2) 90:4;118:13 feature (2) 90:1;94:18 federal (1) 43:16 feel (2) 101:24;103:14 feet (3) 52:10;54:9,24 felt (2) 49:5;102:21 FERC (10) 16:15;113:13,21; 114:17;115:3,5,7; 117:12,18;126:3 FERC-filed (1) 113:20 few (5) 50:21;59:24;89:5; 100:17;118:8 FFO (1) 34:14	field (3) 47:7;50:13;86:5 figure (3) 40:9;41:4;53:4 file (3) 114:22;116:1; 119:5 filed (2) 15:4;115:5 filing (1) 117:18 fill (3) 103:3,16;104:12 final (4) 114:4;115:18,23; 125:2 finally (1) 120:23 finance (9) 6:1;8:21;11:9,10, 23,24;12:2;17:20; 32:22 financed (5) 11:12;16:5,7; 18:12;29:2 financial (28) 7:15;8:24;18:2; 19:4;20:7,8,12,18; 21:1,4,6,9,10,14; 22:4;23:22;24:24; 29:18,22,23;30:1; 32:16,21;34:2,5; 37:22;38:22;39:18 financing (1) 11:7 financings (1) 16:9 find (4) 52:2;56:20;66:15; 105:6 finding (3) 48:2;92:18;98:3 fine (1) 73:17 finish (2) 73:11,23 finished (1) 99:18 firm (1) 45:19 firms (1) 31:15 first (3) 65:7;111:20;112:6 five (4) 51:7;69:23;70:3,5 fix (1) 118:13 fixed (2) 28:3,4 flavor (1) 99:10 flexibility (1)	111:16 flip (1) 17:19 flow (13) 25:3,4,7,10,14,19; 35:4;38:1,9,12;39:10, 19;117:11 flush (1) 95:12 focus (5) 56:18;60:2;79:19; 85:1,3 focused (2) 37:21;55:3 focusing (1) 100:10 foliage (2) 103:11;104:7 folks (3) 100:19;104:19; 109:2 follow (4) 37:24;66:2;97:5; 117:8 following (2) 59:14;91:2 follows (1) 19:10 follow-up (2) 41:13;44:23 Footnote (1) 20:2 Forest (4) 49:23;50:2;52:23; 103:11 forested (1) 82:2 forgetting (1) 111:18 form (3) 84:17;85:12; 114:23 formal (1) 85:1 forth (1) 92:5 fortunate (1) 93:15 forty-nine (2) 82:11,12 forward (2) 6:2;17:22 found (1) 88:24 foundations (2) 43:12;44:7 four (3) 69:11;70:3;77:11 four-foot (2) 82:19;95:6 fourth (1) 122:15 franchises (1)	40:20 frequent (4) 58:22;83:4,17;84:9 friggin' (1) 85:10 front (6) 6:9;7:20;45:24; 64:18;103:22;110:18 full (6) 10:5;14:13;45:13; 67:16;78:1;79:10 fund (4) 7:1;35:10;36:8; 39:4 funded (2) 35:3;36:14 funds (2) 31:21;32:14 further (7) 18:7;37:3;43:2; 48:19;57:5;98:24; 119:24 future (8) 15:1,8;16:4,19; 17:2,5;111:16;118:4
G				
GAP (1) 38:15 gaps (3) 103:3,16;104:12 gave (2) 51:7;111:11 gears (1) 117:16 general (8) 21:12;50:22;60:19; 89:15;91:6;94:2; 105:4;110:14 generalization (1) 83:21 generally (8) 21:1;38:7;82:18; 89:7;91:11;93:17; 95:12;96:20 generated (3) 12:3;18:12;29:6 geographically (1) 51:4 George (1) 49:2 gets (2) 14:3;116:7 given (2) 24:13;51:11 goal (1) 88:6 goes (3) 92:24;98:1;102:16 Good (12) 9:17;18:10;26:15; 27:3;42:14;45:12;				

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

46:13,14;51:8;60:13; 84:13;111:5 Goodwill (1) 23:15 government (1) 116:24 grab (1) 48:2 Great (2) 53:7;126:5 greater (13) 44:11;59:18;120:9, 19,24;121:17,19; 122:22,24;123:17,19; 125:5,21 greatest (4) 56:3,5;59:6,7 Grid (17) 9:22;10:13,15; 11:20;13:22;29:5,15, 23;30:9,23;32:3,6; 43:1;109:24;112:8; 122:15,19 Grid's (1) 120:7 Griffin (2) 107:13,14 ground (4) 63:3;92:7;95:8,12 group (7) 112:17;120:9,12, 14,15,19;123:23 grouped (1) 30:6 grouping (2) 61:5,9 groups (4) 50:20;58:14,16; 118:20 grows (1) 36:16 growth (1) 112:2 guess (8) 25:24;54:11;55:16; 64:12;106:3,12; 112:11;126:9 guidance (1) 89:23 guidelines (2) 59:14;97:5 guy (4) 62:8,11;74:10,12 guys (1) 95:8	47:9,12;48:4 Hampshire (32) 7:1;12:17;13:1,2,5, 11,15;14:6;27:21; 36:20,23;37:1;40:10, 11,15,20;42:2;43:6, 18,21,23;44:14,16, 18,19;59:15;89:16; 90:22;115:16; 121:15;123:8;125:8 Hampshire-Vermont (4) 123:4,15;124:3,7 handle (1) 123:13 hands (4) 18:24;29:10;61:1; 70:10 happen (2) 97:22,23 happened (2) 16:17;100:12 happening (3) 75:19;78:6;97:24 happy (2) 27:1;99:6 hard (2) 66:15;79:18 hazardous (1) 103:1 head (1) 107:15 heading (1) 23:13 healthy (2) 36:17,18 heard (4) 40:9;111:5;113:9; 115:15 hearing (3) 40:8;51:23;126:23 heavily (1) 44:13 Hecklau (13) 45:7,8,12,14; 46:13;53:19;57:9; 67:9;76:17;95:3; 96:20;99:16;100:7 height (9) 51:15;52:5,8; 55:12,14,17,22; 91:12;95:23 heights (1) 52:19 help (5) 24:9;41:16;98:21; 104:15,20 helped (2) 57:15,16 helpful (2) 38:3;104:2 helping (1) 91:13 helps (4)	50:5;90:15;91:3,3 H-frame (1) 91:10 hierarchy (1) 59:18 high (2) 30:17;82:21 higher (7) 43:13;44:12,18,19; 54:9;116:17;117:11 higher-interest (1) 30:21 highest (2) 26:1;52:6 highly (3) 33:4;89:12;92:16 high-voltage (2) 61:5,10 Hill (3) 77:4;81:24;102:16 Hmm-hmm (1) 70:4 Hold (1) 41:12 home (8) 69:4;75:7,18; 79:15;81:20;101:4,6; 104:6 homeowners (4) 98:8,11,14;100:14 homes (24) 58:23;64:22;67:3, 5,7;69:23;70:3,5; 75:2,12;78:14;79:12; 80:11;81:10,13;83:4, 19,22;84:10,14; 97:11;98:19;100:8; 101:2 hoping (1) 95:4 horse (1) 90:8 hour (1) 73:9 house (8) 62:19;69:12;74:15; 81:18,24;82:1; 103:19,22 houses (14) 65:2;66:4;67:9,20; 69:8,11;70:20;72:13; 77:11,20,21,22;78:2, 6 Howard (1) 70:15 HUARD (57) 18:9,24;19:22; 24:11,12,15;29:10; 33:4,16,24;57:8; 59:23;61:1,2;67:12; 70:10;73:11,14,18, 22;74:2,3,20,24;76:6, 8,13,16;80:22,24;	81:2;82:12,15,17; 83:8,12,16;84:4; 85:15;95:5;96:21; 98:6;100:7;106:7,20, 23;108:2;109:1; 120:2,4,6;124:14,17, 20;125:4,19;126:4 Huard's (4) 75:23;76:4;108:9; 126:16 Hudock (5) 28:16;42:11,15,21; 44:1 Hudson (1) 121:14 huge (1) 89:11 hundred (2) 50:16;89:2 hundred-foot-tall (1) 102:7 hundreds (1) 31:10 hurdle (1) 112:6 hypothetical (1) 87:13 hypotheticals (1) 89:18	105:7 impact (29) 44:15;45:23;46:15; 47:2;51:14;52:13; 54:21,21;55:23;56:4, 5,14;57:10,21;59:6,7; 84:24;85:4;88:4; 90:16;91:9,12;92:3; 97:7;98:22;99:20; 105:16;111:16;119:6 impacts (4) 91:19;93:18; 100:23;109:14 important (3) 34:18;88:17,18 imposed (1) 17:11 improvements (1) 112:14 include (5) 16:1;22:19;24:17; 58:11;79:20 included (10) 23:3;25:11;28:3,6, 7;38:23;39:7;50:7; 87:9;121:8 includes (2) 121:6,19 including (6) 6:1;14:16;39:10; 58:17;94:6;121:14 income (1) 39:12 incorporated (1) 42:24 incorrect (2) 65:22;68:18 increase (5) 43:3,4;55:17; 56:22,23 increased (5) 43:21;54:23;82:24; 84:6;100:9 increases (1) 52:9 incretion (3) 16:24;17:3,7 incur (2) 26:9;27:19 incurred (3) 114:1,15;115:7 independent (1) 12:8 indicate (4) 33:15;58:21;64:1; 80:7 indicated (5) 9:18;41:20;57:9; 75:17;109:1 indicates (1) 19:22 individual (1) 31:20
H			I	
Habitat (1) 53:13 half (3) 41:9;73:9;108:15 half-mile (3)			IACOPINO (10) 24:10;40:2;42:5; 53:14;76:8,15;80:22; 82:11;108:5,8 idea (1) 42:14 identification (1) 90:7 identified (14) 46:17,21;47:1,6; 48:15;84:7;87:7; 89:3;93:7;96:23; 97:10;98:8;103:2,13 identifies (1) 52:20 identify (5) 83:10;85:24;88:16; 102:24;109:22 identifying (2) 58:13;100:8 ignore (2) 64:16,16 ignored (1) 85:9 ignoring (1) 25:8 image (2) 75:19;78:7 images (1) 98:18 immediate (1)	

