

Mali Obomsawin
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My name is Mali Obomsawin and I am a member of the Wabanaki community, a citizen of Odanak W8banaki Nation in Quebec. The NECEC will run through sensitive and sacred sites, burial sites, historic sites of my people on both sides of the border. I strongly oppose this "minor" revision and the project as a whole, as it has already destroyed thousands of miles of Indigenous lands and is set to continue. Development projects that tout "clean, green" energy but are built on the graves of Indigenous peoples are neither clean nor green. We have seen NECEC manipulate Indigenous nations and use the international border to its advantage to push forward the project without consent. This is a continuation of the rape and theft of Indigenous lands that we have seen for 500 years in this region. It has to stop.

In 2014, the State signed a lease with Central Maine Power for 36 acres that bisect a parcel of public land in Somerset County between Johnson Mountain and Wilson Pond for construction of the NECEC Corridor.

Even though the Corridor would significantly alter the value and use of the public land, and destroy critical wildlife habitat, it was granted behind closed doors and without the required legislative input for only \$1,400 per year or \$39 per acre. In 2015, yet another backroom deal was brokered with CMP, this time for \$3,600 per year, or \$100 per acre.

A third secret lease was again negotiated by the current administration in 2020, again without the required legislative approval.

In 1993, 72% of Maine voters to amend the Maine Constitution to include Article IX, Section 23 to the Maine Constitution, which states: "State park land, public lots or other real estate held by the State for conservation or recreation purposes and designated by legislation implementing this section may not be reduced or its uses substantially altered except on the vote of $\frac{2}{3}$ of all the members elected to each house. The proceeds from the sale of such land must be used to purchase additional real estate in the same county for the same purposes.

The next year, the Legislature implemented this constitutional amendment.

Even though the law, and our Constitution are very clear, two different administrations entered into illicit leases with CMP for construction of the unpopular NECEC Corridor.

This bill simply reaffirms that the Bureau of Public Lands must secure a $\frac{2}{3}$ vote for the approval of their lease with CMP.