

To whom it may concern at the Maine Board of Environmental Protection:

Agriculture, Conservation, and Forestry, including Ruth A Burke, & Bill Hinkle

My name is Heidi J Vierthaler, I am a Social and Environmental Advocate, with a BA in Geography and Anthropology from the Class of 1994 at the University of Southern Maine.

I am writing to you today to urge you to stop the Central Maine Power CMP Hydro-Quebec New Englanód Clean Energy Connect NECEC Transmission Line Corridor.

I am grateful for the opportunity to communicate with you today regarding this issue, and while I understand that the parameters within which you are working might be limited to what is happening here in Maine, I do hope that you will take a good look at the situation with the way that Hydro-Quebec has reneged on their promises to the Cree and Inuit, and their Ecosystem and try to take as much of their situation into consideration, when your Department of Environmental Protection makes in your decisions, especially regarding our ability to trust ANY agreement with Hydro-Quebec.

I echo the Testimony that I left for this Committee on 2-17-2021 and also urge you to pass this L.D. 471. An Act To Require Legislative Approval for Certain Leases of Public Lands.

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.

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 a

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 ⅔ vote for the approval of their lease with CMP.

The following paragraphs are what I have been sending recently to garner support to stop the NECEC and while I reiterate that I am well aware that this might be beyond the realm of your consideration of the scope of your inquiry and investigation in this examination; I beseech you to take these issues to heart in as much as you possibly can in your deliberation on this issue.

I'm reaching out to you today because Hydro-Quebec's current proposal here in Maine will impact the indigenous Cree people of James Bay ...we will all be impacted by this devastating Hydro-Quebec deal with Massachusetts that wants to run a massive powerline corridor right through the pristine forests of our sacred lands here in Maine.

The point of prevention where we can stop this is here in Maine: We need to stop the New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) Transmission Line Corridor. The NECEC is the deceptive name given to the egregious deal between Central Maine Power (CMP) and Hydro-Quebec. It would deliver Hydro-Quebec's electricity to Massachusetts by carving a massive Transmission Line Corridor thru our precious Maine woods. (Imagine the NJ Turnpike with a center line of massive, high-voltage transformers going down the middle of your favorite get-away spot. Add a little Round-up to the under-growth, and it's not a pretty picture. The Cree can tell you all about the devastating results. Life will get worse for them, too, if Hydro-Quebec has this excuse to build more dams.)

Massachusetts has already signed a contract with Hydro-Quebec. In Maine, the relevant agencies are currently reviewing and assessing the project.

We sincerely hope that you'll join us in this grassroots movement to stop this NECEC monstrosity.

To introduce you to what we in Maine are being asked to relinquish in terms of our pristine Maine wilderness, please see this short (8:16 min) video *What is The CMP Corridor Project?* as part of the *From Away* series from Barrel Up Productions.

<https://youtu.be/ql0cSpGGUws>

If you have another 5:29 minutes, this video tells just how special our pristine Maine Woods is:

<https://vimeo.com/253324517>

On the other hand, the Cree and Inuit have been suffering from Cultural Genocide and Ecological Ethnic Cleansing since the mid 1970's because Hydro-Quebec's Mega Dams have flooded their sacred lands, causing mercury poisoning in their fish and up through their entire food chain. This has obliterated their sustenance existence and their spiritually oriented, indigenous way of life, forcing them to become dependent upon an incompatible Western Consumer-Oriented Economy. Furthermore we need to urgently learn from the Cree that Hydro-Quebec can not be trusted.

The scope of your Hearing should take into consideration the history of Hydro-Quebec, owned and operated by the Government of Quebec, Canada, in not living up to their own promises. That we need to learn from the Cree, before it's too late: that we should reject the New England Clean Energy Connect NECEC Transmission Line Corridor, because: how can we trust Hydro-Quebec? – if Hydro-Quebec, Quebec, and Canada, have not honored their treaties, and all of the agreements etc., that they have made with not just the Cree, but many of their other Indigenous Citizens, including those in the tar sands extraction zones in Alberta. That we know that we can not trust that Hydro-Quebec will honor the agreements that they have made with all of us in Maine, because they haven't even begun to Honor those that they have already made with their own Cree and Inuit Citizens.

Furthermore I want to remind you too that Central Maine Power (CMP), a subsidiary of Avangrid Networks Inc., traded on the New York Stock Exchange with it's majority owner Spanish energy giant: Iberdrola USA Inc., with it's abysmal record of recklessly abusing it's customers with overage charges, which it cannot seem to forgive, but still keeps paying for advertising to promote this NECEC Monstrosity, and has been given the worst rating in the JD Power list of Electric Companies in America, (See: <https://www.jdpower.com/business/press-releases/2019-electric-utility-residential-customer-satisfaction-study> ); cannot be trusted with the complex planning, engineering, construction, and operation of such a complicated Transmission Line Corridor.