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

individually (1) 31:16	106:4	42:16	112:21	limits (1) 78:18
individuals (4) 31:7,8,11,18	into (16) 11:16;20:17;25:12; 32:18;34:16;37:21; 39:3;58:16;59:11; 73:9;94:9,18;96:3; 111:11;112:1;123:11	joint (4) 7:18;9:3;28:15; 110:4	largest (1) 55:6	Line (57) 6:16;23:5;24:6; 31:18;41:22;42:1; 47:7,9,10,12;51:2,5; 52:22;53:21;54:11; 59:10;61:23;69:6; 71:18,21;72:15; 77:12,13;79:2,10,22, 23;80:8,17;81:3; 82:1;86:15,22;87:19; 88:2;90:21;91:17; 92:24;93:16,19,23; 101:9,21;102:19; 103:12;104:8,10,14; 110:12;118:11,24,24; 119:4;121:14,24; 122:10;125:24
industrial (1) 94:18		June (1) 38:21	last (4) 77:21;81:13;104:4; 108:18	
industry (10) 21:5,9,14;24:24; 25:21;26:3;32:21; 34:3;35:1,7	investment (5) 7:12;12:12;30:24; 34:17,18	K	later (1) 95:16	
inference (1) 24:23	investments (5) 6:1;23:22;24:2,3; 36:13	keep (1) 26:17	law (1) 59:18	
infers (1) 24:24	involved (4) 10:5;57:17;95:11; 120:14	keeping (1) 36:12	layers (1) 104:14	
information (7) 7:5;10:8;20:24; 30:2;68:3;85:7;99:3	ISO (17) 111:12,15;113:5, 15;114:3,18,22; 116:4,15;117:19; 118:17,24;119:5,16, 22;123:10,23	key (3) 46:16;62:7;64:16	leads (1) 94:2	
infrastructure (1) 28:7	ISO-led (1) 120:8	Kienia (12) 69:19;70:13;71:12, 13,14,15,17;72:2,18, 23,24;107:7	least (13) 66:11;67:3,19; 70:3;79:8,12;82:3; 87:8,13;99:10; 108:14,15;109:13	
infusion (1) 32:13	ISO-New (7) 11:3;13:10;111:7; 112:17;120:23; 125:16;126:3	kind (10) 88:9,13;89:20; 94:2;99:11;101:7; 102:16,21;104:16; 112:5	leave (3) 99:15;102:3;104:9	line-of-sight (1) 52:17
initial (2) 44:8;57:10	ISO's (2) 114:6;116:21	kinds (1) 93:2	led (1) 120:9	lines (13) 51:13;61:10,17; 71:7;79:3,14,23; 80:12;81:11;94:20; 95:19;119:9;121:13
initially (3) 11:13;16:7;65:14	issuance (1) 19:15	knock (1) 105:18	left (6) 66:10;72:22;74:23; 81:22;82:19;95:7	list (2) 30:12;125:7
initiate (1) 16:12	issue (12) 31:1,3,7,10,15,24; 34:19;36:19;41:19; 55:14;92:20;118:12	knowledge (3) 7:7;8:16;9:12	legal (3) 16:14;17:10;59:21	listed (3) 32:1;54:8;63:13
initiated (2) 114:20;115:10	issued (3) 19:11;30:19; 120:23	known (3) 42:23;44:9,11	legend (6) 61:21;62:7,10; 63:14;64:6;72:20	little (11) 45:15;50:2;67:16, 18;93:1;94:7;101:18; 112:12;113:9; 117:15;126:11
inside (1) 81:6	issues (3) 110:14;123:16,18	KOPs (6) 46:19,23;48:10,13, 17;85:20	legitimate (1) 105:21	live (2) 72:17;85:9
insignificant (1) 101:21	issuing (1) 36:7	L	Lenny (3) 54:4;69:19;107:4	lives (1) 68:18
instance (1) 91:9	item (2) 23:5;31:18	labeled (2) 54:2;70:15	less (3) 6:19;25:16;78:16	living (2) 60:20;70:7
instances (2) 89:6;119:8		lack (2) 38:5;49:14	level (3) 11:3;16:21;63:3	load (4) 12:23;13:17;40:18; 112:2
institutions (3) 30:11,16;31:21		Land (3) 52:24;53:13; 101:16	levels (1) 31:2	local (10) 43:16;58:18,21,24; 83:5,16,19;84:10; 114:7;119:18
insurance (1) 31:22		landowners (1) 91:19	liabilities (8) 22:20,23;24:18,22; 25:16;33:11;37:16, 18	localization (1) 115:2
intended (1) 92:8		landscape (6) 50:19;83:18;90:2; 94:19;101:3;105:20	liability (2) 17:3;22:5	locate (8) 62:2;68:20;69:20; 70:16;77:6,8;79:22; 81:3
interest (7) 14:13;26:10,17; 27:2;30:17;33:9; 34:14		landscapes (1) 58:23	liability's (1) 22:9	located (1) 42:2
interested (1) 30:13	J	landscaping (1) 98:21	life (4) 14:10;16:22;42:22; 85:10	location (1) 60:12
internal (3) 29:3,6,8	James (1) 7:11	Lane (4) 54:4;69:19;70:13; 107:4	light (1) 45:16	locations (3) 50:15;87:4,7
internally (1) 18:12	January (1) 19:10	large (6) 36:12;56:24;71:18; 74:12;88:23;125:20	lights (1) 36:12	Londonderry (5) 49:2,12,22;76:24; 78:21
interpretation (1) 25:8	Jason (15) 76:21;77:6,18,23; 78:3;98:8;100:11,17, 19;102:13,14,18; 103:7;104:2;105:4	largely (1) 90:2	likely (4) 48:24;58:22;80:16; 83:17	
interrupts (17) 6:6;8:10;12:19,21; 21:18;23:21;31:12; 33:3;34:4;37:12; 49:13;64:24;65:11; 67:8;83:2;88:12; 122:13	job (1) 7:10	larger (1)	limit (2) 27:20;89:17	
intervenor (1)	JOHN (5) 45:8,14;83:14; 109:17,23		limited (1) 51:15	
	joins (1)			

