



CONSERVATION COMMISSION

AGENDA

Monday, June 15, 2026

4:30 PM

**City Hall, Second Floor
Conference Room**

Commission Members

Gary Flaherty, Chair
Barbara Richter, Vice Chair
William White
Michele Chalice
Steven Bill

Kenneth Bergman
Bob Milliken, Alternate
Thomas P. Haynes, Alternate
John Therriault, Alternate
Alexander Von Plinsky, Alternate

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Meeting Minutes** – May 18, 2026 & May 19, 2026
- 3. Planning Board Referral**
 - a) **PB-26-15 - Major Site Plan & Surface Water CUP - Eversource L163 Transmission Line**
- Applicant Normandeau Associates Inc., on behalf of owner Public Service Company of New Hampshire (d/b/a Eversource Energy), proposes to replace five existing utility structures along the L163 Transmission Line. The proposed work area begins at the southern entrance to the Old Gilsum Road trail along Timberlane Drive and will continue for ~1-mile to the north. A Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit is requested for ~3,487-sf of impact within the 75-ft surface water buffer to allow for the installation of timber matting and a temporary gravel access road.
- 4. Presentation and Discussion: Pat Russell Park Expansion** – Deputy City Manager Andy Bohannon will review the plans for the expansion of the Pat Russell Park into the former Findings property, review physical site constraints (e.g., floodplain, floodway, contamination, etc.), and provide an overview of project funding sources.
- 5. Report-outs:**
 - a) Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee
 - b) Invasive Plant Species
 - c) Land Conservation / Easement Monitoring
 - d) Pollinator Updates
- 6. Discussion Items**
 - a) Land Protection Criteria amended May 2026
 - b) 2026 Commission Budget
 - c) Donation request from Society for the Protection of NH Forests
- 7. New or Other Business**
- 8. Next Meeting:** Monday, July 20 (City Hall)

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
MEETING MINUTES

Monday, May 18, 2026

4:30 PM

Room 22,
Recreation Center

Members Present:

Gary Flaherty, Chair
Barbara Richter, Vice Chair
William White
Councilor Michele Chalice
Steven Bill
Ken Bergman
Bob Milliken, Alternate
Thomas Haynes, Alternate
John Therriault, Alternate (Voting)

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Members Not Present:

Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Alternate

SITE VISIT: At 3:30 PM before the meeting, a quorum of Commissioners attended a site visit of the property located at 30 Production Avenue.

1. Call to Order

Chair Flaherty called the meeting to order at 4:30 PM.

Steve Ringland of Howard Street was present to learn about the Commission.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – April 20, 2026

A motion by Mr. Therriault to adopt the April 20, 2026 meeting minutes was duly seconded by Councilor Chalice and the motion carried unanimously.

3. Planning Board Referral

- a. **PB-26-11 - GMS Parking Lot Expansion - Major Site Plan & Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit - Applicant Fieldstone Land Consultants, on behalf of owner GMS Realty LLP, proposes to expand the rear parking lot and install stormwater management infrastructure within the 30-ft surface water buffer on the lot at 30 Production Ave. The property is ~3.1 ac and is in the Industrial District.**

30 Chair Flaherty welcomed John Noonan with Fieldstone Land Consultants on behalf of GMS
31 Realty, seeking to expand their parking lot. He showed the plans. He explained that the existing
32 25 parking spaces at the front of the businesses on Production Avenue are very limited and it is
33 difficult to have the employees parked plus all the storefronts. So, the petitioners are looking to
34 expand parking to the rear that would be utilized mostly by employees. The proposal is to add 24
35 parking spaces. He showed areas on the plans that were demonstrated on the site visit that are
36 mostly travel aisle in the rear; it is all gravel now and a lot of mud, so there are problems with
37 deliveries for the larger loading docks, which will have a solid surface to park and unload trucks.
38 Mr. Noonan explained that the petitioners proposed larger pavement edges about 20 feet past the
39 existing edge of the gravel and to expand a section. Access to the site is both from Production
40 Ave on the northern end (there is an easement for two businesses to utilize the driveway) and the
41 southern driveway access is just for this property. Along the rear of the site on the southern edge,
42 there is a tax ditch that turns and follows the back edge of the property and then continues. This is
43 the tax ditch system that is used to drain the majority of Keene, but in this area especially,
44 delineated wetlands follow parallel to where the tax ditch is. So, Mr. Noonan said the petitioner
45 would be very limited on expanding the parking lot and then having enough space for stormwater
46 management.

47
48 Therefore, Mr. Noonan said the applicant proposed a long, skinny rain garden through the area.
49 He said there is not a lot of pitch. He knew there were questions about having an outlet structure
50 and pipes that would drain the systems but there is not a lot of elevation there; it is fairly flat. The
51 only lower area would be all the way in the tax ditch, which would require crossing the wetland
52 resource to drain it. That is how they decided to do a rain garden, which would hold and detain
53 rainwater in the drier months and would soak into the ground in the wetter months; it would build
54 up in the basin, and the spillway of the pond is at the 100-year flood elevation. So, this would
55 hold a 100-year storm event. The entire rear section is only about two feet deep.

56
57 With this system running along the back, the City Engineer Bryan Ruoff asked the applicant to
58 work in coordination when the project moves forward for access to the tax ditch for maintenance;
59 it has been maintained for many years. They clean the tax ditch and dredge along the area. Mr.
60 Noonan said the applicant was open to it and they just need to work out particulars on who pays
61 the contractor to do this work in the tax ditch when it is the City infrastructure and with the
62 impacts of crossing the Wetland Permit that is held. Typically, any of that maintenance is held by
63 the City and they permit those crossings. Those are things the applicant is willing to work with
64 the City on, but details would have to be figured out.

65
66 Next, Mr. Noonan discussed the Site Plan checklist, noting two trees required, and a plan for two
67 red maples; he showed the locations proposed closest to the parking spaces. He was certain that
68 the applicant would be willing to entertain a different species of shade tree if the Commission has
69 a preference. The current lights on site would be maintained, so no lights are proposed on site.
70 The utilities are moving, such as the propane tank that was moved already and are being
71 decommissioned and removed completely; new propane tanks will be placed on a new pad
72 location. The new tanks are already in use but will be lifted up to grade with the concrete pad to
73 the level of the parking lot.

74

75 Overall, Mr. Noonan said the applicant was present because of the buffer following the wetland.
76 He said the project stayed out of the wetland resource. They are calling for erosion control
77 measures, so there will be a double row of silt fencing placed along the outer edge of where the
78 grading is, following the wetland resource. There would be no existing or proposed closed
79 drainage structures in the back. He showed the berm of the detention / rain garden that would be
80 finished in a loam and conservation seed mix unless the Commission recommended a different
81 mix. Mr. Noonan welcomed questions.

82
83 Councilor Chalice asked for the slope from the building to the rain garden. Mr. Noonan said it
84 was proposed at 2%. At this time, it varied and some parts were steeper at 8%. The goal would be
85 to flatten it to a 2% grade. Councilor Chalice appreciated that it would be such a gradual slope.
86 Mr. Noonan said the idea is to get into the sheet flow, so that rain is really gradually sheet flowing
87 and then opens into the long narrow basin that is along the back.

88
89 Chair Flaherty asked if it would be feasible for low salt use on the back parking lot during the
90 winter. Mr. Noonan did not think the applicant had a restriction at this time and could ask the
91 client if they would be willing. Mr. Haynes said the Commission could make that
92 recommendation and Chair Flaherty agreed.

93
94 Vice Chair Richter asked if there would be an opportunity to use a pervious pavement, at least for
95 the parking; she knew heavy trucks would be going through some areas, but wondered if the
96 parking spots could be pervious for the size of cars. She did not know if it was something the
97 Planning Board (PB) could look into. She said it would certainly help with the drainage issue.
98 Vice Chair Richter also asked if there would be a way to save some of the existing trees. Mr.
99 Noonan replied that the large trees would be difficult to save. Vice Chair Richter said they are
100 doing a lot of work absorbing water and holding the bank. So, it seemed silly to her to remove
101 them and install an artificial replanting. She suggested some way to save them. Discussion ensued
102 as Mr. Noonan reviewed the plans and suggested that in a wider section, they may be able to shift
103 where the spillway was proposed, and the berm would be wider to accommodate the three biggest
104 trees in that area. The Commission agreed that it was a good recommendation.

105
106 Mr. White asked if there was anything on site currently catching or stopping the water runoff. Mr.
107 Noonan said nothing. Mr. White said any berm or rain garden added would keep runoff from the
108 wetland more than is currently happening; everything is flowing from the loading docks into the
109 wetlands. He was sure that testing the soil would show a lot of interesting things. Mr. Noonan
110 said some of the steeper spots around it were starting to erode. Mr. White asked if the area is
111 plowed in the winter and Mr. Noonan said yes. So, Mr. White said they just turn up all that soil
112 and leave it in a big pile.