To further prove my point I am sending:

- My Fact Sheet: “Be a Climate Change Hero – Maine, New England, & the World: Stop Hydro-Quebec and the New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC)!”, and the fact that installing the NECEC Transmission Line Corridor would be a grave mistake in such a sparsely populated region with scarce Emergency Management Personnel and Resources, especially with all of the forest fires that we are seeing around the world but most especially in Australia. We need to protect what is left of the carbon sequestering resource of our pristine Maine Forest, and the lives of all living in the area, and globally.
- My White Paper Report: Stop The NECEC for the Cree and ME.
- In this there are a couple of films that would be good introductions for the destruction of the Cree and their ecosystem, and I didn't want these to be overlooked:
  - *1972: The James Bay Hydro Electric Project*, a contractor sales film, is probably the best short video, that describes how the Hydro-Quebec Mega Dams were built into the Cree landscape, when they moved the entire village of Fort George on an island to the mainland where it became the Community of Chisasibi. It is heartwrenching to see just how much disrespect to the land Hydro-Quebec had, and it describes the social services that were established, but to little avail as will be discussed further.  
<https://youtu.be/GmGCifYrfzI>
  - *One More River*: by Rezolution Pictures: This film gives a compelling reason why we should not trust anything that Hydro-Quebec tells us. Filmmakers Neil Diamond and Tracey Deer travel deep into James Bay to follow Cree Filmmaker Earnest Webb, in an

emotional behind the scenes process up to the signing of the *Paix des Braves Agreement* of 2002, and how the Native Cree Tallymen hunters raced to stop it's implementation in which Hydro-Quebec Mega Dams would divert the Rupert River, and how the Grand Council of the Cree Government were swayed to sign onto to it. It also features Cree Advocate Roger Orr, and my Cree Friends Matthew Mukash and Larry House who truly stood up for their People and Ecosystem. Do we really want to make the same mistakes that the Cree made in signing onto something with Hydro-Quebec?  
<https://youtu.be/gUlZejarull>

- Links to our new websites: <https://www.notonecec.com/>  
<https://www.nocmpcorridor.com/>
- This link to my Facebook Live Stream of your Army Corp of Engineers Hearing in Lewiston, 12/5/2019, because I ask you to consider in your review the information in the Description. In it I include links to some of the relevant websites of those who gave their Testimony, I want you to learn more about the people giving their Testimony, and the relevant books and articles about James Bay (I do hope that you will be able to get a copy of Hans Carlson's book as part of your "evidence", I hope that by my including it here that you will enter it into your record. At this moment I am still editing this description, but I am sending it now to be sure that it is entered into the record.  
[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10157353166917605&id=690312604](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10157353166917605&id=690312604)
- My new Friend Heather House's Hunger Strike regarding the lack of consultation over the recent \$4.7 Billion Development Agreement the "Grande Alliance". This points to just one more example of how the Government of Quebec AND the so-called Cree Leadership has recklessly not honored their own Indigenous Citizens, and why we as a state should not trust the deal between our state and theirs, and it would make us even more complicit in the further Genocide and Ecological Ethnic Cleansing of our Cree Neighbors to our North in the James Bay ecosystem South of Hudson Bay.

This is just another reason why we should encourage our Maine Voter Friends to sign our Referendum endeavor by Sunday, January 10th, you need to sign in person, our No CMP Corridor Referendum at our signature events for registered Maine voters:

<https://www.nocmpcorridor.com/events>

Please See My Full Post of Heather House's Hunger Strike with:

- The History of her Region
- The disturbing history of the way that the Canadian Crown Corporation's Quebec Government, it's Hydro-Quebec Utilities Company, and even the Cree Government: The Grand Council of the Cree, have been working in collusion at the expense of the sacred Cree Ecosystem of our world,  
and

- The reason for, history, and ending of Heather House's Hunger Strike.

More importantly it has Heather's Facebook Live Stream of her passionate reading of her eloquent "Open Letter" to the Grand Council of the Cree Leadership.

See the post here:

[https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story\\_fbid=10158405779107605&id=690312604](https://m.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=10158405779107605&id=690312604)

A never again is happening again, and we as a state should not sanction such egregious human rights violations. We as a state should stand proud that we are respecting the sovereign needs of our Cree and other Indigenous Neighbors, as an example for the world to see.

I hope that we can count on you for your support to stop this destructive plan of the New England Clean Energy Connect NECEC Transmission Line Corridor. If I can be of any further assistance to you, because my numbers are unlisted and confidential, I can be reached at the numbers that I will leave with the Maine Board of Environmental Protection Clerk, and if they don't have it, at least I have left them with April Kirkland Office Associate at the Bangor Office, who has reached out to Ruth Ann Burke.

I finally reiterate that I hope that you will keep the Cree, Our Maine Community, and the World, in your hearts as you cast your votes, as all of our lives are in your hands.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

All of my best to you and yours.

Heidi J Vierthaler

Resident in Southern Maine, close to Brunswick.

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To whom it may concern at the Maine Board of Environmental Protection, inc. Ruth A Burke, & Bill Hinkle

Please find my Correspondence: in the attachment "A-C-C-MDEP-2-2-17-2021", which introduces you to the attachments regarding My Testimony for your Hearing on February 18, 2021, including the Human Rights and Climate Health issues regarding the Hydro-Quebec and Central Maine Power CMP New England Clean Energy Connect NECEC Transmission Line Corridor, which will devastate our pristine Maine Wilderness and further the Genocide and Ecological Ethnic Cleansing of our Cree and Inuit Neighbors to our North in the James Bay ecosystem South of Hudson Bay. This is the source of Hydro-Quebec's Genocidal electricity.

Please let me know if I can be of any further assistance to you. Because my numbers are unlisted and confidential, I can be reached at the numbers that I will leave with the Maine Board of Environmental Protection Clerk, and if they don't have it, at least I have left them with April Kirkland Office Associate at the Bangor Office, who has reached out to Ruth Ann Burke.

Sincerely,

Heidi J Vierthaler

Heidi J Vierthaler  
Freeport

I might want to give my Testimony live.