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

long (4) 35:10;99:9;102:15; 124:21		113:14;114:6;116:1; 11;117:22;118:2,7; 119:3,11,17;120:7; 11,18,22;121:2,5,11, 16,19,22;122:3,9,17; 123:2;125:10	meetings (3) 100:21;116:21; 120:15	minimize (1) 91:9
Long-distance (1) 66:14	M		members (8) 19:1;29:11;37:5; 42:16;53:15;85:17; 95:1;104:24	minus (3) 24:21;28:5;34:9
longer (2) 112:3;119:14	ma'am (3) 57:12;60:15;67:4	Massachusetts (11) 10:21;43:5,9,10,14, 17,20;44:13,17; 123:20,22	Memorial (1) 50:2	minutes (2) 75:22;109:13
longevity (1) 112:1	Madam (1) 46:10	matters (1) 94:1	memory (1) 46:23	misreading (1) 64:12
longstanding (1) 57:1	main (1) 112:23	math (1) 28:23	mentioned (4) 37:9;40:5;96:8; 118:21	mistake (1) 42:3
longstanding (1) 57:1	Maine (1) 93:11	matter (1) 44:21	mentioning (1) 34:14	mitigate (3) 90:16;93:18; 103:17
long-term (18) 11:15;12:5;16:9; 18:14;19:3;20:16; 26:22;27:8,13,14; 29:14;30:5;32:1,5; 35:15,19;36:21,24	mainly (1) 43:6	matting (1) 43:8	merely (2) 24:21;57:13	mitigated (2) 90:9,11
look (28) 32:15;35:9,14; 38:1,7,19,20,22,24; 39:1,7,20;44:2; 47:13;53:7;55:15; 61:19;63:3,4;65:18; 66:19,23;67:15; 72:22;73:24;83:14; 87:11;101:4	maintain (1) 118:24	mature (2) 19:13,14	Merrimack (1) 123:8	mitigating (5) 88:4;90:14;95:21; 105:6;109:8
look (28) 32:15;35:9,14; 38:1,7,19,20,22,24; 39:1,7,20;44:2; 47:13;53:7;55:15; 61:19;63:3,4;65:18; 66:19,23;67:15; 72:22;73:24;83:14; 87:11;101:4	maintainability (1) 112:1	may (9) 10:18;40:3;60:20; 71:19;73:10;78:14; 107:21,21;115:21	met (4) 47:14,19;48:4;86:7	mitigation (9) 63:5;90:5,6;95:19, 23;97:17;98:3; 106:15;109:4
looked (7) 48:8;51:3;53:8; 54:6;59:8;63:2;68:11	major (2) 72:9;111:22	Maybe (11) 41:16;47:21;65:1; 67:16;70:19;71:2; 73:8;79:12;99:10; 102:14;114:15	metaphor (1) 92:7	money (2) 29:4;85:6
Looking (29) 19:9;22:4;25:18, 18;30:4,8;35:9;38:6; 63:19;64:7,15,17; 66:1;69:5;71:2,14, 14;72:12,20;73:19; 77:2,16;78:12;81:19; 86:2;87:3;90:10; 104:19;108:9	makes (5) 12:22;13:16;40:17; 114:3,19	Mayflower (3) 81:14,19,23	method (1) 24:20	months (4) 38:18,19,20,21
looks (17) 52:18;63:11;64:13; 69:6;71:1,2;72:20; 78:17;79:15;80:16; 81:23;82:2;92:4,7; 101:6;103:22;111:15	making (1) 105:14	McNeill (44) 6:10,12,15,23;7:8; 9:17,24;10:3,11,17, 23;11:5,20;12:9; 13:23;15:4,15,18; 16:2;18:4;29:1,6,12, 17,20,23;30:8,19; 31:9,13,19;32:4,7,11; 34:1,5;36:2,11;37:10, 13;38:22;39:22;41:7; 42:3	methodology (2) 34:10,15	Moody's (2) 34:8,9
lot (4) 37:22;50:23;56:11; 104:19	management (2) 8:22;88:6	mean (24) 11:7;14:8;15:18; 28:23;52:14;66:3,9; 73:4;75:16;79:5; 80:14;84:21;90:24; 91:1,24;92:9,10,17; 93:15;95:8,10;98:17; 104:18;118:9	metric (2) 37:17,21	more (33) 21:7,15;31:23; 34:12;35:17;37:17, 19;38:7;42:24;43:8, 11,12,17;44:4,9,13; 49:7;52:10;53:5; 55:21;56:6;57:15; 58:22;83:17;90:23; 101:13,17;103:21,23; 112:9;113:6;114:6; 116:13
lots (1) 71:3	manager (5) 7:11;10:4,7,9; 42:11	meeting (2) 112:7;117:2	metrics (2) 34:13,16	morning (1) 95:17
loud (1) 19:10	managers (1) 15:3		microphone (1) 103:6	most (6) 34:19;35:23;50:24; 51:20;87:3;96:1
low (1) 31:1	manages (1) 30:23		middle (5) 73:15;75:4,5; 78:23;79:11	mostly (2) 31:20;97:10
lower (9) 6:24;26:21;44:18, 19;72:13;75:1,2; 79:23;117:11	manner (2) 11:11;85:22		might (21) 24:8;42:14;50:20; 51:6,9;55:4,11; 67:17;76:12;79:20, 20;80:14,14;86:21; 97:20;98:15;100:9; 102:11;105:8;106:2; 122:9	Move (2) 17:5;34:23
lower-growing (1) 102:9	many (8) 30:11;46:23,24; 70:19;71:24,24;80:7; 121:22		mile (4) 28:22;41:9,10,23	moves (1) 39:6
lowering (1) 91:12	map (18) 53:12,13,20;60:7,8, 10,17;61:21;63:24; 64:5;67:6,10,14; 70:12,14;75:9;77:6; 78:20		miles (5) 28:17,18,19;41:8; 42:1	moving (1) 6:2
lowest (1) 34:20	mapped (1) 52:23		million (29) 6:17,18,19,19;8:4, 5;9:20;10:13,14,16; 14:5;15:6,12,24; 17:24;19:11,13; 27:15;28:1,12,13,21; 32:17;41:4,9,24; 42:1;115:18,20	much (12) 18:5;21:15;26:21; 27:18;31:2;34:12; 43:8;53:5;66:14; 92:14;109:11;120:17
	maps (2) 61:3;77:17		millions (1) 31:10	Muldoon (1) 49:2
	Marie (1) 70:13		mind (4) 24:12;76:14;87:24; 100:6	multiple (3) 30:16;71:22;72:10
	mark (2) 17:1;66:12			Musquash (1) 49:24
	marked (1) 61:24			
	market (3) 26:22,22;31:3			
	marketable (2) 23:8,9			
	Martin (37) 99:20;109:17,23, 23;110:6,10,20,23; 111:14;112:9,16,23;			

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

must (2) 111:20,21	105:18,21	122:23;124:6,9,11	125:13,23;126:9,21	operations (6) 11:18;16:9;32:14; 38:8;39:2,10
MVRP (19) 64:23;70:21;78:4; 83:3;84:8;112:20; 120:10;121:4,6,9,16, 17,20;122:1,18; 123:3;124:23;125:2; 126:5	NEP (1) 15:6 NEP's (3) 32:15;42:10;61:4 net (6) 19:15;28:2,3,3,4; 44:15 network (5) 12:20,23;13:17; 40:18;111:9	Note (1) 19:9 noted (1) 28:15 Notes (8) 19:12,14;30:6,7, 10;31:7;47:21;48:2 noticeable (1) 55:18 notwithstanding (1) 39:17 NRPC (1) 60:8 number (19) 10:15;25:12;28:8, 17;40:14;47:11,11, 19;50:4;54:2;56:13; 74:12;93:2;106:13; 111:11;121:8,13; 122:20;124:23 numbers (5) 20:20;38:19;47:22; 88:23;89:11	officially (1) 121:3 offset (1) 98:21 oftentimes (2) 94:14;96:4 once (4) 11:15;47:8;68:8,12 one (40) 6:15;11:21;20:2; 26:8;32:16;33:18; 35:12;37:7,7;41:13; 49:16;51:17;53:7,10; 54:2;58:17;73:10; 79:15;80:15;81:22; 86:7;88:7,20,24; 93:20;96:1;98:6; 101:5;102:20;104:4; 105:8,10;106:10; 107:21;112:20; 119:12;121:12; 123:5;124:1;125:20 O'Neil (69) 7:18;8:18,20,20, 24;9:5,8,13;11:6,9; 15:2;16:6;17:21,23; 18:5,10,16,18,22; 19:6,19;20:1,4,6,10, 14,16,19,21;21:3,7, 11,15;22:1,3,7,9,14, 19;23:1,6,8,11,15,17, 23;24:5,20;25:2,6,13, 23;26:15;27:4,10,12, 17,20,24;28:5,9,13; 35:12;36:19,22;37:1; 38:4,14;39:23	opinion (3) 17:24;54:20;55:21 opinions (2) 7:5;8:7 opportunity (2) 7:1;106:4 opposed (2) 14:6;42:4 optimal (2) 34:19;36:15 optimally (1) 35:11 option (1) 92:12 order (3) 101:19,22;111:19 ordered (1) 17:20 original (3) 10:12;50:14;52:12 ornamental (1) 101:13 ornamentals (2) 101:17;104:13 others (2) 80:16;111:18 out (23) 11:14;16:5,7; 19:10;30:22;49:3; 59:6;82:6;85:6; 89:17;97:16,19; 100:24;101:12,23; 103:22;109:6;119:4, 5;120:14;122:24; 124:12,23 outflow (1) 35:4 outlined (1) 47:2 outreach (5) 97:12;98:10;99:4; 100:11;105:14 outreached (1) 105:17 outside (3) 75:19;78:6,18 outstanding (1) 19:16 over (17) 14:10,16;15:22; 16:22;17:2;35:2,5,9; 39:6;89:2;92:24; 93:5;101:7;103:22; 113:19;120:15;122:5 overall (6) 11:24;43:3,14,18; 44:2,20 oversight (2) 45:22;57:10 own (1)
N	New (101) 6:18,24;10:15; 12:1,9,10,17;13:1,2, 4,11,14;14:6,7;27:21; 30:10;32:18;36:12, 19,23;37:1,13;39:8, 15;40:9,11,15,20; 41:5,7;42:2,4;43:5, 18,21,23;44:14,16, 18,19;53:6;54:1,23; 55:9,12;59:14;61:24; 63:24;64:3,3,22; 69:8;70:6,6,21,23; 71:15,19,23;73:2; 77:13;78:3,14;79:13; 80:7,11,12;81:10,11, 17,20;82:23;83:3; 84:6,8,14;89:16; 90:18,22;92:13;93:2, 6,21;94:6,8,17; 107:17;110:11; 113:19;115:16; 117:6;118:17; 119:12;121:14; 123:3,8,10,14;124:2, 7;125:8	O	ones (10) 34:13;48:10;49:5, 9;66:4;68:4;84:7; 86:6;92:15;103:2 ongoing (1) 11:18 only (13) 9:22;13:10;14:2; 24:13;25:24;33:8,18; 50:18;53:15;55:9; 69:2;78:5;126:24 open (11) 63:11,23;64:3,3; 71:6;75:17;78:8; 80:15;81:14;84:11; 116:21 opened (1) 102:21 opening (1) 75:14 operability (1) 112:1 operate (1) 117:6 operating (1) 14:11	
NA (1) 32:14		oath (1) 42:19 object (5) 32:24;59:20;83:6; 84:16;85:11 obligation (6) 14:24;16:14,21; 17:10,13;117:19 obscure (1) 103:6 obscured (1) 49:1 observation (2) 46:16;50:11 obvious (2) 96:1;102:23 obviously (2) 102:7;104:18 occurred (1) 17:13 off (4) 54:4;78:23;82:14; 107:14 offer (2) 106:4;126:11 OFFICER (42) 33:13,22;37:4,6; 39:24;42:6,13;43:22; 44:22;45:2,5;59:22; 73:7,13,16,20;74:1, 17,22;75:21;76:3; 84:18;85:13,16; 94:24;96:13;99:1,8, 17;104:23;106:3,20; 108:3,6;109:10; 120:2;124:14,18;		
name (10) 7:9;8:18,20;45:13, 14;76:18,22;78:20; 109:23;110:2				
named (2) 121:3,5				
narrow (1) 86:6				
National (19) 9:21;10:13,15; 11:20;13:22;29:5,15, 23;30:9,23;32:2,6; 43:1;52:24;60:9; 109:24;120:7; 122:15,18	next (14) 45:7;61:19;62:17, 21;66:20;67:3,4,7,17; 99:19;100:20; 109:12;111:22;117:2			
nature (2) 38:13,16	NG (3) 32:13,14,17			
near (2) 26:6;56:2	NH (1) 60:8 Non-current (4) 23:10,14;24:3,4 non-Pool (1) 119:17 non-prudent (1) 114:14			
necessarily (1) 64:6	normal (1) 12:7 normally (1) 96:2 north (8) 64:12,16;65:22; 67:23;74:18;79:21; 100:20;103:8 Northeast (3) 19:11,17;93:5 Northern (4)			
necessary (1) 16:3				
need (13) 15:23;17:1;36:20; 38:1;54:17;73:10; 85:14;89:21;110:13; 118:9,14;125:18; 126:19				
needed (1) 119:14				
NEEDLEMAN (18) 41:16;45:11;46:9; 59:20;83:6,10,14; 84:16;85:11;95:14; 96:16,19;98:24;99:5, 12;100:5;109:21; 111:1				
needs (13) 111:8,22;112:7; 113:15,18;120:20; 122:19;123:1,3,4; 124:3;125:6;126:2				
negative (6) 22:16;25:1,9,21; 39:11,17				
neighbor (1) 105:10				
neighbors (2)				