113
114 Mr. Bergman asked to see a profile of how high the top of the berm is compared to the low point
115 of the rain garden. Mr. Noonan said the top of the berm is only two feet higher than the bottom of
116 the rain garden. That is just above the spillway which is at the point of the 100-year floodplain.
117 Mr. Bergman asked if there would be safety posts in front of the canisters (propane tanks) to
118 prevent trucks from backing into them. Mr. Noonan said yes, they are placing concrete blocks
119 there (two feet by two feet above grade). Mr. White asked if the propane tanks would be staying

120 in that location in general and Mr. Noonan said yes, once the concrete pad is poured. If there were
121 to be a propane leak, Mr. White said it would settle right in the berm / rain garden area.
122

123 Mr. Therriault asked what size tree the applicant is planning to plant (e.g., two-foot sapling). Mr.
124 Noonan said a two-inch caliper. So, Mr. Therriault said a juvenile tree but not tiny. He asked if
125 they would consider Tilia Americana, American linden, or American basswood instead of the of
126 the red maple. Mr. Noonan said he would absolutely be willing to tell his client if the Commission
127 proposes a better choice of tree. Mr. Therriault thought this area has no lack of silver, sugar, and
128 red maples as a pollen source in the spring. He said the City is not filling a niche mid-summer
129 when there is a dearth of linden blooms that provides a gap of nectar for pollinators. From a
130 pollinator standpoint, he said these trees would be a better choice. He said there used to be a big
131 basswood in front of Mechanics Bank on West Street that was cut down a few years prior. He
132 would like to see more lindens around town for the pollinators. To Mr. Therriault, they would be
133 a better addition than the maples.
134

135 Mr. White asked about the legal requirement for shade trees. Ms. Brunner explained that there is a
136 City requirement about breaking up the massing of large parking lots. Once above 50 parking
137 spaces there are requirements for interior landscape islands that are about breaking up the mass,
138 providing wildlife habitat, and helping to mitigate some of the heat island impact. Typically for
139 shade trees, the City is looking for something that is not evergreen; anything that would provide
140 shade. Mr. White suggested aiming for the best environmental impact.
141

142 Councilor Chalice suggested that lindens are lovely for the particular period that they are
143 blossoming. However, she suggested the swamp white oak and willows as particularly keystone
144 species having the highest ecological benefit for all of the Lepidoptera, the moths and the
145 butterflies, which create the caterpillars that the birds need to feed their babies. Mr. Therriault said
146 willows are not a bad idea either; they are an early season pollinator. Discussion ensued about
147 whether willows' root systems are too wide to be that close to the building, with Councilor
148 Chalice stating there is a lot of pavement in between and Mr. White countering that willows will
149 find water and get into foundations. Councilor Chalice suggested willows because they utilize the
150 water at such a distance from the building. Discussion ensued about the pros and cons of willows
151 for this location. Mr. White clarified that the Commission could recommend tree species but not
152 mandate them. Councilor Chalice recommended one swamp white oak and one linden. There was
153 consensus.
154

155 Mr. Bill asked the rain garden capacity in terms of amount of water. Mr. Noonan said it would
156 handle a 50-year storm. With a 100-year storm, there would likely be backfilling from the tax
157 ditch and overtopping back to it. Mr. Bill asked how the water leaves the rain garden. Mr. Noonan
158 said there is an 18-inch-deep sand-mix layer in the bottom and two inches on top of open basin.
159 Mr. Bill also asked where the rough drainage goes; does it drain into a storm area or tie out into
160 the front. Mr. Noonan thought it would tie out into the front catch basin. Chair Flaherty and Mr.
161 Haynes said they saw some downspouts in the back of the building just dumping right in the
162 ground. Mr. Bill said that might be something to design into and could be a recommendation. Mr.
163 Bill was thinking about the winter when the ground is frozen and the City sometimes gets its
164 heavier rainfall when the plants are inactive, so he had concerns about the capacity of the system.
165 Discussion ensued briefly about the existing vs. current capacity and protection of the wetland.

166 Chair Flaherty felt that it was not a perfect proposal, but it would improve the existing condition.
167 Mr. Noonan mentioned other ideas he would have liked to include, like a pipe as an outlet, but
168 said it is a wet area. He and the Chair agreed it is difficult.

169
170 Mr. Haynes asked if the berm, sand, and rain garden plantings are all designed to absorb any
171 contaminants that come from the site. Mr. Noonan said yes, their details come from the
172 University of New Hampshire (UNH) suggestions for stormwater. When they get their Alteration
173 of Terrain Permit, they have general details that the applicant will follow for treating runoff for
174 oils, etc. Councilor Chalice asked if New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services
175 (DES) has a list of recommended plants for remediating contamination. Mr. Noonan said yes, it
176 comes from the UNH stormwater manual, and they include: low bush, blueberry, deep laurel, blue
177 flag iris, cardinal flower, New England Aster, and black-eyed Susans. Councilor Chalice was
178 content with that list of all native plants.

179
180 Mr. Bergman asked if the elevation of Production Avenue itself is higher than the parking lot and
181 Mr. Noonan said yes. Mr. Bergman asked if there is runoff from the roadway to the parking lot.
182 Mr. Noonan said Production Avenue has closed drainage catch basins.

183
184 Mr. Haynes asked if during a 100-year flood the tax ditch would fill so it would be the same
185 height as the water coming off the new parking lot. Mr. Noonan said yes. He showed where the
186 100-year flood line would go through the site and afterward follow the backside of the berm, but
187 the spillway elevation is the same as the 100-year flood.

188
189 The following motion by Chair Flaherty was duly seconded by Mr. White. On a vote of 7–0, the
190 Conservation Commission positively recommends Planning Board Referral PB-26-11, with the
191 following recommendations:

- 192 1. Pervious pavement in the parking areas.
193 2. Low winter salt use if possible.
194 3. Tree replacement with *Tilia Americana* and *Quercus Bicolor*.
195 4. Invasive Species Management.
196 5. Retaining the three large trees on site, if possible, by modifying the layout.

197
198 Mr. Noonan departed.

- 199
200 **4. Public Hearing**
201 **a. Acquisition of 2 properties located at 0 Gilsum Rd. for Conservation Purposes –**
202 **TMP #s 218-010-000 & 218-011-000: In accordance with the requirements of**
203 **RSA 36-A:5 the Keene Conservation Commission will conduct a public hearing**
204 **to evaluate whether to expend funds from the Conservation Land Acquisition**
205 **Fund for the purpose of purchasing .95 acres and 3.7 acres of forested uplands**
206 **located adjacent to the Greater Goose Pond Forest.**

207
208 Chair Flaherty opened the Public Hearing.

209
210 Ms. Brunner said this was about the vernal pool properties the Commission had discussed the
211 prior month. She showed the lots on a map along Old Gilsum Road, adjacent to the Greater Goose

212 Pond Forest. The Commission discussed other adjacent lots the City does and does not own on the
213 map related to these two that are for sale, numbers 10 and 11. The City also owns 9, so this
214 purchase would make those contiguous. It does not own 12 and 13 yet; it does own 15. Discussion
215 continued. The City could consider merging the three lots and adjusting the easement; the City
216 was working over time to own several parcels and put them into conservation.

217
218 Chair Flaherty welcomed public comments and there being none, he closed the Public Hearing.

219
220 A motion by Chair Flaherty to enter Non-Public Session to discuss whether to purchase property
221 was duly seconded by Mr. Bergman and the motion carried unanimously. The Session began at
222 5:02 PM.

223
224 A motion by Mr. Therriault to seal the minutes of the Non-Public Session was duly seconded by
225 Councilor Chalice and the motion carried unanimously. The public session reconvened at 5:15
226 PM.

227
228 **5. Report-outs:**

229 **a. Greater Goose Pond Forest Stewardship Subcommittee**

230
231 Mr. Haynes reported that the Subcommittee met on Friday, May 8 in the Greater Goose Pond
232 Forest. They met at the North Trailhead to discuss how to close off the original trail, so people
233 can use the one built a couple of years back. The North Trailhead is pretty eroded, so the
234 Subcommittee has some ideas. They walked up the North Trailhead to talk about a perpetually
235 wet area in the springtime that is a mud hole; the trail keeps expanding as people try to go around.
236 The Subcommittee considered alternatives to address it. They also went to the new bridge to
237 discuss the June 6, 2026 ribbon cutting ceremony and what materials may be needed (e.g., a tent)
238 so it looks professional. The Parks and Recreation Department are overseeing most of it. The trail
239 builder, Lew Shelley, met the Subcommittee at the bridge to look at alternative ramp ideas
240 because there is no ramp at this time. The Subcommittee decided at this point not to pursue any
241 ramp ideas and that the ramp would be a future initiative maybe tied to the All Persons Trail that
242 can get people to the Pond. So, the idea is on hold for now. The Subcommittee had been doing
243 trail work for a while at this point in the season. The first organized Saturday volunteer event
244 would be on May 23, 2026. He said for the next couple of months, the volunteers would be
245 working on the Mattson Trail, which is one of the priority trails for 2026.

246
247 Mr. Bill mentioned an issue with unauthorized trail construction. Mr. Haynes said the bikers put
248 in a few new trails, but they had worked through the issue, deciding they would not come down
249 hard on them and let the trail stand, maybe with some modifications. The group is encouraged to
250 work with the Subcommittee in the future. Mr. Haynes said that while the Subcommittee's
251 recommendations are not as publicized as ideally, they do exist and were not followed. So, he
252 hoped this event would put those trail building regulations on the group's radar.

253
254 Councilor Chalice asked if it is a fall line trail or whether they had done well aligning it, so there
255 is minimal erosion. Mr. Haynes noted that a biker on the Subcommittee went over the trail and
256 said they did a good job. As much as Mr. Haynes does not like having the new trail, he did call it
257 an impressive, technical trail that is not for the everyday biker, with very technical trail jumps,

258 steeps, and rocks, etc. So, they did well building the trail according to the expert on the
259 Subcommittee.

260
261 Mr. Bergman recalled discussion in 2025 about signage to dissuade unauthorized trail building
262 without checking with the City first. Mr. Haynes said there is no actual signage saying that, but it
263 is the hope. He added that it is not a hard rule, it is a recommendation. The Subcommittee has met
264 with the New England Mountain Bike Association (NEMBA), encouraging them to work
265 together. The Subcommittee is not opposed to new trails; they just want to work together to
266 ensure they fit within the Forest's Stewardship Plan. Mr. Bergman warned about giving an inch
267 and taking a mile. Councilor Chalice asked if there is a NEMBA member on the Subcommittee
268 and Mr. Haynes said yes. Mr. Bill said that the member was not aware of this new trail either;
269 there was some secrecy. He said the issue is a lack of enforcement ability and really relying on the
270 good faith of people in the Forest.

271
272 Discussion ensued about the problems with discouraging fire building in the Forest, such as a
273 prominent ring on the far side of the spillway. Discussion continued about other spots. Mr. White
274 said it is illegal to build fires, and the Subcommittee could absolutely use the Fire Department
275 (FD) as a resource; that is legally enforceable. He explained smoke tower coverage that can spot
276 smoke during the day. He said there is no way those lighting fires in the Park have permits, so the
277 FD can enforce that. Discussion continued. Mr. Haynes did not think fires were nightly, so the
278 Subcommittee goes in and tries to disperse the locations to discourage more. They always worry
279 about spreading when it is dry and windy. Mr. White noted that if the Subcommittee wanted to
280 really take action, because kids are going to have fires, they can manage directly around the main
281 areas by creating fires lines (i.e., pulling by the leaf litter in a trench); it is a common practice in
282 the west. It makes fire harder to spread. Chair Flaherty wondered if there was any signage that
283 could be put out from the FD. Mr. White does not work for the Keene FD but was willing to
284 speak with his connections in Keene. Mr. Haynes said a part of the discussion was whether to put
285 up signage and if it would make a difference. Mr. White said the public can be ignorant about
286 what they do not realize they cannot do, like making a fire in the woods. So, just a little education,
287 like a sign (e.g., Smokey the Bear), may help. It still may not work on some.

