

1 STATE OF VERMONT
2 PUBLIC SERVICE BOARD
3

4 Docket No. 7032
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6 Petitions of Vermont Electric Power Company, Inc.
7 (“VELCO”), Green Mountain Power Corporation
8 (“GMP”), and the Town of Stowe Electric
9 Department (“Stowe”) and for a certificate of public
10 good, pursuant to 30 V.S.A. Section 248,
11 authorizing VELCO to upgrade a substation in
12 Moretown, Vermont; construct .3 miles of side by
13 side single pole tap; construct a switching station in
14 Duxbury, Vermont; construct 9.4 miles of 115 kV
15 transmission line; upgrade an existing GMP 34.5
16 kV subtransmission line; construct a substation in
17 Stowe, Vermont; and for Stowe to construct 1.05
18 miles of 34.5 kV subtransmission line in Stowe,
19 Vermont.
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21

22 VERMONT AGENCY OF NATURAL RESOURCES’ PREFILED TESTIMONY OF
23 DIANA L. FREDERICK
24

25 **Q1. Please state your name, business address and occupation.**

26 A1. Diana L. Frederick, Vermont Department of Forests, Parks & Recreation
27 (“Department”), 5 Perry St., Suite 20, Barre, VT 05641-4265. I am the District
28 State Lands Stewardship Forester.

29 **Q2. Please describe your educational background and relevant work experience.**

30 A2. I have a Bachelor of Science degree in Forestry from the University of Vermont
31 and have been employed by the Vermont Department of Forests, Parks &
32 Recreation since 1979 and in my current position since 1991. My current
33 responsibilities include oversight of all management activities on state-owned
34 lands in the Barre District, which includes Lamoille, Washington and Orange
35 Counties. Specifically, my duties include: conducting resource inventories;

1 preparing comprehensive long-range management plans, which require extensive
2 public involvement; implementing the long range management plans--by laying
3 out, marking and administering all timber sales; ensuring compliance with the
4 long range management plans; maintaining and constructing truck roads and
5 recreational trails; maintaining forest and state lands boundaries; coordinating
6 activities of the District Stewardship Team comprised of the Department and
7 Vermont Department of Fish & Wildlife personnel; and any other activities
8 related to state-owned lands in the Barre District. Please see my attached resume.
9 (Exhibit ANR-DF-1).

10 **Q3. What is the purpose of your testimony in this proceeding?**

11 A3. The purpose of my testimony is to provide the Department's position on the
12 proposed Project with respect to impacts on state-owned lands, namely the Mount
13 Mansfield State Forest, and all associated approved uses of those lands, under the
14 environmental criteria reviewed by the Public Service Board pursuant to 30
15 V.S.A. §248(b)(5), and to provide testimony as to whether the proposed VELCO
16 project is consistent with the Long Range Management Plan (LRMP) for the
17 Mount Mansfield State Forest. The LRMP is provided electronically on the
18 attached CD (Exhibit ANR-DF-2). It is also available on the FPR website at
19 www.vtfpr.org/lands/approvedplans.cfm.

20 **Q4. Are you familiar with the proposed Project?**

21 A4. I am generally familiar with the Project and have reviewed VELCO's prefiled
22 testimony regarding the issues I listed above.

1 **Q5. Can you describe the general scope of impacts to the Mount Mansfield State**
2 **Forest and associated uses expected from the Project?**

3 A5. Yes. On the State Forest lands, the proposed transmission line falls within an
4 existing Green Mountain Power right-of-way (ROW). VELCO does not
5 specifically propose additional clearing and widening of the ROW except for the
6 crossing of the Waterbury Reservoir. However, VELCO indicates that additional
7 selective clearing of vegetation and potential danger trees may occur along the
8 route as necessary. Since I do not know exactly what this clearing will entail it is
9 hard to say what the impacts will be. Could have additional negative could have
10 significant visual impacts near the reservoir. If the selective clearing referred to
11 by VELCO means cutting individual trees spaced out along the route it may not
12 be inconsistent with the LRMP. FPR would have to review VELCO's final
13 clearing plans to make that determination.

14
15 The main impact to the State Forest will be at the point where the proposed
16 transmission line crosses the Waterbury Reservoir. One concern is for the visual
17 impact of the proposed transmission line and the resulting clearing viewed from
18 the water and from the various boat access areas and park areas; another concern
19 is the potential for erosion from the clearing along the shoreline. Another concern
20 is the location of the H-frame pole on the Blush Hill side of the reservoir. Because
21 the clearing and pole will be east of the existing transmission line it is hard to
22 determine exactly where the new pole will be installed in relation to the existing
23 parking area and boat ramp and the impact it will have on any future

1 improvements to the boat access area. Please see the testimony of Susan K.
2 Bulmer for more information on the recreational uses and access areas associated
3 with the Reservoir.