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

46:6 owner (6) 62:24;108:19; 118:12;119:3,10,19 owners (3) 100:18;106:11,14 owns (1) 122:10	11:13 pay (4) 33:6,10,21;38:6 payable (2) 30:6,11 Peabody (1) 49:23 pension (1) 31:21 people (3) 109:3;115:5; 120:13 per (3) 28:11,21;41:23 percent (19) 12:23,24;13:13,16; 14:8,14;19:12,13; 26:20;27:3,4,5;28:1; 31:2,4;40:5,9,17; 116:13 percentage (1) 43:13 perception (1) 56:7 performance (1) 34:6 performed (1) 57:19 Perhaps (4) 33:1;55:10;102:3; 115:20 period (5) 22:16;39:6;57:24; 58:7;83:4 periodically (1) 12:5 periods (1) 84:9 permitting (3) 43:15,16;44:8 person (4) 31:20;60:20;68:18; 92:2 perspective (1) 102:6 petition (1) 110:12 philosophy (1) 105:5 photo (1) 50:7 photograph (1) 96:21 photos (3) 50:14,17;51:1 picked (2) 49:5;51:7 pine (1) 102:7 place (5) 86:13,15;116:21; 117:8;118:16 placed (1)	62:12 placement (2) 62:22;69:1 places (3) 58:24;83:19;96:22 plan (2) 104:1;119:21 Planning (6) 60:9;102:2;110:1, 3,14;120:8 plant (7) 24:2,5;28:2,3,4,5,6 Plante (7) 28:16;99:6,22; 100:2,6;106:10; 108:9 planting (1) 104:1 plantings (3) 94:16;101:13; 104:15 please (6) 8:18;20:10;42:19; 45:12;83:11;109:22 plus (3) 28:1;29:6;121:22 pm (1) 126:24 point (14) 16:12;17:11;32:7, 8;61:6,11,14,15,16; 67:5,14;87:4;118:23; 122:6 points (3) 46:16;50:11; 103:19 Pole (6) 62:2;66:19;68:20; 74:4;82:9,10 poles (6) 61:24;80:7,12; 81:12;82:6;95:23 policy (1) 88:6 Pond (2) 49:3;60:14 pool (1) 29:4 Poor's (2) 26:2,3 portfolio (2) 11:24;30:24 portion (29) 6:18;8:8,11;9:22; 10:14,21;13:11,14, 17;14:1,2,5,20;19:3; 27:15;28:12;29:14; 40:10;44:14;54:16, 22;56:2;64:4;72:24; 73:1;87:9;89:8; 101:8;122:19 position (4) 7:10;8:19;35:7;	63:1 positive (1) 25:12 possibility (4) 64:7,10,21;69:4 possible (4) 66:9;77:16;81:16; 97:16 possibly (4) 71:10;77:17;78:16; 81:17 potential (23) 15:13;25:22;47:5; 48:7,16,18;49:21; 50:1;52:15;71:15; 73:4;75:12;77:13; 78:2,9,10,13;81:9,10, 20;84:21;86:19;87:1 potentially (3) 52:21;77:20;86:1 Power (16) 12:1,9,10;30:10; 32:19;34:23,23;39:8, 15;41:8;42:4;119:7, 12;122:6,11,14 Power's (4) 6:18;41:6;107:18; 110:11 preclude (2) 88:9,13 preferred (3) 121:4,8;122:16 prefiled (12) 6:4,7,22;7:4,18,22; 8:14;9:2,3,10;28:15; 45:24 preparation (3) 20:7,8;45:22 prepare (3) 20:17,19;57:15 prepared (2) 38:15;53:4 prepares (1) 29:24 preparing (2) 29:21;68:3 pre-project (1) 115:11 present (6) 16:19,21;17:1,5; 93:12;116:22 presented (5) 6:22;58:8;72:7; 116:4;118:19 PRESIDING (42) 33:13,22;37:4,6; 39:24;42:6,13;43:22; 44:22;45:2,5;59:22; 73:7,13,16,20;74:1, 17,22;75:21;76:3; 84:18;85:13,16; 94:24;96:13;99:1,8, 17;104:23;106:3,20;	108:3,6;109:10; 120:2;124:14,18; 125:13,23;126:9,21 presumably (2) 10:9;114:11 pretty (5) 31:2;34:23;104:11; 108:10;120:17 previous (1) 43:20 Previously (5) 40:8;42:15;65:6; 88:11;99:23 price (1) 113:7 prices (1) 34:23 primarily (2) 51:14;96:5 primary (1) 113:4 prior (2) 10:19;114:19 private (4) 50:8,12;56:13; 97:10 probably (8) 26:23;53:9;68:14; 69:6;82:3;106:17; 107:17;112:21 problem (2) 111:21;123:14 problems (3) 96:4;123:7,19 proceedings (1) 76:2 proceeds (1) 19:15 process (10) 7:16;17:9;85:23; 110:13;111:12,20; 116:22;117:4,19; 123:24 professional (2) 92:1,4 program (1) 19:18 project (110) 6:16;7:2;8:8,11; 9:22;10:4,4,6,7,9,20, 22;11:2,8,9,10,16,17, 19;12:6,8,13,16;13:1, 8,14,18,24;14:10,12, 19,23;15:3,16,19; 16:18,22;28:11,18, 22;40:6,10;41:5; 42:11,24;43:3,19; 44:3;45:21,23;48:8, 23;49:10;50:9,13; 51:9,11,20;52:4,15; 53:6;54:16;56:2,11; 57:22;59:6;60:4; 85:8;86:12;87:9,11;
---	--	---	---	---