288
289 Discussion ensued about a favorite swimming hole by the new bridge that is posted as "No
290 Swimming." Mr. Bill received advice from the New York Park System, which posts "Swim at
291 Your Own Risk" instead, so the liability is on the individual and not the Park. He suggested
292 considering it as an alternative. It bothers him to have "No Swimming" signs that are
293 unenforceable and could come with legal responsibility for the City. Mr. Haynes thought that was
294 a bigger discussion for the Subcommittee. Vice Chair Richter thought "No Swimming" did
295 provide a certain level of legal protection, but she understood that it is not enforced.

296
297 Mr. Haynes said the dilemma with everything out in the Forest is that the Subcommittee is a
298 handful of people who can do nothing to enforce things. Occasionally they will be in the moment
299 when someone is leaf blowing a trail, but that is a rare occurrence. They can only keep doing what
300 they are doing, which is to be as pro-stewards as possible and encourage people to treat the forest
301 well, which 90% of people do.

302

303 Mr. Haynes recalled that Chair Flaherty would be attending a turtle workshop at the end of May.
304 Mr. Haynes said there are a lot of turtles at Goose Pond. Perhaps after the workshop, the Chair
305 could share what he learned with the Subcommittee and others in the Park working on turtle
306 studies. Chair Flaherty agreed.

307
308 **b. Invasive Plant Species**

309
310 Mr. Milliken reported that he created a sign-up for the invasive species volunteer events, he just
311 had to figure out how to get it to the public. He asked if there was a template. Ms. Brunner said
312 that the City would advertise the dates and times. Ms. Brunner and Mr. Milliken agreed that these
313 could be added to the City's volunteer sign-up pages as well. He sent Ms. Brunner a link to the
314 Google Form with the dates and times and it will create an Excel sheet with people's contact
315 information, so he can reach them.

316
317 Mr. Milliken noted that he found the wild parsnips on Elm and Court Streets, there are also garlic
318 mustard, bittersweet, and multiflora roses in the area. So, he called it a bigger job that he thought.
319 Unfortunately, the garlic mustard was already flowering, so he said it was time to get out there
320 and get the word out to volunteers. Mr. Haynes asked if garlic mustard is spread by the flowers
321 and the seeds. Mr. Milliken said just through the seeds; if you pull it, it is gone. The first year it is
322 just a small plant that stays low and then, the second year, it flowers and seeds.

323
324 Mr. Bill stated that Beaver Brook from the Branch River upstream is a mess and there are quite a
325 bit of invasives . Mr. Bill wondered what the strategy should be to protect certain City properties
326 because it is an overwhelming problem. Mr. Milliken agreed, stating he unfortunately feels like
327 the Commission should attack the areas that will spread faster. For example, the spot he found at
328 the corner of Elm and Court Streets that is right out of a tiny brook that flows into the Ashuelot
329 area; if spreading seeds into that water, it will take over. He said people in the community call and
330 say, "you need to take care of your area," and he is unsure how that goes. He is still new at this.

331
332 Discussion ensued about supplies for this effort: are there funds for plastic bags that would be
333 needed? Mr. Milliken also asked about their disposal. Ms. Brunner said to call the Public Works
334 Department, which is pretty good about providing bags and picking them up to dispose of them.
335 Mr. Milliken noted all the different methods for getting rid of these plants, so he asked what
336 happens when they take the bags somewhere. Ms. Brunner noted that Councilor Williams
337 mentioned there is a place to burn the invasives; alternatively, putting them in the plastic bags and
338 covering them with tarps to bake in the sun and then disposing of them. Mr. Milliken called the
339 latter one of the best methods because you know they are dead. However, he asked where they
340 would be kept. Ms. Brunner thought the Public Works Department. Any invasive plant removal
341 on City park land is contracted through a company. Mr. Milliken would develop a list of supplies
342 and send them to Ms. Brunner for voting at the next meeting.

343
344 Vice Chair Richter noted that Councilor Williams had an email list that he would contact for
345 volunteers and asked if Mr. Milliken had it. Mr. Milliken said no and he would reach out to
346 Councilor Williams.

347
348 Mr. Milliken said the first invasive pull of the year would be May 20 at 4:30 PM on Elm Street.

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c. Land Conservation / Easement Monitoring

Vice Chair Richter had nothing new to report. The next Workshop on the Land Protection Criteria would be Tuesday, May 19, 2026 at 4:00 PM.

d. Pollinator Updates / Bee City Photo

Councilor Chalice and Mr. Therriault were at the Monadnock Food Co-Op Earth Day celebration. Councilor Chalice provided basic information on the City’s Bee City status, answered questions, and talked about potential future projects. Councilor Chalice also noted the upcoming Pollinator Palooza to the Commission, and she would share information there as well.

Discussion ensued about the Commission’s Bee City USA photo with the new sign. The Commission agreed to meet at Ashuelot River Park at 3:30 PM before the June 2026 meeting (if there is a site visit) to take the photo and carpool to any site visit from there. If there is no site visit in June, the group will meet at the Park for the photo at 4:00 PM before the June Commission meeting.

6. Discussion Items

a. 2026 Commission Budget & Donation Request from Society for the Protection of NH Forests

Ms. Brunner said there were a few expenses for the Fiscal Year (FY) she had not been accounting for. On July 22, 2025, the Commission donated \$150 to the Wantastiquet-Monadnock Rail Trail Coalition. Also, Ms. Brunner went to the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions Annual Meeting and Conference, which was \$60. There were also the New Hampshire Association of Conservation Commissions dues, the Bee City sign, the annual renewal for Bee City USA. Pending was the request from Ashuelot River Local Advisory Committee (ARLAC) for \$125.

Ms. Brunner went through past financial records for a few years since the City’s financial system changed and only found one record of a donation to the Society for the Protection of NH Forests for \$112. She assumed the Commission donated whatever was left of its Budget at the end of the year. She said that if the Commission decided to give ARLAC \$125, it would have \$365 remaining to give something to the Forest Society and anything else it would like to spend on. Chair Flaherty said a good chunk would be spent on supplies. Councilor Chalice wanted to provide information on seeds. Mr. Haynes asked about waiting to make the decision in June. Ms. Brunner said the Forest Society sent its request some time ago but did not provide an amount. Chair Flaherty recalled that the Commission would need to spend its Budget by the end of the next month’s (June 2026) meeting before it goes away for the FY, so they should probably vote on something now.

Discussion ensued. Mr. Haynes recommended funding ARLAC because of the long history of supporting them and holding off on donating to Society for the Protection of NH Forests until

394 June to ensure the Commission can cover the supplies it needs more critically locally; whatever is
395 remaining could go to the Forest Society.

396
397 The following motion by Mr. Therriault was duly seconded by Councilor Chalice. On a vote of 7–
398 0, the Conservation Commission donated \$125.00 to the Ashuelot River Local Advisory
399 Committee (ARLAC) for 2026.

400

401 **b. Update on Letter to Keene Country Club re: Best Management Practices for**
402 **Turf Adjacent to Water Bodies**

403

404 In the meeting packet there was a letter sent with attachments dated May 4, 2026. The
405 Commission thanked staff for sending it. Mr. Bill was glad to see the criteria that were submitted
406 and the information about fertilization too because water bodies being algal blooms have been
407 more problematic. He hoped they would take that to heart.

408

409 **c. Update on Notice Practices for Mosquito Control Activities (Michele Chalice)**

410

411 Councilor Chalice reported that Justin Adams, the representative for the Northeast Vegetation
412 Mosquito Control Firm that the City is contracted with, replied to the Councilor. He is willing to
413 speak with the Commission. He explained in a very long memo that Ms. Brunner could distribute
414 for the June meeting that they do an arboviral testing, which allows them to monitor the potential
415 for the types of diseases that we are concerned about. In general, they use the BTI granules, which
416 is a bacterium that kills larvae. It is the same product that Councilor Chalice tells people to put in
417 their rain barrels and ponds, which is considered very low toxicity and not a concern for people or
418 pets. She said they do not anticipate doing any “adulticiding,” which is killing, or fogging of
419 actual bugs themselves. If they determine that there is a problem, they have a quite elaborate
420 series of posting steps that need to be taken and notification requirements to City government, to
421 the health department, and to registered beekeepers. However, it is not something that they
422 anticipate in this instance. Obviously, this is their extreme busy season, but Councilor Chalice
423 said she would not mind learning more about the arboviral testing during some off season. There
424 was consensus that this memo answered the Commission’s questions. Councilor Chalice was glad
425 to hear they would be focusing on larvae in the pre-stage vs. fogging the subdivisions like when
426 she was a kid.

427

428 **d. Update on Red Pine Removal on Maple Ave – Reseeding (John Therriault)**

429

430 Mr. Therriault sent a letter to the Parks and Recreation Department because they are the ones
431 managing the Dinsmoor Woods red pine replacement. He read a May 13, 2026, response Director
432 of Parks and Recreation, Carrah Fisk-Hennessey: “We think spreading wildflower seeds would be
433 a wonderful enhancement to the Dinsmoor Woods area. We appreciate the thoughtfulness and
434 staying in alignment with Bee City USA, as well as our environmental steward initiatives. It will
435 take time, some time for the understory to grow, and we know that we will be managing invasives
436 for quite some time. We look forward to all the natural and native tree species that have a chance
437 to shine.” Mr. Therriault suggested waiting until fall to spread the native wildflower seeds so they
438 can go through stratification over the winter and bloom next spring. He said it felt like the
439 Commission was in alignment with Parks and Recreation. Mr. Therriault said he was thinking

440 about doing something in the September timeframe. Chair Flaherty asked how much seed he had.
441 Mr. Therriault said he would walk the area and measure where the understory did not do anything
442 and then buy the seed.

443
444 Councilor Chalice suggested making an event of it. She said it would require buckets with sand
445 and seed to distribute properly. Councilor Chalice offered to develop a handout that talks about
446 what those seeds are for and what they do in the late fall so they have an opportunity. Mr.
447 Therriault agreed. Vice Chair Richter asked if it is best to spread the seeds on bare soil. Mr.
448 Therriault said it is best to just scratch the soil a bit on top so the seeds sort of embed with the
449 snow melt. Mr. Milliken said it looked like something had been spread there like a grass and
450 Chair Flaherty said maybe straw even. Mr. Milliken had not seen any knotweed resurfacing yet.