4 **Q6. Could you please describe the concerns you have for visual impacts?**

5 A6. The Project, proposed, may result in increased negative visual impacts for
6 recreational users of the reservoir from the water and from the Blush Hill parking
7 lot and access area, as well as other recreational areas around the Reservoir from
8 which the proposed project will be seen. VELCO admits that the visual impact
9 will be adverse for users of the Reservoir. The Project proposes that at the
10 Reservoir crossing the existing right-of-way will be widened by 100-feet and a
11 second set of H-frame poles will be erected on both sides of the Reservoir. As a
12 result of this clearing, the existing line, as well as the new line, will be visible.
13 This will impact the users at the boat ramp, on the water and at other access areas
14 around the Reservoir. There may also be visual impacts from the Waterbury Day
15 Use Area with the increased clearing both from the beach area and boat access--
16 and from The Point on the Nature Trail. The Nature Trail runs west from the
17 beach area along the reservoir to the point of the peninsula and loops back to the
18 beach. The trail out to The Point will be upgraded to ADA handicapped-
19 accessible standards within the next 2 to 3 years.

20 **Q7. Please explain your concerns regarding erosion.**

21 A7. I am also concerned about the potential for erosion resulting from additional
22 clearing along the shoreline of the reservoir and the impact this might have on the

1 water quality. This concern is specifically addressed by ANR witnesses Anne
2 Hunter and Kim Greenwood.

3 **Q8. Does the Department have a policy regarding construction of electric**
4 **transmission lines on state lands?**

5 A8. Yes. FPR Policy #16, entitled "Utility Easements." This Policy states that "No
6 utility easement will be granted on state land which is solely for the convenience
7 of the utility company, for which no direct benefit accrues to the Agency of
8 Natural Resources, and/or which does not serve the greater public good".
9 (Exhibit ANR-DF-3).

10 **Q9. What is the purpose of the Long Range Management Plan (LRMP) for the**
11 **Mount Mansfield State Forest?**

12 A9. The purpose of the long-range management plan for Mt. Mansfield State Forest is
13 to guide all management activities on the forest and to assist in making decisions
14 on requests for new activities or uses. The plan deals with management concepts
15 and not specific details, such as when road maintenance activities will occur.
16 Instead, the forest is divided into four land management categories that allow
17 certain types of activities while excluding others. The categories range from areas
18 of intensive use (the campgrounds, day-use areas, and ski areas) to those that are
19 highly sensitive to human impacts. Most of these areas are high elevation lands
20 that have steep slopes and very shallow soils, but also include low elevation areas
21 with state significant natural communities. At the transmission line location along
22 the reservoir, the Blush Hill side is mapped as "Special Management" because it
23 is a deer wintering area and the Gregg Hill side is mapped as "General

1 Management.” The description of these areas is found in the LRMP. (Exhibit
2 ANR-DF-2).

3

4 **Q10. Will the proposed transmission line be consistent with the policies and goals**
5 **of the LRMP?**

6 A10. The proposed transmission line would be consistent with activities allowed within
7 the General Management Area on the Gregg Hill side because a transmission line
8 already exists and VELCO’s proposal is within the existing right-of-way , with
9 the exception of the additional 100 foot clearing. The additional clearing may not
10 be consistent with the LRMP. The change in the Special Management Area may
11 could be inconsistent due to the existing transmission line. Consistency with
12 Special Management Area will depend on the extent of the final clearing plan.

13

14 In reviewing VELCO’s proposal, pursuant to the LMRP, FPR must also address
15 conflicts with other users. At the Waterbury Reservoir, these conflicts would be
16 with those who come to the Reservoir for recreation and a proposed timber sale,
17 as addressed below.

18

19 The increased visual impact to the experience of recreational users would not be
20 consistent with the long-range management plan and existing uses. It may not be
21 consistent with FPR Policy #16, Utility Easements. Mt. Mansfield State Forest is
22 managed for all 600,000 residents of the State of Vermont, not just the residents
23 of the Lamoille County area.

1 **Q11. Are there currently any planned timber sales in this area of the Mount**
2 **Mansfield State Forest that may be impacted by VELCO's proposal?**

3 A11. Yes. A timber sale is planned in the area of Gregg Hill Road where the proposed
4 transmission line crosses the Reservoir. The timber sale is a combination of an
5 intermediate thinning in a white pine stand and a selection harvest in a northern
6 hardwood stand and mixed softwood-hardwood stand. The sale will encompass
7 approximately 92 acres and harvest an estimated 120 MBF (thousand board feet)
8 and 440 cord of pulpwood. A map of the area of the planned timber sale is
9 attached. (Exhibit ANR-DF-4).

10 **Q12. Can you discuss the adequacy of the information provided by VELCO in**
11 **terms of addressing the impacts discussed above?**

12 A12. I have not seen sufficient information regarding the actual location of the new H-
13 frame structures to determine what impact it will have on the Blush Hill boat
14 access and any future upgrades to the access area. The information provided also
15 does not attempt to simulate (by computer) the impact of the clearing and new
16 structures from any visual vantage points along the reservoir.

17 **Q13. Do you have any concerns associated with the temporary construction**
18 **impacts?**

19 A13. Yes. My concerns are that the clearing and construction of the transmission poles
20 along the shoreline must not result in sediment entering the reservoir. I am
21 concerned for the safety of recreational users of the reservoir and adjacent land
22 area. I am also concerned that construction may result in closures of the area for
23 lengths of time that have not been specified.

1 **Q14. Does this conclude your testimony?**

2 A14. Yes it does.