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

89:1,6,7,11;90:2,13, 14;91:1;93:9,13,22; 96:9;97:4,24;100:22; 101:2;103:15; 104:11;105:18; 111:14,24;112:2,13; 113:5,16,23;114:13; 115:15,17,19;116:9; 118:1,3,17;124:13, 16;125:15,15;126:8	provide (13) 7:9;8:18;14:4; 20:20,24;68:3;89:24; 90:4;98:20;102:5,8, 11;103:4	20:11	19:9;20:2;91:22; 92:5	RECCROSS-EXAMINATION (2) 106:8,22
provided (7) 6:3,7;7:17;9:2; 10:8;57:9;125:7	provided (7) 6:3,7;7:17;9:2; 10:8;57:9;125:7	Q	real (2) 38:4;74:2	Red (1) 45:15
provides (1) 126:5	provides (1) 126:5	qualities (1) 47:17	reality (1) 66:9	redacted (1) 125:5
Providing (4) 7:15;32:18;40:14; 69:14	Providing (4) 7:15;32:18;40:14; 69:14	quality (3) 49:14,18;86:10	really (18) 15:2;25:24;26:20; 35:9;38:17;44:21; 49:8;55:14;63:1,5; 66:1;85:3;89:5;92:6; 96:7;103:20;104:18; 111:23	redeemed (1) 30:21
provision (1) 117:7	provision (1) 117:7	quarter (2) 113:6;122:15	reason (7) 26:13,15;42:9,20; 68:6,7;82:21	redirect (6) 42:7,8,17;96:15, 18;100:4
proximate (1) 55:16	proximate (1) 55:16	quick (12) 21:24;33:20,23; 35:8,18;37:8,10,14; 38:2,4;74:2;106:10	reasonable (5) 68:13;88:1;90:4; 98:2;102:1	reduce (2) 91:12;95:24
prudence (3) 36:9;114:4,19	prudence (3) 36:9;114:4,19	quickly (2) 33:21;38:6	reasons (1) 43:6	reduced (4) 8:5;9:19;10:21; 47:11
prudency (1) 115:12	prudency (1) 115:12	quite (5) 50:21;89:22;92:23; 103:9,11	recall (1) 47:3	reduction (2) 9:21;10:2
prudent (4) 36:4,10;114:9; 115:24	prudent (4) 36:4,10;114:9; 115:24	R	received (1) 14:19	refer (12) 18:23;29:9;52:16; 60:6,24;67:13;69:15; 70:9;76:7;78:19; 80:20;82:7
prudently (2) 114:1;115:6	prudently (2) 114:1;115:6	radius (2) 47:6;50:24	recently (1) 58:13	reference (2) 46:19;125:10
PSNH (17) 11:10;12:22;13:2, 4,16,19,20;14:2;22:7; 26:4,19;27:10;28:1; 30:23;34:7;40:15,17	PSNH (17) 11:10;12:22;13:2, 4,16,19,20;14:2;22:7; 26:4,19;27:10;28:1; 30:23;34:7;40:15,17	raise (1) 101:16	recess (1) 76:1	referenced (1) 109:1
PSNH's (2) 28:12,17	PSNH's (2) 28:12,17	ran (1) 85:21	recognize (13) 6:11;7:22;9:3; 29:13;60:7,10,13,16, 19;61:3,4,9;77:2	referred (2) 98:6;124:9
Public (10) 40:4,6,7,8;41:18; 44:23;86:10;88:6; 102:17;116:21	Public (10) 40:4,6,7,8;41:18; 44:23;86:10;88:6; 102:17;116:21	range (4) 15:13;31:4;52:11; 106:18	recommended (1) 113:16	referring (13) 18:21;21:11;23:4, 19;65:12;67:6,10; 76:19;81:22;96:20; 109:5;122:9,18
publicity (1) 117:15	publicity (1) 117:15	rate (6) 17:5;27:3,4;30:17; 34:18;35:13	reconditioning (1) 121:13	refers (1) 41:24
publicly (1) 47:18	publicly (1) 47:18	rated (2) 30:24;34:8	reconductor (1) 122:14	refi (1) 26:14
Public's (2) 41:2;82:8	Public's (2) 41:2;82:8	ratepayer (1) 44:20	reconsider (1) 126:12	refinance (4) 11:14;18:14;26:16, 16
PUC (3) 27:22;36:20,23	PUC (3) 27:22;36:20,23	ratepayers (13) 12:17;14:6,7;26:9; 27:1;31:5;33:5,12; 35:24;36:1,4,6;44:16	record (7) 8:19;13:7;15:10; 45:13;69:17;70:11; 82:14	refined (1) 43:1
pull (2) 45:15;89:17	pull (2) 45:15;89:17	rates (3) 26:17;30:15;34:20	recorded (1) 76:11	refresh (1) 46:23
pulling (1) 82:5	pulling (1) 82:5	rather (3) 50:4;54:7;115:11	recoups (1) 114:21	refurbish (1) 15:21
pun (1) 92:7	pun (1) 92:7	rating (8) 21:16,19;26:2,4,5; 34:8,17;35:13	recover (7) 12:11;14:11;17:21; 35:5,23;36:4,5	regard (3) 84:2;114:4,10
pure (1) 25:9	pure (1) 25:9	ratings (1) 35:16	recovered (6) 13:9,20;26:12; 113:12,19,22	regardless (2) 44:17;60:1
purpose (4) 110:8,10,15;126:7	purpose (4) 110:8,10,15;126:7	ratio (12) 21:24;33:14,20,23; 35:8,19;37:8,10,14, 14;38:2,4	recovery (11) 12:7,18;14:14; 16:11,13,16;17:16; 113:10,11;114:20,20	regards (2) 105:4,15
purposes (2) 115:12;116:16	purposes (2) 115:12;116:16	ratios (10) 21:4,8,11,13,17,19; 32:20;33:2;34:2;35:8	recreational (3) 58:19;59:1;60:21	region (4) 13:10;15:20,23; 113:19
pursuant (1) 117:12	pursuant (1) 117:12	reach (2) 87:22;97:19		regional (13) 12:20,23;13:7,23; 14:1;60:9;111:8; 113:15,17,18;114:8, 16;115:1
put (4) 96:1;101:12,17; 116:9	put (4) 96:1;101:12,17; 116:9	reached (2) 97:16;109:6		Regulatory (2) 23:6,7
puts (1)	puts (1)	read (4)		