451
452 **e. Land Protection Criteria Amended February 2026**

453
454 Discussion ensued about who would be attending the May 19, 2026 workshop to have a quorum.
455

456 **f. Airport Wildlife Fence Project Update (Ken Bergman)**

457
458 Mr. Bergman showed a map and provided history on this effort he began working on in 2018 with
459 then Airport Director, David Hickling, who was very sympathetic to the Commission's interests
460 and explained the process to him. Mr. Bergman explained the wildlife safety fence at the Keene
461 Dillant-Hopkins Airport. The money for such a fence, which is needed because of incursions of
462 deer, coyotes, and even geese on the runways, comes ultimately from the Federal Aviation
463 Administration (FAA), but is channeled through the New Hampshire Department of
464 Transportation (DOT), which works with local airports and other organizations and their advisory
465 consults. The best Mr. Hickling had gotten to was where the fence was going to be built in stages.
466 This year, DOT provided the funds to allow the whole fence to be built in one phase, presumably
467 beginning fall 2026 and continuing into early spring 2027. Most of the work will be completed in
468 the winter, which is a biologically quieter time. The plan is for an 8-foot-high chain link fence
469 with 1.5 feet of concertina wire on top.

470
471 He noted the original plan was to completely enclose the runways by going along Airport Road
472 all the way down to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. He oriented the Commission with the map.
473 The original plan would have enclosed a stream that feeds water into the marsh coming through
474 from the Edgewood neighborhood in addition to enclosing an entire wetland complex within the
475 Airport property. Mr. Hickling always questioned why to enclose that menagerie within the
476 runway protection scheme. Mr. Bergman showed adjoined wetlands that are top wildlife quality
477 control habitat. The river comes from various places and actually runs underground under the
478 runway. Mr. Bergman spoke about beaver removal work along Airport Road where culverts have
479 been cleared of the beaver dams that cause water in neighboring yards. It is all interconnected.

480
481 Mr. Hickling worked with his consultant, McFarlane Johnson, which is really experienced with
482 how New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) will respond because there
483 are wetlands, and that is their number one priority. However, the purpose of all this is to protect
484 the runway, and we do not want to do that by enclosing rich wildlife habitat within a fence. So,
485 they performed a delineation of wetlands and lighter mapping in 2025 and ground penetrating

486 radar in 2026. The good news is there is a berm at the end of the runway that is elevated and
487 slopes up and then descends; this will allow for bringing the fence closer to the FAA's object free
488 zone. Mr. Bergman explained what is typically allowed in this zone, which are frangible (i.e.,
489 breakable) objects only. So, the good news is they have found that they can bring the fence, much
490 closer to the runway than they had thought. This means the impingement upon the wetlands will
491 be less, which Mr. Bergman demonstrated on the map delineating the wetlands; there will still be
492 some impingement, though minimal. The main disruption will be during construction. They are
493 not going to sink the fence posts in with concrete sonotubes. They are just going to vibrate them
494 down as far as they can go. There will be some lumber pads and mats, but the disruption will be
495 much less, temporary, and will preserve most of the wetlands. Otters, for example, will be able to
496 go outside the fence and into the main marshes through the culverts or overland into the river;
497 there are various oxbows in different places. Discussion continued about other parts of the river.
498

499 Mr. Bergman summarized that the money came through to perform this fence work closer to the
500 runway in one season, mostly during the winter months, in a way that would be much less
501 disruptive than originally thought. The plan is to begin with the frost during fall 2026. Mr.
502 Bergman had already seen ground penetrating radar trucks out there studying the sediments. Brief
503 discussion continued about the original opposition from New Hampshire DES, whose goal is
504 fierce protection of wetlands. Mr. Hickling convinced them there was no good in putting the fence
505 along Airport Road.
506

507 Chair Flaherty asked if the chain link fencing would be galvanized coating. Mr. Bergman said it
508 would not be vinyl coated, so Chair Flaherty said galvanized. Mr. Bergman said the 1.5 feet of
509 concertina wire on top is required by the FAA as security to keep people out although he worried
510 about deer getting trapped. The Commission agreed that the fence would be so far in wetland that
511 the deer would not be able to get good enough footing to jump that high.
512

513 Discussion ensued about the wildlife value at the Airport and the Sentinel writer about recreation
514 viewing there. However, Mr. Bergman said there are still issues with pedestrians blocking the
515 roadway to the Wastewater Treatment Plant and Airport Road. He said without public access,
516 some of the value of the good view of the marsh would be diminished. He called it a separate but
517 related issue. The new Airport Director, Ryan Cooley, also mentioned more tree topping or
518 cutting to the Swanzy Conservation Commission and that would likely not make anybody happy
519 in those neighborhoods. Discussion ensued on the FAA's need for good approaches and the limits
520 of tree foliage. At Councilor Chalice's request, Mr. Bergman agreed to give the Commission a
521 tour of the marsh along the roadway. It would require the Airport and Public Service's
522 permission.
523

524 Vice Chair Richter noted that a lot of people are really concerned about the situation of trapping
525 beavers. Mr. Bergman said he spoke with the trappers and they are killed by the traps; they cannot
526 be transplanted for practical reasons. He said the beavers bear scars from fighting, they are very
527 territorial and force young to disperse. By putting them in a new location, they would be attacked
528 immediately. He said you also need permission from a municipality or landowner to relocate
529 them. He heard hearsay that there had also been otter trapping because it is hard to discriminate
530 between the two within the same waterways. Mr. Bergman said there are the same issues in the
531 City's cemeteries, like on North Lincoln Street. Vice Chair Richter said if there is an opportunity

532 to recommend beaver control devices like “beaver deceivers,” she would like to. Mr. Bergman
533 said the trappers did not think they would work here at all. Vice Chair Richter and Councilor
534 Chalice wanted to know more about that. Mr. Bergman noted complications with this being
535 Keene land in Swanzey, with an Airport Director and a head of Public Service, who likely
536 contracted with the trappers. It was an issue in the Swanzey Conservation Commission meeting,
537 in addition to solar farms and grassland birds.

538
539 Mr. Therriault recollected when starting this discussion, the main objective was to
540 get those wetlands outside the fence because it is too much of good habitat for all kinds of birds
541 and mammals. It sounded to Mr. Therriault like the Commission won: most of the wetlands would
542 be outside the fence and accessible. Mr. Bergman agreed, noting at one point there was talk of
543 viewing blinds along Airport Road. He would keep the Commission updated.

544
545 **7. Correspondence:**

546 **a. ARLAC Annual Update on River Monitoring Activities & Donation Request**

547
548 Ms. Brunner said this Annual Report from ARLAC talked about the results of their annual
549 monitoring. They look at dissolved oxygen, chloride, turbidity, and total phosphorus. The pH is
550 low at all sites except **Hinsdale** in July and August and the Thompson Covered Bridge site in
551 Swansey. They said specific conductance showed moderate to high impact in Keene and
552 downstream. Ms. Brunner assumed that it was during drought. It says similar effects are seen in
553 2025. Fluoride levels also increased July through September 2025; they remained within Class B
554 standards. E. coli showed acceptable readings. However, when considering E. coli geometric
555 means, which imposes a stricter limit, impacts appear mid-river from Keene into Swansey.

556
557 Mr. Bergman said it was all fascinating but did not know what a lot meant. When there is low
558 rainfall during drought conditions, he said the Treatment Plant has a harder time discharging
559 enough volume to dilute. Others agreed that makes sense.

560
561 **8. New or Other Business**

562
563 Councilor Chalice suggested that the Commission take time requesting to review the site plans for
564 Pat Russell Park. She explained the proposed parking lot that was granted \$75,000 by a funding
565 entity as a cap for contaminated soils from the former railroad. She said three City Councilors,
566 including herself, voted against this parking lot at the Park, and there are questions in the
567 community as a whole about the site aspects of this second half of the Pat Russell Park. At this
568 time, Assistant City Manager, Andy Bohannon, was progressing with a plan. She said a group of
569 people felt strongly that it would not be the right way to finish this park and are concerned the
570 City is going with the input of certain people but coming up with a design they are presenting to
571 the Committee as a done deal. She proposed the Commission ask to review the site plan on the
572 June agenda prior to any further progress. Ms. Brunner said she would certainly reach out to the
573 Deputy City Manager to see if he would be willing to come to the June meeting. Ms. Brunner said
574 the Site Plan is for governmental use of the property and appeared before the Planning Board for
575 their recommendation. Really, Ms. Brunner said the City Council decides, and the Conservation
576 Commission is advisory to the City Council, so the Commission could certainly share its
577 recommendations with the City Council.

578
579 In terms of reviewing the site plan, Ms. Brunner said even the Planning Board did not have the
580 opportunity necessarily. Councilor Chalice asked the mechanism: a memo from the Commission
581 requesting a presentation on the proposed site plan? Ms. Brunner said she would discuss with the
582 Deputy City Manager and ask if he is willing to come give a presentation. The plans are also
583 publicly available, so Ms. Brunner said this could be on the June agenda with or without a
584 presentation. Vice Chair Richter said she spoke with Mr. Bohannon, who was willing to seek
585 recommendations from the Conservation Commission, although more so for planting and
586 replanting; however, he said he was willing to work with the Commission. So, Vice Chair Richter
587 agreed with inviting him for a presentation. Discussion ensued on what the Commission was
588 requesting: site plan review or engineering plan review. Vice Chair Richter thought the latter.
589 Discussion ensued about whether it already passed the City Council. Councilor Chalice thought it
590 already passed the Finance, Organization and Personnel Committee. She knew three Councilors
591 voted against it but it did pass. Ms. Brunner said that if the City Council had already voted on the
592 parking lot and approved it, there would be no further recourse on the parking. There may be
593 some flexibility on the plantings. Mr. White asked if it is a cap on the soil and Ms. Brunner said
594 yes, there were a combination of funding sources to keep the contamination from going into the
595 brook. Councilor Chalice said the City chose that method of capping and others agreed that it is a
596 common method.