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

related (1) 61:24	21:18;23:21;31:12; 33:3;34:4;37:12; 45:9;49:13;64:24; 65:11;67:8;83:2; 88:12;99:24;109:19; 122:13	25:24;84:19	51:12;53:2,3,22; 54:23;55:1,20;56:8; 66:13;68:5,7,8,14,16; 71:6,21;73:3,5;76:9; 10:78:4,24;79:3,11, 16,21;80:19;81:7,15, 17;83:1;92:13,14; 93:21;100:9,23; 101:7;102:4,18; 103:7,18,20;108:16	47:14;59:15,16; 86:8;89:24;117:8,18
relationships (2) 21:5;32:22	reporting (1) 29:24	response (4) 41:1,17,19;113:14	risk (1) 35:20	running (1) 65:20
relatively (1) 10:1	represent (4) 32:10;49:21;54:8; 70:17	response] (2) 45:4;126:20	road (28) 49:18;64:11,20; 65:20;69:19;70:13; 71:17;72:2,6,11,18, 22;73:1;75:8,13; 76:11,18;78:14;98:7; 100:20;102:22; 104:5;107:7,10,13, 14,16,24	runs (3) 75:9,9;87:21
relevance (4) 33:1;124:21;125:1, 17	representation (1) 49:17	responses (1) 15:10	Robinson (2) 49:3;60:13	S
relevant (6) 28:24;33:2,5; 124:16;126:1,13	representative (2) 49:21;51:8	responsibility (2) 40:6,7	role (5) 7:14;8:23;29:21; 45:21,22	S&P (2) 34:8,9
reliability (21) 11:1;12:6,13; 15:20,23;40:10;96:6; 111:8,17,21;112:7; 118:14;119:2; 122:23;124:6,11,12, 13;125:9,15;126:6	representatives (1) 116:23	responsible (1) 40:12	room (2) 51:23;116:23	same (9) 16:6;31:2;33:17; 53:12;66:22;78:11; 103:9,24;125:9
relocate (1) 101:18	represented (2) 48:12;50:1	result (7) 51:6,9;55:4;57:21; 71:16;78:15;118:11	ROSE (1) 105:1	satisfactory (1) 63:17
relocated (1) 122:19	representing (2) 69:21;77:9	resulted (1) 43:2	ROSS (42) 33:13,22;37:4,6; 39:24;42:6,13;43:22; 44:22;45:2,5;59:22; 73:7,13,16,20;74:1, 17,22;75:21;76:3; 84:18;85:13,16; 94:24;96:13;99:1,8, 17;104:23;106:3,20; 108:3,6;109:10; 120:2;124:14,18; 125:13,23;126:9,21	satisfy (4) 68:17;69:11;75:7; 80:6
remain (1) 103:3	re-program (1) 76:14	resume (3) 75:23;76:4;109:15	rough (1) 106:13	saw (1) 113:15
remaining (3) 101:9;103:11,15	Request (2) 41:17;108:21	resumed (1) 76:2	Route (1) 49:15	saying (4) 65:22,23;66:4; 67:18
remember (8) 106:24;107:3,6,9, 12,14,19,23	requesting (1) 109:4	retire (1) 117:20	routes (1) 96:10	scenario (1) 116:12
remnant (1) 78:17	required (2) 43:9;118:15	return (1) 12:11	ROW (11) 64:11,23;66:20; 67:1,16;70:6,21,24; 76:10;84:7;104:11	scenic (36) 46:17,21,24;47:4,5, 15,16,17;48:5,15; 49:14,15,18,18;50:6, 18;55:3;56:12,18; 58:1,10;59:8,10,13; 60:2;85:2,8;86:7,9, 10,13;87:5;88:23; 92:16;96:24;97:8
removal (21) 41:21;63:13,21,23; 64:2,5,9;65:17;66:6, 24;69:21;70:1,17; 71:16;77:9;78:1,15, 23;79:10;81:4;98:19	requirements (3) 13:18;14:10,15	returns (3) 14:13;99:24;100:2	rows (1) 67:19	schedules (1) 20:17
remove (3) 55:7;66:23;102:19	requiring (1) 43:11	revenue (3) 13:18;14:9,15	RSA (1) 59:15	scratch (1) 82:15
removed (10) 69:3;70:1;72:24; 82:20;86:24;87:14; 90:18;95:6;108:18, 21	Research (1) 45:20	revenues (2) 11:17;38:13	rule (1) 59:19	screen (1) 94:13
removing (4) 66:24;87:12;90:21; 95:9	resident (1) 62:18	review (9) 20:21,22;30:1; 41:12;86:5;114:24; 115:10,18;116:18	rules (7)	screened (2) 55:11;82:4
repaid (1) 33:15	residential (5) 50:21,23;56:21; 68:4;69:16	reviewed (2) 57:13;119:22		screening (10) 49:7;55:8;68:15; 73:6;78:7;79:9; 86:23;98:21;102:6,8
repay (1) 19:16	residents (8) 58:18,21;59:5; 60:4;64:4;83:17; 84:2;85:9	reviews (8) 20:3;22:18;41:15; 47:24;61:13;63:15; 114:18;115:22		Seacoast (5) 122:22;124:6,13; 125:8,9
repeat (1) 61:8	resolutions (1) 100:13	Ridge (1) 104:5		SEC (7) 47:14;48:5;59:15, 16;86:8;89:24;97:5
replacement (1) 118:18	resolved (1) 123:21	RIELLY (4) 9:14;32:24;42:8,18		second (3) 16:23;41:14;59:17
report (3) 57:16;120:24; 121:3	resource (6) 47:15;48:5;86:7; 87:8;89:8,9	Right (49) 13:16,21;14:18; 17:11,12,18;18:19; 21:12;22:11;23:15; 26:19;29:1;36:3,3,5; 39:22;40:23;45:5; 47:22;48:20,22; 53:10;66:10,13,19; 68:5,6;70:1;72:8,23, 23;73:6;74:1,19,23; 75:4;76:3;80:15; 82:15;83:9;90:22,23; 109:10;118:2;121:7, 17;123:14,17;126:12		section (7) 43:5,6;101:15; 102:20;103:18; 115:17;125:12
reported (2) 93:10;116:7	resources (24) 46:17,21,24;47:5, 12;48:15;50:6,18; 55:3;56:12,18;58:1, 10;59:8,10,13;85:2, 24;86:3;87:3;88:24; 89:3;96:24;97:8	right-hand (1) 72:13		Secured (1) 26:4
Reporter (20) 6:6;8:10;12:19,21;	respect (3) 96:22;97:9;100:16	right-of-way (43)		securities (2)

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

23:8,9 seeing (3) 30:13;59:10; 124:15 selected (10) 46:16,20;48:9,10, 13:50:8;68:5;85:20; 113:5,16 selecting (1) 111:14 selection (5) 48:21;111:7,12; 120:10;126:7 sell (1) 34:22 Senior (2) 19:12;26:4 sensitive (1) 86:1 September (1) 38:20 Series (2) 19:12,14 service (3) 11:16;12:20;40:7 Service's (1) 40:6 Session (1) 126:24 set (1) 85:15 settings (1) 68:4 seven (3) 50:4;71:3;106:17 several (1) 100:21 Shadow (1) 104:5 shadows (1) 80:4 sheet (4) 23:24;27:13;32:2; 38:11 sheets (2) 19:2;29:13 shift (1) 117:16 shifting (1) 93:1 short- (1) 35:19 short-term (19) 11:13,14;12:3; 16:8;18:13,13;19:3, 16:20;16:26;20; 27:18,20;29:3;31:3; 35:3,15,16;37:20; 38:7 shoulders (1) 69:7 show (5) 33:20;38:12;87:10;	123:16;124:2 showed (4) 52:7;53:4;123:7,19 showing (3) 52:3,8;54:7 shown (3) 63:21,24;71:4 shows (1) 108:10 side (23) 15:6;17:19;21:16; 64:20;71:13,14;72:2, 4,6,11,18,21,23; 75:13;77:23;78:13; 101:9;102:3;103:12; 104:7,9,13;107:18 sight (3) 52:22;69:7;80:17 sign (1) 25:22 significant (8) 68:15;86:1;89:12; 97:3;98:16,22;104:6, 11 significantly (3) 34:24;43:13;82:4 similar (14) 8:3;11:11,21; 30:23;32:16;34:7; 43:19;44:7,16;55:4; 105:15;110:15; 118:24;123:18 simply (2) 37:14;117:7 simulation (1) 68:9 simulations (6) 49:6;50:8;68:4; 87:10,13,14 single (1) 85:10 single-pole (1) 80:2 site (5) 57:17,19;88:1; 91:17;93:23 sites (3) 47:10;48:22;68:11 siting (7) 43:15;44:7;90:13, 14;93:18;95:21;96:9 sits (1) 64:17 situation (4) 55:5;93:14;97:19; 103:10 situations (2) 23:2;92:21 six (1) 106:17 slight (2) 43:3,4 small (4)	62:8;63:18,20;89:8 snapshot (1) 39:18 soften (1) 104:15 solution (13) 104:2;105:12; 110:13;111:20; 120:24;121:4,8,19; 122:16,22;123:18; 124:1;125:21 solutions (4) 101:1;106:2; 121:18;125:8 solve (2) 111:21,22 somebody (2) 95:4,13 somehow (1) 33:11 sometime (2) 14:24;108:18 sometimes (3) 23:2,8;94:8 somewhat (1) 90:8 somewhere (1) 39:8 soon (1) 16:14 sophisticated (2) 34:10,13 sorry (18) 18:17;19:19;22:8; 24:9;27:11;32:3; 33:19;37:13;49:14; 60:8;61:8,14,15; 67:4;76:20;77:22; 83:12;108:7 sort (18) 21:22;35:22;38:5; 48:12;63:4;84:24; 85:21,22;87:2,21; 89:23;91:6,14,16; 94:17;100:6;105:8; 109:7 sounds (1) 82:21 south (11) 64:5,8,13,20; 65:21;67:20,24; 74:15,18;77:12; 101:5 Southeast (2) 123:20,21 Southern (1) 123:8 space (1) 101:19 spacing (1) 95:22 speak (5) 75:18;78:8;85:3;	95:15;100:11 speaking (4) 21:21;98:13; 106:11,24 species (3) 103:4,17;104:12 specific (8) 21:7;83:23;97:6; 98:10;105:3;112:9, 13;122:3 specifically (14) 30:14;43:24;68:10; 98:14;100:10;101:4; 104:20;107:3,6,9,12, 20,24;111:6 specifics (1) 98:12 speed (1) 125:3 spent (1) 85:5 spit (1) 85:6 split (1) 115:2 spoke (2) 74:10;105:3 spoken (1) 58:13 spots (1) 50:16 stability (2) 111:17;126:6 stakeholder (2) 116:22;118:20 standard (11) 21:4,8,13;24:20, 23;25:8;26:1,3; 32:20;33:20,23 standpoint (2) 56:15;96:5 start (1) 118:7 started (2) 11:16;109:13 starting (1) 85:23 state (5) 43:16;45:13;69:16; 70:11;93:9 stated (5) 17:21;18:11;29:2; 49:19;111:10 statement (21) 19:24;20:1;21:6, 10;25:3,4,7,14,19; 30:4,8;32:16,23; 36:2;38:9,12;59:4; 83:9;88:6;89:15;91:6 statements (15) 19:4;20:7,9,12,18; 21:1;22:4;29:15,18, 22;30:1,12;38:16,22;	84:1 statement's (1) 20:4 states (1) 83:16 steel (1) 91:11 stenographer (1) 73:10 step (1) 92:24 still (9) 15:22;30:22;42:19; 66:10;78:17;79:19; 118:14;119:1;125:13 stop (3) 73:21;109:15; 125:24 straight (1) 102:16 Street (3) 122:6,11,14 streets (2) 108:24;109:3 strengthens (1) 6:23 strictly (1) 114:7 strip (2) 74:15;102:3 structure (24) 33:8;36:16,18; 52:4;54:3,8,24;55:9, 12,18;62:5,12,23; 63:10,12;68:23;69:2, 8,9,12;71:23;74:7; 80:18;93:24 structures (33) 43:10,14;44:6; 51:16,16;52:5,6,18; 53:2,3,6;54:1,10; 55:1,10,15,20;56:6; 71:19,22,23;72:1,11; 79:21;80:3,9;81:17; 87:12;91:10,13; 92:10,15;123:10 studied (1) 48:19 studies (6) 92:3;93:2;119:5; 123:7,10;124:1 study (29) 47:6;50:15,20,22; 52:21;53:6;56:18,19; 57:16;58:2,9,12;59:8, 9;85:2;86:2;89:3; 120:14,15,19;123:1, 13,15,22,23;124:3, 13,22;125:11 stumps (3) 82:19;95:7,11 sub-4 (1) 31:4
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DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

Subcommittee (1) 85:17	symbolizing (1) 63:20	18;111:10;112:18; 113:2	69:7;80:17,18	24;91:5,17;124:24; 125:21
submission (2) 115:12;116:15	System (6) 99:20;109:14; 110:3;118:14;119:7; 120:21	therein (1) 7:5	towards (6) 65:20;66:16;67:20; 91:21;98:1;102:16	tuck (1) 26:8
submitted (2) 110:4;116:7		thereof (1) 93:12	towers (2) 61:5,11	turn (2) 25:11;53:12
subsequent (1) 11:23	T	thinking (1) 90:17	Town (6) 49:2,11,22,23; 76:22;78:20	twenty (1) 50:16
substantial (1) 69:9	tab (1) 26:22	third (2) 88:19;115:11	trailing (4) 38:18,19,20,21	two (40) 17:6;31:22;32:7,8; 39:9,13;44:3,5,5; 54:10;61:7,16,17; 63:24;65:7,12,14; 67:21;69:2;70:12; 72:12;75:2;77:17,21, 22;78:6,11;79:3,17, 23;81:13;82:11,12; 86:11;96:9;104:14; 112:5,10,19;113:8; 123:12
substantially (1) 48:24	table (2) 100:1,3	though (2) 66:10;71:9	transmission (39) 10:22;11:12;13:8; 15:19;51:13;57:1; 61:5,10,10;62:2; 71:18,21;72:9,10; 86:14,22;87:19;88:3; 89:16;90:15,21; 93:16;94:20;95:19; 103:2;110:1,12; 111:9;113:18; 114:23;116:1,8; 118:11;119:8,17; 120:8,21;124:10; 125:6	two-pole (2) 68:22;80:8
substation (4) 94:6,10,13;122:11	tail (1) 107:17	thought (3) 49:4;51:7;65:5	traveler (1) 59:1	type (2) 27:2;51:5
substations (1) 94:17	talk (2) 76:9;97:16	three (14) 38:21,24;44:11,13; 49:1;58:16,17;59:11; 75:23;77:11;79:12, 13;81:10,11	travelers (1) 58:18	types (6) 28:6;31:23;50:19; 93:24;94:5;95:22
suburban (1) 50:23	talked (3) 32:12;36:6;98:7	three- (2) 82:19;95:6	treating (1) 101:14	typical (3) 35:1,6;42:21
suggested (1) 49:15	talking (2) 35:18;65:1	three-point (1) 28:21	tree (31) 51:14,18;54:18; 55:5,21;56:3,10; 63:13,21,23;64:2,5,9; 65:17;66:6,23;69:21, 24;70:17;71:16; 72:15;73:6;75:15,16; 77:9,12,13;78:1,15, 22;81:3	typically (11) 15:21;22:22;23:1; 24:16;25:20;31:9,9, 15,17;85:24;118:11
suggesting (1) 114:12	talks (1) 48:20	throughout (3) 13:10;42:22;50:15	travels (1) 101:14	ultimate (2) 115:3,8
suitable (1) 49:6	tall (1) 55:15	timing (1) 17:14	traveling (2) 71:12,12	ultimately (7) 14:8;33:7,8;44:10, 15,20;115:3
suite (5) 112:16,21,24; 113:17;121:5	taller (2) 54:24;92:14	today (8) 26:23;29:19;46:6; 95:16;109:15; 110:22;126:15,19	treatments (1) 101:14	unacceptable (1) 94:12
summary (1) 111:13	tariff (8) 12:18;14:1;16:11; 113:13,21;117:5,10, 12	today's (1) 15:1	tree (31) 51:14,18;54:18; 55:5,21;56:3,10; 63:13,21,23;64:2,5,9; 65:17;66:6,23;69:21, 24;70:17;71:16; 72:15;73:6;75:15,16; 77:9,12,13;78:1,15, 22;81:3	under (15) 12:17;19:16;23:9, 11,15,23;24:4;30:5; 42:19;63:14;113:21; 117:6,10,18,19
sunroom (1) 101:6	tariffs (2) 12:12;113:20	together (6) 20:11;30:6;61:17; 73:23,24;123:12	triggers (1) 17:9	underground (1) 96:2
superior (1) 111:24	tasked (2) 117:2;126:2	told (1) 122:8	trouble (1) 48:2	Underneath (1) 24:5
Supplement (4) 50:7;53:11,17;68:2	team (2) 10:7;29:24	tomorrow (7) 17:20;95:17; 109:16;126:10,11,15, 22	trouble (1) 48:2	undersea (1) 112:22
support (8) 6:4,8;7:15,19;8:24; 11:18;110:11;112:2	tempered (1) 56:23	took (2) 47:13;96:21	true (5) 7:6;8:15;9:11; 84:2;117:13	Understood (2) 114:3,10
supports (2) 39:20;98:3	tend (1) 31:22	top (6) 64:14;65:2;69:5; 79:4;101:17;107:15	try (12) 16:15;47:3;91:8; 93:17,23,24;97:19; 101:1;105:6,7; 124:21;125:3	undertaken (1) 100:15
Sure (14) 7:11;37:10;47:22, 23;55:13;61:9;70:22; 83:24;90:23;95:3; 106:7;111:17; 112:11;124:15	tender (1) 9:14	topography (1) 52:22	trying (8) 13:6;50:17;65:17,	undeveloped (1) 90:2
survey (1) 93:9	tennis (4) 62:14;108:11,14, 17	total (6) 12:16;14:16;48:3; 114:2;115:16;116:10		unless (2) 64:12;67:5
suspect (2) 82:2,2	term (2) 35:10;112:3	totally (1) 83:24		unreasonable (20)
Sustained (2) 59:22;85:13	terms (10) 11:7;13:22;16:11; 26:18;35:18;38:8; 51:4;110:12;111:14; 117:5	touched (1) 28:10		
swear (2) 46:5;110:22	territory (1) 119:13	tough (1) 103:5		
sweep (1) 112:14	testified (1) 116:14	toward (3)		
swings (1) 35:2	testimony (29) 6:4,8,13,20,22;7:4, 18,23;8:1,7,14;9:3, 10;15:4;28:16;39:16; 45:24;46:3,5;52:8; 56:9;110:4,9,10,11,			
sworn (4) 42:15;45:8;99:23; 109:18				
symbol (3) 62:8;63:13;74:9				

DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

57:23;58:6;62:23; 87:17,18,23,24;88:5, 22;89:14,20;90:10; 91:7,16,22;92:18; 93:7,11;94:4;98:4 unreasonably (3) 88:22;91:4;105:23 unrelated (2) 125:17,20 up (45) 12:22;13:16;14:24; 17:2;37:24;40:12,16, 17,20;42:11;43:12; 17:51:1;53:10;64:3, 3,17;65:19;69:11; 70:1;71:6,12;74:23; 75:14;78:14;94:14; 95:16;99:14,16; 102:16,21,22;104:1; 105:12;106:17; 108:12;109:11; 112:12;113:23; 115:20;116:12; 117:14;123:11; 124:2;125:3 update (1) 42:22 Updated (1) 125:6 upgrade (5) 121:24;122:16; 124:10,11;125:7 upgrades (4) 121:9,12;122:21; 125:12 upon (1) 27:21 USA (3) 30:9;32:14,17 use (9) 11:17;47:14;49:9, 16;52:23;74:18,22; 87:22;93:17 used (11) 19:15;21:4;32:21; 34:3;39:4;41:4; 50:16;72:4;74:13; 90:12;95:24 user (1) 59:2 users (1) 58:19 uses (3) 21:9,14;24:24 using (9) 24:10;34:12;64:5; 74:20;85:6;91:1,10; 92:14;113:19 Usually (1) 116:22 Utilities (2) 19:17;91:20 Utilities' (1)	19:11 utility (2) 26:2;35:7 V Valley (1) 123:8 value (9) 16:19,21;17:1,5,6; 102:5,8,11;103:20 Vancho (33) 7:9,11,11,15,21,24; 8:3,8,11,17;9:7; 12:20,22;13:4,16,21; 14:8,18;16:14;17:12, 18;18:10;19:7,8; 20:23;21:2;24:8; 26:10;28:23;40:3,14, 22;41:12 variety (1) 50:15 various (5) 21:10;96:20;100:8; 118:20;120:15 vegetation (12) 52:23;78:18;86:20, 21,23,23;87:14; 90:18,21;95:6,9; 98:19 verbal (2) 45:4;126:20 Vermont (1) 93:12 versus (2) 43:18;115:1 VIA (11) 47:3;48:20;51:17; 58:11,21;83:9,13,21; 84:2;87:21;97:1 vicinity (2) 52:7;100:17 view (50) 48:11;49:19,22; 51:6;54:15;56:6; 58:14,16;60:3;61:23; 63:7,8,9,11,24;64:13, 22;70:6,7,8,21,23; 71:6,15,20;72:5,6; 73:2;75:17;79:17,19; 80:11;81:10,15,20; 82:24;83:23;84:11, 21,23;85:8;86:11; 87:8;103:6,17,21,21; 104:1,15;105:22 viewed (1) 55:16 viewer (2) 50:20;68:15 viewers (1) 59:9 viewing (1) 101:11	viewpoint (1) 48:21 viewpoints (2) 48:12;51:7 views (33) 48:7,17,18,19,23; 49:4,10,22;50:1,8; 51:2;58:23;60:3; 64:3;66:15;67:2; 72:10;73:5;77:14; 78:3,14;79:5,13; 81:16;82:4;83:3,18; 84:6,8,14;85:8; 86:19;90:18 viewshed (3) 52:16;53:1;86:5 visibility (9) 51:19;52:15;55:9; 56:22;59:12;86:3; 87:1;95:24;100:10 visible (1) 53:5 visited (2) 50:14;57:17 visits (1) 57:19 Visual (21) 45:23;46:15;47:2; 51:8,13,19,19;52:13; 54:21;55:23;56:4,14; 57:10,21;58:12; 90:16;92:3;94:11; 97:6;98:4;105:16 visually (1) 65:24 W Wait (3) 83:13,13;126:10 waiver (1) 14:19 walk (3) 59:24;60:3,21 walked (1) 103:12 walkers (1) 71:11 walking (3) 63:8;72:4;73:2 wall (1) 94:16 Wangs (1) 103:10 Wangs' (1) 101:4 water (1) 70:14 way (14) 11:11;16:6;19:21; 20:24;25:2,24;38:5, 15;66:24;86:17,21; 97:3;123:10,19	WEATHERSBY (3) 95:18;108:23; 109:9 weighs (1) 118:18 weighted (1) 34:16 welcome (3) 23:17;27:17;94:23 weren't (2) 87:4;91:14 western (1) 72:21 wetland (1) 43:9 what's (7) 21:23;54:20;75:19; 78:6;91:7;114:22; 124:9 WHEREUPON (5) 45:8;76:1;99:22; 109:17;126:23 WHITAKER (1) 95:2 white (7) 62:8;63:18,20; 69:20;70:16;77:8; 102:7 whole (3) 10:24;34:15;39:20 wide (2) 35:1;80:15 wider (2) 56:7;81:17 Wildlife (1) 53:13 Wiley (1) 77:3 willing (3) 98:20;104:21; 106:1 wind (1) 92:21 winnowing (1) 85:23 winter (1) 122:5 Within (21) 12:9,10;18:1; 29:23,24;30:12;47:6, 12;48:4;50:24;51:11; 52:20;53:5;54:17; 59:9;86:1;88:7;89:3; 90:14;112:21;123:9 without (4) 25:18;35:24;82:5; 90:21 Witness (16) 20:3;22:18;41:15; 44:1;45:3;47:24; 61:1,13;63:15;67:9; 70:10;84:18;99:2; 100:1,2;106:5	witnesses (7) 9:14;37:7;95:14; 99:20;109:12;111:1; 126:17 wondering (1) 105:3 wooded (1) 81:24 word (5) 38:5;77:23;81:23; 93:17;103:5 work (14) 12:14;45:18,19; 47:7;50:13;51:11; 93:16;99:11;101:10; 106:1,2;107:20; 120:13;122:7 worked (10) 93:20;94:5;100:24; 101:12,23;102:23; 105:11;121:24; 122:4,5 working (32) 22:2,3,16,22; 24:21;25:1,2,6,9,12, 14,21;33:18;34:21; 35:2,4;39:4,7,11,12, 17,45;17:91;18; 105:5;107:3,6,9,12, 19,23;112:17;120:9 worthiness (2) 34:7,11 written (3) 7:4;8:14;9:10 wrote (1) 48:1 Y Y151 (5) 121:14,24;122:12, 14,17 yard (2) 101:8;105:20 yards (5) 58:23;83:4,19; 84:9;102:15 year (11) 11:22;17:4,7; 34:24,24;35:2,2;39:9, 14,21;108:18 year-end (1) 39:19 years (5) 11:23;26:24;39:1, 10;120:16 yellow (2) 53:22;61:24 York (1) 37:13 yup (1) 54:19
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DAY 1 AFTERNOON SESSION ONLY - June 13, 2016
SEC 2015-05 MVRP ADJUDICATIVE HEARING BEFORE SITE EVALUATION COMMITTEE

	2008 (1) 120:21	31:3	
1	201 (1) 68:20	31.5 (1) 19:13	6
1 (5) 18:23;24:11,13; 82:8;126:23	2014 (2) 22:10;32:17	3124 (3) 41:22;42:1;53:21	6 (1) 31:2
1.6 (1) 19:12	2015 (2) 19:10;121:1	33 (5) 76:7;77:2,16; 78:12,12	6.5 (1) 13:13
10 (6) 26:24;28:1,19; 49:3;67:19,19	2016 (1) 41:23	34 (3) 60:24;61:6,11	6.6 (2) 27:3,4
10- (1) 31:3	2018 (1) 19:13	35 (4) 60:24;63:21;68:20; 108:10	60 (1) 28:1
10:00 (3) 109:16;126:15,22	2023 (1) 123:15	36 (2) 28:12;69:16	6-1/2 (8) 12:23,24;13:4,16; 14:8,14;40:5,17
108 (2) 47:4;48:3	2025 (1) 19:14	37 (7) 28:12,13;70:9,13; 71:2;72:12;73:21	66 (3) 26:20;27:5,6
10-year (1) 26:22	2026 (1) 123:15	375 (1) 32:17	7
119 (1) 125:12	204 (2) 54:3,8	38 (2) 70:9;73:19	7 (2) 6:16;19:19
12 (3) 38:18,19,24	208 (1) 74:4	4	71 (1) 56:10
12/31/14 (1) 22:13	20-foot (1) 55:17	4 (4) 6:15;8:4;29:9;30:4	750,000 (2) 41:10,23
12/31/2014 (3) 19:5;22:17;27:9	21 (1) 47:19	4:30 (2) 109:15;124:19	8
13 (10) 16:1,19;38:24; 41:4;48:6,8,9,14,18, 23	241 (1) 80:8	4:33 (1) 126:24	8 (6) 19:20;48:17;49:5; 53:13,20;125:12
13.5 (2) 17:24;41:24	242 (1) 80:8	400 (1) 102:15	8.6 (1) 27:14
13-1/2 (2) 15:6,12	245 (1) 27:15	43 (4) 76:7,20;77:8;98:7	84 (1) 54:10
14 (4) 38:24;49:23;83:12, 13	25 (3) 60:6;67:15;75:22	44 (1) 78:19	85 (1) 54:10
1-4 (1) 41:18	25-foot (1) 52:11	45 (3) 52:10;80:20;81:1	88 (2) 66:19;69:12
15 (2) 19:10;75:22	275 (1) 26:23	46 (2) 80:20,23	9
15- (1) 52:11	28 (2) 48:4;49:15	47 (1) 82:10	9 (12) 8:4;15:6,12;16:1, 19;17:24;19:9,19; 20:2;40:9;41:4,24
16 (2) 53:13,21	280 (1) 26:24	48 (1) 82:10	9.75 (1) 30:18
162-H (1) 59:15	2-mile (2) 47:6;50:24	49 (1) 82:9	9.8 (1) 28:18
18 (2) 41:8;42:1	3	5	
19 (1) 6:16	3 (5) 29:9;38:20;50:7; 53:11,17	5 (1) 52:9	
2	3.1 (2) 22:6,9	50 (2) 52:10;116:13	
2 (2) 18:23;19:9	3/31/14 (1) 29:16	500 (1) 102:15	
2.7 (1) 22:12	3/31/2014 (2) 32:2,6	500,000 (1) 41:22	
20 (3) 54:9,24;109:13	3:07 (1) 76:1	51 (3) 47:11,13;48:4	
200 (1) 62:2	3:25 (2) 76:2,4	57 (1) 48:20	
	30 (2) 54:9,24		
	30-year (1)		