597
598 Mr. Bergman asked if the parking lot is along Carpenter Street. Councilor Chalice said it comes
599 off Water Street along Beaver Brook; it is the former Findings property. Vice Chair Richter said
600 her concern was that it did not come to the Commission as a Conditional Use Permit technically.
601 She understands that it is City land but said it would be nice if the City followed their own rules
602 because the location of the contamination is so close to Beaver Brook; the parking lot is right on
603 the bank. She had been in contact as a Keene individual, urging them to move the parking lot
604 back as much as possible because it is a contaminated site. Mr. Bohannon said they were going to
605 try pushing it back, maybe reducing the number of parking spots, so it would be as small as
606 possible, and possibly including a bike rack. Councilor Chalice said some wanted a bicycle
607 pavilion instead. Ms. Brunner noted it is also a floodplain and possibly a floodway, so there are
608 many variables. Ms. Brunner would invite Mr. Bohannon to the next meeting.

- 609
610 **9. Upcoming Meetings (Keene Recreation Center, Room 22)**
611
612 • Tuesday, May 19, 2026 – 5:00 PM, Workshop to Discuss Land Protection Criteria
613 • Monday, June 15, 2026 – 4:30 PM, Regular Meeting – 2nd floor conference room.
614

615 **10. Adjournment**
616

617 There being no further business, Chair Flaherty adjourned the meeting at 6:21 PM.
618

619 Respectfully submitted by,
620 Katryna Kibler, Minute Taker
621

622 Reviewed and edited by,
623 Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

City of Keene
New Hampshire

CONSERVATION COMMISSION
WORKSHOP MINUTES

Monday, May 19, 2026

4:00 PM

Room 22,
Recreation Center

Members Present:

Gary Flaherty, Chair
Barbara Richter, Vice Chair
Ken Bergman
Bob Milliken, Alternate (Voting)
Thomas Haynes, Alternate (arrived at 4:25 PM)

Staff Present:

Mari Brunner, Senior Planner

Members Not Present:

William White
Councilor Michele Chalice
Steven Bill
John Therriault, Alternate
Alexander Von Plinsky, IV, Alternate

1. Call to Order

Chair Flaherty called the workshop to order at 4:00 PM.

2. Workshop:

- a. Conservation Land Protection Criteria – The Keene Conservation Commission will hold a workshop to discuss priorities for acquiring conservation land, guidelines for acquiring legal interest in conservation land, and potential updates to the Commission’s adopted Land Protection Criteria.**

Discussion ensued about the introductory material. As a former instructor, Mr. Bergman wanted to write it in more active tense, especially one sentence to make the statement more of a declaration. The Commission agreed that the following would be more refreshing and represent the Commission as agents of what the City should do: *“The City of Keene Conservation Commission, in making recommendations for land protection and acquisition to the City Council, shall give priority to land that supports or enhances the following resources or features. Land directly abutting existing conservation land is a high priority for protection. Expanding existing conservation areas is an efficient use of City resources and makes it easier to steward and manage land. The Conservation Commission will review potential land purchases that score high on the Priority Checklist.”* The Commission confirmed that the italicized section is a summary of what follows, not redundant; it is a declaration.

31 Discussion continued about defining abutting lands. Ms. Brunner thought it was a high priority
32 as listed in the italicized section. Vice Chair Richter did not think it was clearly listed in the
33 priorities below, so she added it as the overarching theme in the introduction, since it seemed to
34 come up in all the Commission’s conversations about land purchases. The Commission
35 discussed whether abutting land should be its own priority and Chair Flaherty was unsure it
36 needed to be repeated again. The Commission reviewed the existing priorities to see where it
37 could fit. Mr. Bergman looked at the sentence, “*Expanding existing areas...*” and thought it
38 already covered abutting properties and the Commission agreed that it did not need to be more
39 explicit. When looking to expand existing areas, they are looking to acquire or protect abutting
40 lands; they are two different ways of looking at the same thing. Ms. Brunner confirmed that the
41 Commission will entertain non-abutting lands for conservation purposes with this language.
42 Chair Flaherty said any property that is essential for conservation purposes he would want to
43 consider. The Commission chose not to make abutting land its own land protection criteria. They
44 decided that it was covered with corridors under Wildlife, in particular. They added that it could
45 be a Conservation Priority Checklist item; the checklist would mirror these priorities. Vice Chair
46 Richter would rework the Checklist based on the new priorities.

47
48 Discussion continued reviewing the Land Protection Criteria that commissioners revised at the
49 last workshop. Mr. Bergman noted that at least two of these criteria must be addressed by any
50 potential purchase, and asked if abutting land would be like a super overarching category, then.
51 Vice Chair Richter said it would be in the Checklist to rank lands higher. Chair Flaherty thought
52 that was reasonable. Chair Flaherty thought the Commission did not want to lock itself into
53 abutting lands having to explicitly be one of these criteria to meet.

54
55 Discussion ensued about checklist items #1. Protect Surface Water Resources and #2. Protect
56 Groundwater Resources. Breaking these in two criteria was one of the bigger changes from the
57 last workshop; it is why “drinking water” is listed twice. Mr. Bergman thought it implied high
58 quality, clean drinking water.

59
60 #3. Protect Forest Ecology is where the Commission made the most changes at the prior
61 workshop. It used to be more focused on timber and wood lots, and they changed it to be more
62 focused on the ecological benefits. Vice Chair Richter noted that a lot of this language evolved
63 from how the Commission originally wrote it historically and it was good to evolve with
64 different priorities.

65
66 On priority #4. Protect Agricultural Resources, Mr. Bergman asked if soil is covered and Ms.
67 Brunner said yes, it points out state and locally important soils. Ms. Brunner said there is not a
68 lot of prime soil in Keene. She said community gardens were listed for urban agriculture too.

69
70 Chair Flaherty reminded the Commission these priorities can be edited again in the future if they
71 find they are not as effective as needed when purchasing properties.

72
73 On #5. Protect Wildlife and Natural Areas, Mr. Bill added “Unique Geologic Features,” at the
74 last workshop. Mr. Bergman noted that wildlife means a broad, inclusive view of the word (i.e.,
75 all living vertebrates, not just bears and wolves, for example). Discussion ensued on the term
76 “natural habitat” vs. “undeveloped habitat.” Chair Flaherty said the group discussed this at the

77 last workshop and the issue is that most of the land around Keene has been developed in some
78 way in the past and is no longer truly natural. They discussed “undeveloped or natural habitat” as
79 an option, but ultimately landed on “undeveloped habitat.” Some people may interpret “natural”
80 differently.

81
82 The Commission continued on priority #6. Protect Cultural, Recreational, and Scenic Value. Mr.
83 Bergman asked for an example of “d. Land that promotes connectivity of recreational networks.”
84 Ms. Brunner recalled mention about the lower half of a Drummer Road property with wetlands
85 and some City trails on it. All she could think about was trails. Vice Chair Richter said even
86 kayaking by trails. Discussion ensued about the proliferation of e-bikes and e-scooters on the
87 trails not following speed limits (i.e., the various classes). Some require registration but some
88 have combustion engines seen on the rail bed (not allowed) and need to watch for pedestrians.
89 Discussion ensued briefly about the liabilities of e-bikes.

90
91 For #7. Collaboration and Leverage, Ms. Brunner noticed that “a” had a different grammatical
92 format than the others and the group revised it to read: “Land with landowners or other
93 collaborators interested in protection.”

94
95 A lengthy discussion ensued about the conclusion material on the Land Protection Criteria:
96 “Further Directions and Considerations,” which the Commission did not review at the prior
97 Workshop. Mr. Bergman asked the meaning of “*will determine whether the proposed project by*
98 *itself fully protects the intended resource*”: the resource will refer to the priorities listed above?
99 Vice Chair Richter agreed, especially in the case of a water resource, and protecting downstream
100 resources from industrial uses, for example.

101
102 Mr. Haynes arrived at 4:25 PM.

103
104 They all agreed it was odd to have the following statement and proceeded to revise it: “*All costs*
105 *associated with preparing a proposal initiated by the Conservation Commission for City Council*
106 *consideration, whether initiated by the City Government or by a private person or group, will be*
107 *borne by the City unless a third party, including the landowner, is willing to fund all or part of*
108 *these costs.*” Reasons for revision and comments included:

- 109 • The City Council and City Manager are the ones to decide funding as the fiduciary agents
110 of the City.
- 111 • The Commission cannot force somebody to pay to do a study for them to determine if the
112 Conservation Commission wants to purchase land.
- 113 • This might have been included in case landowners who want to negotiate with the City
114 get “cold feet.” Discussion ensued about scenarios in which this may occur with a third
115 party to justify maintaining it.
- 116 • The Commission discussed striking the statement entirely but decided to revise it.
- 117 • Ms. Brunner said that at present, it read that if someone were trying to convince the City
118 to buy their land and the City wanted more information, the City would have to pay for it,
119 which did not make sense to her.
- 120 • The Commission discussed this being a case-by-case basis and how that could complicate
121 things, but with this paragraph, things will be naturally evaluated case-by-case.

- 122 • Discussion continued as the Commission considered revisions. Most of the revisions did
123 not make sense to Ms. Brunner from the City’s perspective and she still thought about
124 striking it. City Flaherty thought about sitting with the revision until the next workshop
125 before deciding whether to delete it.
- 126 • The Commission discussed whether the City Council would have to review/approve these
127 amendments and Ms. Brunner was unsure whether they were adopted by the City Council
128 to start. Right now, they are a Policy of the Conservation Commission. Vice Chair
129 Richter did not think it would be bad to have the Council’s backing on these Priorities, so
130 they are at least aware, as the Commission is somewhat speaking for them.
- 131 • Revision: *“The City will consider on a case-by-case basis who will bear any costs
132 associated with preparing a proposal for land protection.”*
133

134 The Commission reviewed the final statement of the document and proceeded revising it: *“The
135 recommendation put forward by the City Administrator shall weigh the benefits of the proposed
136 acquisition against the broader tax implications and municipal priorities that currently exist in
137 the community.”* Reasons for revision and comments included:

- 138 • The Commission is not the one weighing the benefits against the broader tax
139 implications.
- 140 • This statement might have been written by a higher Committee and adopted by the City
141 Council.
- 142 • The Commission’s responsibility is to send a recommendation to the City Council that
143 shall include a description of the resources as to why a property is worth protecting.
 - 144 ○ Mr. Bergman asked if the Council receives these recommendations for land
145 purchase. Ms. Brunner said they receive a memo from her that summarizes the
146 different items discussed as being important and why they are valuable properties
147 to conserve. She said that is very helpful because they do scrutinize these
148 decisions. Mr. Bergman suggested including the Checklist with the memo and
149 Vice Chair Richter said they should also ideally receive a map with the high
150 wildlife corridors, etc. Ms. Brunner said they could receive a GIS map of how the
151 parcel fits within others conserved already.
 - 152 ○ Discussion diverted briefly to incorporating parcels through easements. It is an
153 easy, administrative process, as long as they are under common ownership. Mr.
154 Haynes suggested a conversation with the Society for the Protection of New
155 Hampshire Forests.
 - 156 ○ The City Council should also receive a list of how the property meets the Land
157 Protection Criteria, even if in map form, and the Checklist.
- 158 • Final Revision: *“The Conservation Commission’s recommendation to City Council shall
159 include a description of the natural resources and how the property meets the criteria in
160 this checklist.”*
161

162 General discussion continued. Ms. Brunner would find out whether the City Council had adopted
163 this document before and would need to therefore adopt the amendments. Chair Flaherty said
164 there would be another workshop to finalize these changes and to start reviewing the
165 Conservation Priorities Checklist.
166

167 Mr. Bergman mentioned wildlife corridors and how they are made usable by the nature of the
168 terrain, soil, and vegetation; they are not demonstrated by actual seldom wildlife traffic. Vice
169 Chair Richter said New Hampshire Fish and Game has a wildlife corridor map. However, Mr.
170 Bergman said it is not based on actual monitoring of traffic. Chair Flaherty said that is
171 unaffordable. Discussion ensued about how Mr. Bergman ran wildlife cameras for many years
172 along the Ashuelot River and acquired a lot of evidence and the associated difficulties.

173

174 Before the next workshop, Vice Chair Richter would ensure that the Conservation Priority
175 Checklist mirrors these specific Land Protection Criteria. The Commission thanked her. Ms.
176 Brunner would send the updated Land Protection Criteria to the Commission.

177

178 **3. Adjournment**

179

180 There being no further business, Chair Flaherty adjourned the workshop at 4:54 PM.

181

182 Respectfully submitted by,
183 Katie Kibler, Minute Taker

184

185 Reviewed and edited by,
186 Mari Brunner, Senior Planner



May 11, 2026

City of Keene
Planning Board
3 Washington Street
Keene, New Hampshire 03431

Re: Conditional Use Permit Application and Site Plan Review
Eversource L163 Line Project
Keene, New Hampshire

Dear Members of the Board:

On behalf of Public Service Company of New Hampshire d/b/a Eversource Energy (Eversource), Normandeau Associates, Inc. (Normandeau) is submitting this Conditional Use Permit Application for the proposed Eversource L163 Line Project within the City of Keene. On behalf of Eversource, Normandeau is requesting consideration of a Conditional Use Permit Application for unavoidable wetland and upland buffer impacts in the City of Keene Surface Water Protection Overlay District.

The L163 Transmission Line crosses through portions of Keene, Nelson, Stoddard and Antrim and the right-of-way (ROW) is approximately 150-ft wide. The proposed project includes the one-to-one replacement of five (5) existing utility structures within the City of Keene. The project is necessary to support current and future electricity demands in the region. The structure replacements were selected based on inspection of the transmission line. It was determined that these wooden structures have reached the end of their life expectancy and must be replaced to meet current electrical standards. The existing wood structures will be replaced with weathered steel structures to increase the long-term reliability of the line. There are no proposed expansions of the ROW or construction of new transmission lines associated with this project.

The proposed work area in Keene includes Old Gilsum Road, which Eversource proposes to use to access the ROW. No improvements to Old Gilsum Road are proposed. From the point where Old Gilsum Road enters the existing ROW, existing access roads will be used to access four structures to the west and one structure to the east of Old Gilsum Road. The ROW is currently cleared and routinely mowed as a part of Eversource's Vegetation Management program. Natural cover in the ROW includes upland shrublands and emergent and scrub-shrub wetland habitats. As the Project is in the Rural and Conservation Districts of the City of Keene, a 75-ft buffer applies to all wetlands in the project area. No mapped FEMA floodplains are present within the work areas in Keene.

Normandeau delineated and classified wetlands and surface waters in the vicinity of the project footprint, photographed resources, and recorded data relevant to wetland functions and values in 2025. The wetland delineation was conducted in accordance with the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) Wetlands Delineation Manual using the Routine Determinations Method and the Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual as required by the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES) Wetlands Bureau and the USACE. The wetland delineation and characterization was conducted by Normandeau's New Hampshire Certified Wetland Scientists (CWS): Mr. Benjamin Griffith (CWS No. 298) and Dr. Elizabeth Olliver (CWS No. 337), with additional permitting support from Mr. William McCloy

(CWS No. 268). Photos of delineated resources in the Keene portion of the Project are available in Attachment A.

The proposed project will include access to structures being replaced and the construction of work pads around utility pole replacement locations to stage equipment through both upland and wetland areas.

Buffer Impacts

Proposed impacts within the City of Keene are minimal. Proposed impacts to the Surface Water Protection Overlay District including the 75-foot wetland buffer total 1,930 square feet for the establishment of a temporary gravel access road. This temporary road will be restored using native topsoil following construction and seeded with a native upland seed mix appropriate for western New Hampshire. This temporary road will connect an existing access road and Old Gilsum Road allowing for maintenance and construction vehicles to traverse to the east within the ROW while avoiding an existing stone wall. A total of 1,557 square feet of temporary timber matting within Wetland W100 is also proposed to allow access through the existing wetland that Old Gilsum Road passes through. No impacts to the vernal pool located within W100 east of Old Gilsum Road are proposed. No replacement poles are proposed within the 75-foot wetland buffer. Old Gilsum Road will not be improved or upgraded within the 75-foot buffer.

Other Land Disturbance

Outside of the 75-foot buffer, total land disturbances will total 43,565 square feet to prepare work pads at the five structures that will be replaced. The majority of these areas will be stabilized, seeded and mulched following construction with a total of up to 1,800 square feet of stone, pervious work pad areas left per structure to allow for future maintenance access (a total of up to 9,000 square feet for all work in Keene). There will be no net increase in the area of impervious surfaces. The existing wooden poles will be replaced with new poles of the same general cross-sectional area; resulting in no net increase.

State and Federal Permits

A list of the required state and federal level permits and/or coverages under permits and the status of Project's applications for these is provided below:

- **NHDES Statutory Permit by Notification – Utility Maintenance Activity:** *Application development in progress*
- **NHDES Alteration of Terrain Permit:** *Submitted on 4/3/26, review in process*
- **NHDES Shoreland Permits:** *None required for the work in Keene*
- **USACE Permit (Self-Verification):** *Self-Verification required, Submittal of required materials in progress*
- **EPA 2022 General Construction Permit:** *Development of application for coverage in progress*

In accordance with Article 11 of the Keene Land Use Code, a conditional use permit (CUP) issued by the Planning Board is required for a proposed use listed in Article 11.6.1 when the proposed use is located on land within the Surface Water Overlay Protection District and those impacts are not already covered under the jurisdiction of the NH Department of Environmental Services state issued wetlands permit or shoreland permit.

Article 11.6

In accordance with Article 11.6.2, as required on the Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit (SWP CUP) Application form, the following criteria are addressed below.

A. Why proposed use or activity cannot be placed outside of Overlay District.

The proposed work area is located within and restricted to the existing cleared L163 transmission line ROW, which is generally bordered by development and forest communities. Due to these site constraints, and inability of Eversource to move the ROW and existing structure locations, travel through the Surface Water Overlay District is unavoidable when the buffer includes the entire width of the ROW. The proposed temporary access road segment within the 75-foot buffer is required so equipment can move west to east within the ROW; the 90-degree corner on the existing access road and Old Gilsum Road is too sharp to be made without additional disturbances while avoiding the existing stone wall along the edge of Old Gilsum Road.

B. How encroachment into the buffer area has been minimized to the maximum extent possible, including reasonable modification of the scale or design of the proposed use.

The proposed temporary access road segment is the shortest possible route and minimizes impacts within the 75-foot buffer area. The access road will be restored following construction and will be seeded with a native upland seed mix suitable for the site. The access road will be stabilized and maintained as needed during construction to minimize impacts within the buffer area and to the adjacent wetland. In Wetland W100, timber matting will be used to establish the temporary access route along Old Gilsum Road, thereby minimizing impacts to the wetlands to the greatest extent feasible. Impacts to wetlands were further minimized to the extent practicable by using the existing Old Gilsum Road crossing and not establishing a new crossing. Erosion and sediment control and impact minimization Best Management Practices (BMP) will be implemented along work areas in the ROW to reduce/limit potential effects.

C. How the nature, design, siting, and scale of the proposed use and the characteristics of the site, including but not limited to topography, soils, vegetation, and habitat, are such that when taken as a whole, will avoid the potential for adverse impacts to the surface water resources.

The Project proposes a one-to-one replacement of existing utility structures within an existing and routinely maintained utility ROW. Direct project impacts to the surface water resources will be temporary, through the use of timber matting to establish access routes necessary to complete the replacements. Where possible, wetland crossing will be located at the narrowest portion of the wetland and/or existing roads (e.g. Old Gilsum Road) within the ROW will be followed. Proposed impacts by the Project in the 75-foot buffer include a short segment of temporary access road; the side slopes are not appropriate for temporary timber matting without leveling the area and therefore establishment of a stable, temporary gravel road has been proposed to limit the need for future disturbances within the 75-foot buffer. All disturbed areas will be restored following construction and will be seeded with an appropriate native seed mix.

D. How the buffer shall be left in a natural state to the extent possible.

The proposed project will maintain the buffer in a natural state following restoration at the end of the construction phase of the project. All other areas within the buffer that will be used by the project are either already disturbed (Old Gilsum Road or existing ROW access roads) or will remain in their current, natural state. During construction, appropriate perimeter controls (straw wattle, silt fence, etc.) will be implemented, as needed, to protect adjacent surface water resources. Restoration methods such as seeding with native seed mixes and mulching will be followed, as needed, to return the buffer to pre-construction conditions. An environmental monitor will be retained to provide erosion control monitoring and advise Eversource on the installation and maintenance of erosion control measures during construction and restoration.

E. Discussion of whether the proposed encroachment will result in an adverse impact on the surface water resources.

The surface water resources in the L163 project area in Keene consist of a scrub-shrub wetland and one vernal pool. The wetland is currently crossed by Old Gilsum Road. Project contractors will build the short section of temporary access road in a way that will avoid the wetland, and limit impacts within the buffer. The road surface will be stabilized during construction and following the work all disturbed areas will be restored to pre-construction conditions, stabilized, seeded and mulched. The risk of transport of sediment to surface water resources outside of the project area during construction is low. No permanent changes in vegetation community are proposed which could permanently alter the rate, timing, and/or volume of stormwater runoff and its potential to influence water quality in those surface water resources temporarily impacted by or that occur downstream of the Project. The Project will result in no permanent changes that would alter or eliminate any of the functions and values currently provided by the surface water resources to be temporarily impacted, including wildlife habitat.

Article 21

In accordance with Article 21, as required on the SWP CUP form, the Project meets Site Development Standards as discussed below.

21.2 Drainage & Stormwater Management

An exemption from the drainage report required under Article 21.2.B is requested on the basis that no permanent changes to grades and/or permanent changes to vegetation community and/or coverage in the ROW that could result in increased volume or velocity of runoff onto adjacent properties or surface water bodies are proposed. The Project is utilizing timber matting within wetlands and access within the 75-foot buffer will be temporary. Erosion and sediment controls will be installed and maintained throughout construction and restoration, as needed, to manage any temporary changes in drainage patterns during construction and protect the water quality of adjacent resources.

21.3 Sediment & Erosion Control

The Project will utilize the *NHDES Best Management Practices (BMPs) Manual for Utility Maintenance In and Adjacent to Wetlands and Waterbodies in New Hampshire* (March 2019) and the New Hampshire Stormwater Manual as required as part of the NHDES Alteration of Terrain Permit for the Project. In addition, the Project will prepare a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan as part of coverage for the Project under the current EPA Construction General Permit. Eversource will retain an environmental monitor to complete erosion control inspections, advise the team on practices to maintain compliance with water quality standards, and track the progress of site restoration.

21.4 Snow Storage & Removal

Any removal of snow from proposed access routes and work pads will be completed, if needed, by the project contractor. Snow removal will only occur when work is active; otherwise, it will not be removed. Development of large snow stockpiles will be avoided in wetlands and buffer areas to the extent feasible and will not impact property outside of the ROW.

21.5 Landscaping

No landscaping is proposed as part of this Project. All disturbed/restored areas will be seeded with an appropriate native seed mix and mulched, as needed, to facilitate re-establishment of the pre-construction vegetation community in the ROW.

21.6 Screening

No need for installation of screening has been identified for the proposed Project. The Project consists of the replacement of existing utility structures in an existing and routinely maintained utility ROW with no screening currently in place.

21.7 Lighting

No outdoor lighting fixtures are proposed as part of the Project.

21.8 Sewer & Water

No impacts to existing sewer or water utilities by the Project are anticipated. Dig Safe and City Department of Public Works will be contacted prior to the start of work so ensure any existing utilities are marked out and avoided. Known underground utilities, if identified on access routes, will be protected with matting although none are expected due to the rural, remote nature of the project area in Keene.

21.9 Traffic & Access Management

The Project is not anticipated to significantly impact traffic capacity and/or safety and no improvements to roadways, bridges, signals, or intersections are proposed as part of the Project. Eversource and contractors will work with the City of Keene to minimize impacts to users of hiking and walking trails in the vicinity of the project area in Keene and along Old Gilsum Road.

21.10 Filling & Excavation

Filling and excavation will be temporary, minimal and limited to a short section of access road within the 75-foot buffer. No other excavations or fills are proposed within the 75-foot buffer and temporary matting will be used in wetland areas. Other excavation and fills outside of the 75-foot buffer will be minimized and only be what's needed to achieve a safe access road segment and for establishing the minimum work pad area at each structure where a replacement is proposed for use during the projects and for future access needs. Work pads near the structures will be reduced to no more than 30 feet by 60 feet with other areas needed for the work being stabilized and restored. The impacts related to these fill and excavation activities will comply with the conditions outlined in the NHDES Alteration of Terrain Permit and this Keene Surface Water Protection Conditional Use Permit for the Project. Eversource will coordinate with the City where excavation is anticipated on City-owned property in the City of Keene.

21.11 Surface Waters & Wetlands

The Project will comply with all issued federal, state, and City of Keene permit conditions and all relevant regulations regarding activities in wetlands and surface water regulations.

21.12 Hazardous & Toxic Materials

The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan, to be developed as part of obtaining coverage for the Project under the current EPA Construction General Permit, will discuss in detail all anticipated sources of hazardous or toxic materials associated with completion of the Project. In general, potential hazardous or toxic materials sources on site will include construction equipment fueling activities, minor equipment maintenance, any temporary sanitary facilities, and waste storage (incidental trash, demolished existing utility structures, etc). No other sources of hazardous or toxic materials are anticipated and the Project is unaware of any existing contamination by hazardous or toxic substances on site.

Spill kits will be available at all active work sites in case of spills from fueling and minor maintenance of equipment and vehicles. All spills will be cleaned up immediately after discovery, following the manufacturer's

recommended methods for spill cleanup. All demolished existing utility structure materials and any temporary sanitary facilities will be removed from the site as part of restoration prior to project close out.

21.13 Noise

During construction, an increase in noise levels in the area will be required for the necessary use of heavy equipment to install the replacement structures. These construction activities will be limited to Monday through Saturday from 7 am to 5 pm. After completion of construction, there will be no change in noise levels in the area as compared to pre-construction conditions.

21.14 Architecture & Visual Appearance

The Project involves the replacement of existing utility poles in an existing and routinely maintained ROW. No changes which would significantly alter any viewshed or view corridors are proposed.



Attachment A. Photos of the Buffer Area, Wetland, and Other Project Areas



Photo 1 – Representative overview of the Old Gilsum Road access route, viewing north. (09-24-25)



Photo 2 – Representative overview of the Old Gilsum Road access route, viewing south. (09-24-25)



Photo 3 – Existing spur access off Old Gilsum Road leading to existing access road within the L163 ROW. (09-24-25)



Photo 4 – Proposed wetland crossing of W100 on Old Gilsum Road, viewing north. Existing access road leading to Str. 188 visible on the right side of the photo. (09-24-25)



Photo 5 – Potential vernal pool in wetland W100, viewing east from near the edge of Old Gilsum Road. (09-24-25)



Photo 6 – Wetland W100 west of Old Gilsum Road, viewing west. (09-24-25)



Photo 7 – Proposed Str. 188 work pad, viewing southeast. (09-24-25)



Photo 8 – Overview of the ROW with Str. 190 visible on the right side of the photo, viewing southwest. (09-24-25)



Photo 9 – Proposed Str. 190 work pad, viewing west. (09-24-25)



Photo 10 – Proposed Str. 191 work pad, viewing west. (09-24-25)



Photo 11 – Overview of the ROW, viewing southwest from between Strs. 191 and 192. (09-24-25)



Photo 12 – Proposed Str. 192 work pad, viewing west. (09-24-25)

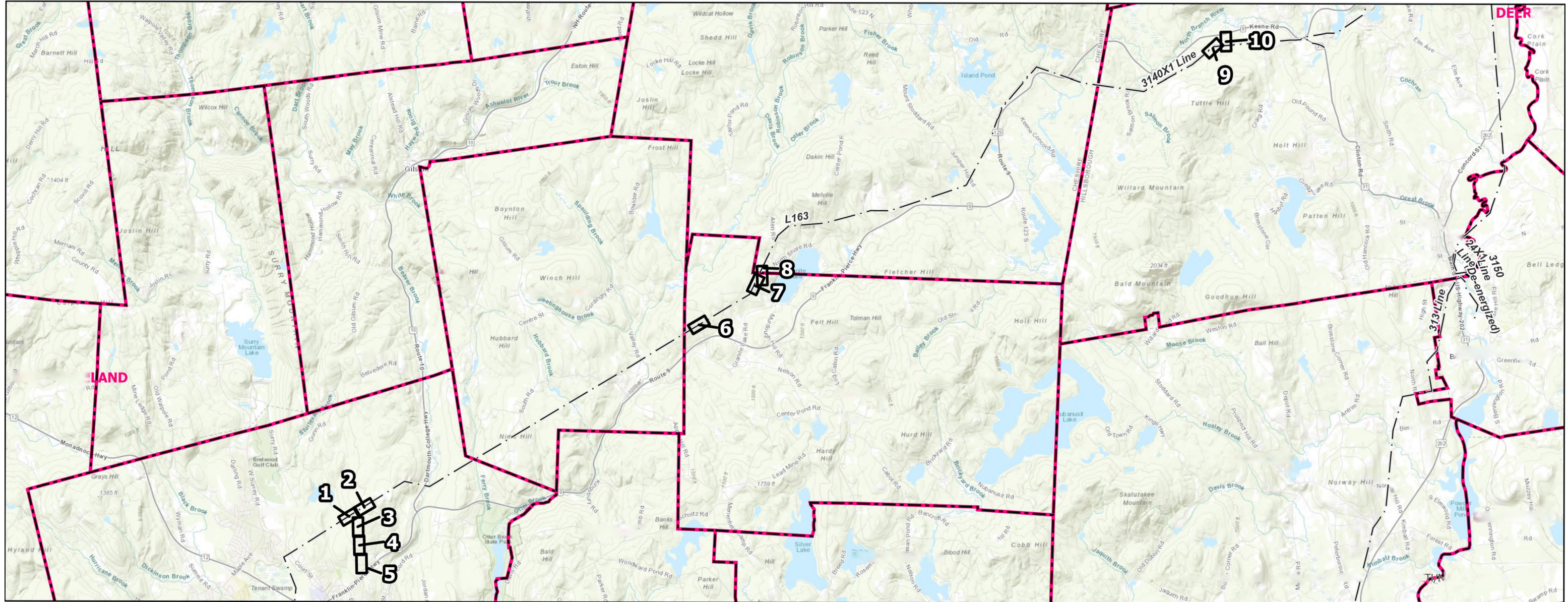


Photo 13 – Proposed Str. 193 work pad, viewing west. (09-24-25)

L163 Line ACR Project

KEENE, NELSON, STODDARD AND ANTRIM
NEW HAMPSHIRE

Date: 4/22/2026
Rev: 6/3/2026



--- Transmission Lines



0 0.25 0.5 1 Miles

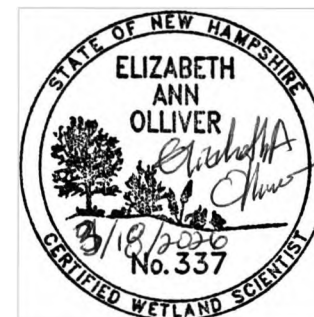
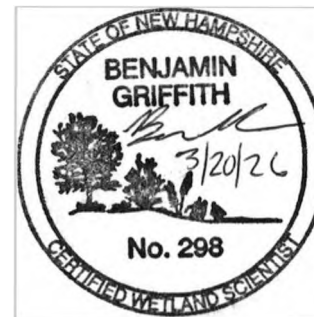
PREPARED FOR:

EVERSOURCE

107 Selden Street
Berlin, CT 06037

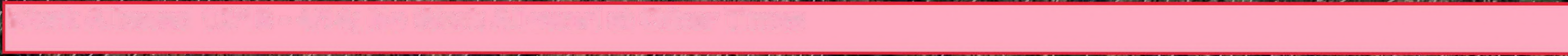
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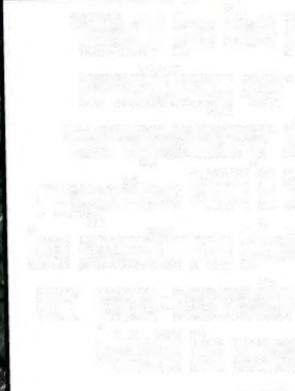


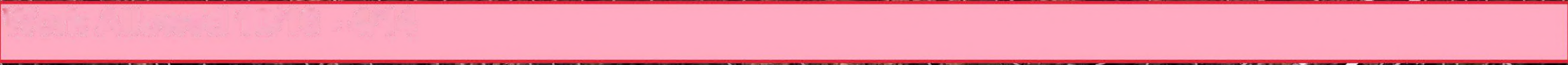
PREPARED BY:

NORMANDEAU ASSOCIATES
ENVIRONMENTAL CONSULTANTS

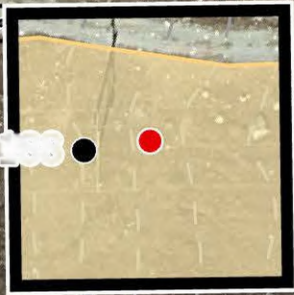
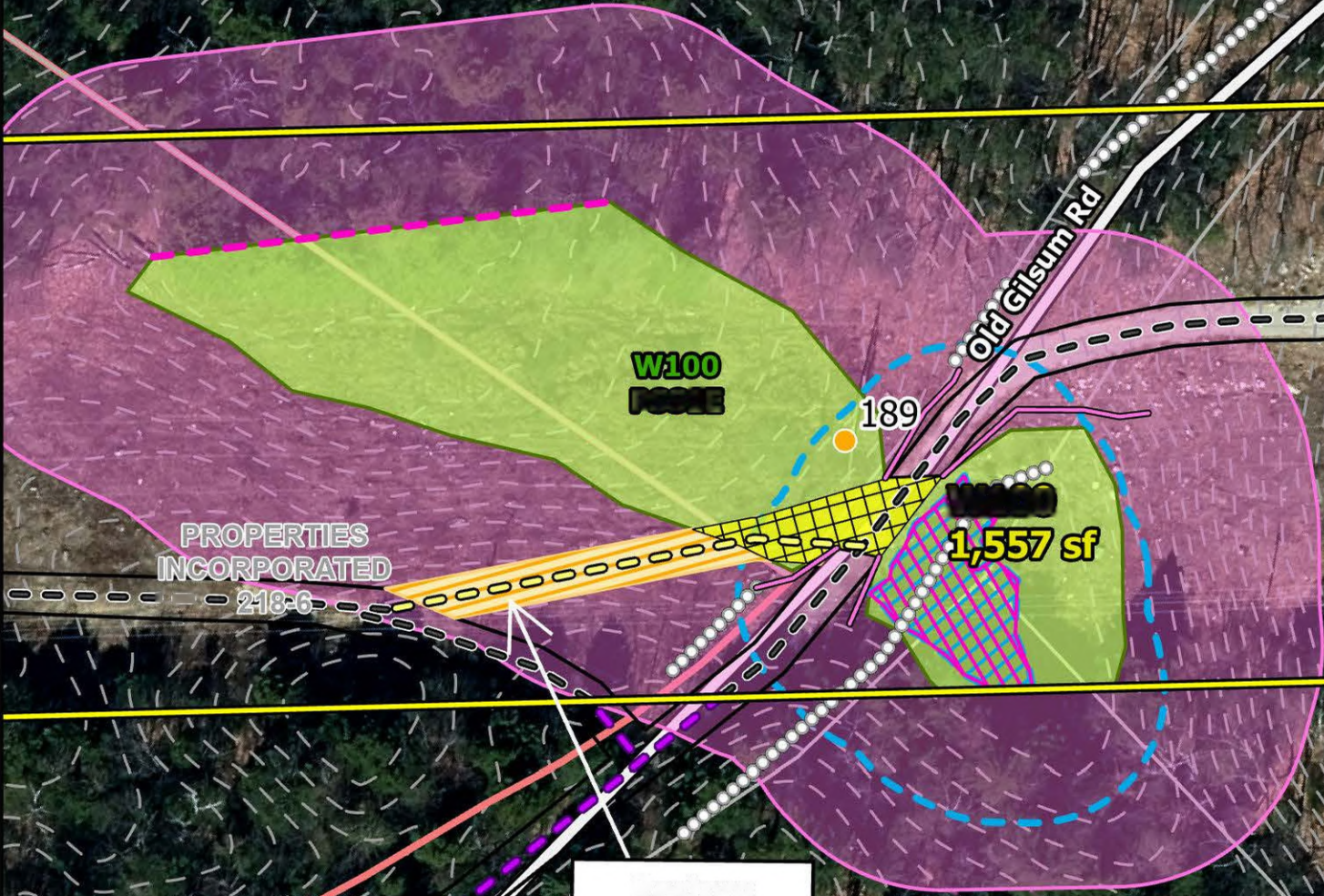


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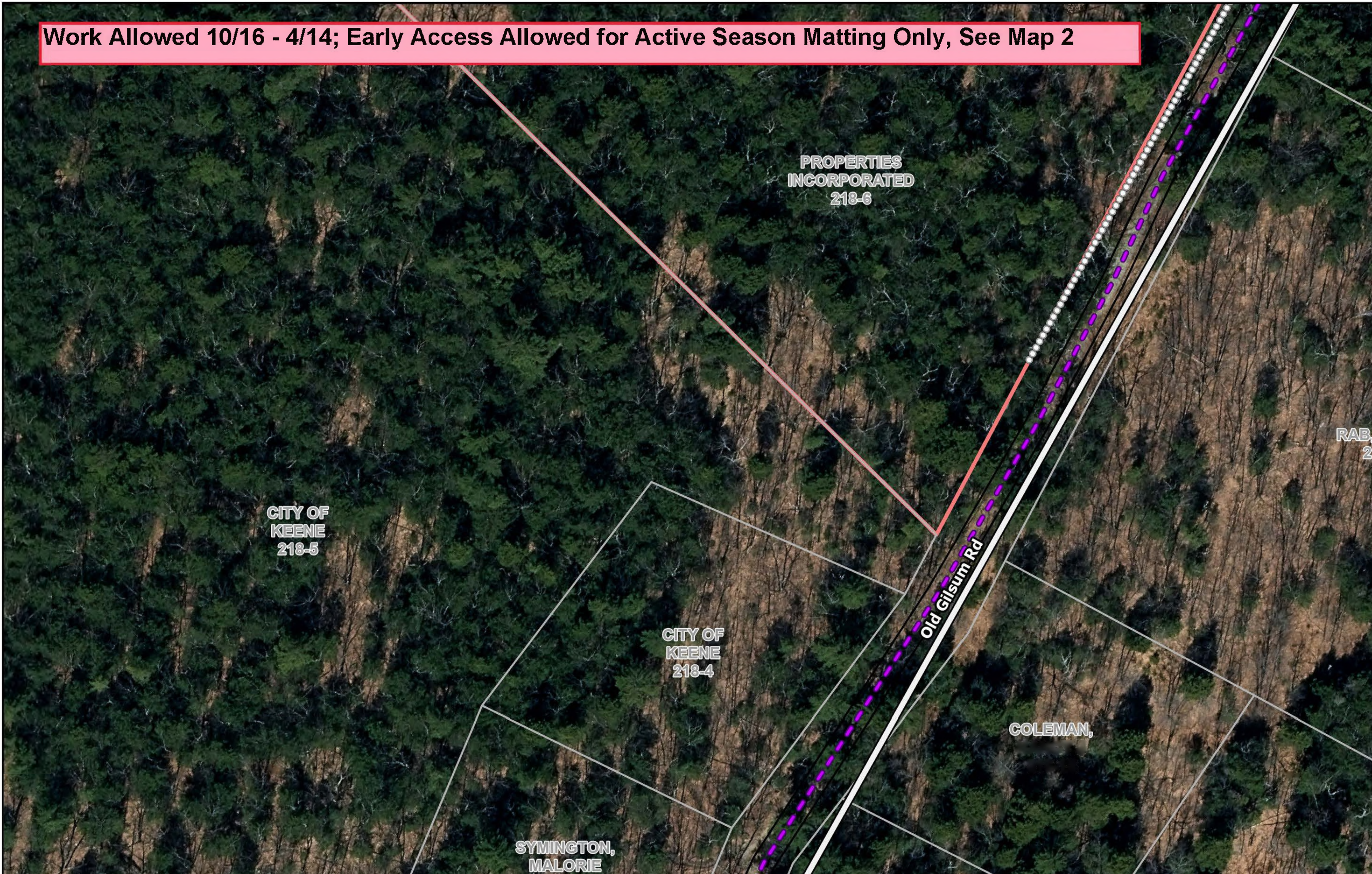


CITY OF
KEENE
218-7



PT
KEENE
-1

Work Allowed 10/16 - 4/14; Early Access Allowed for Active Season Matting Only, See Map 2



PROPERTIES
INCORPORATED
218-6

CITY OF
KEENE
218-5

CITY OF
KEENE
218-4

SYMINGTON,
MALORIE

COLEMAN,

Old Gilsun Rd

RAB,
21



CITY OF
KEENE
102-1

Old Gilsun Rd

DR
OW

Work Allowed 10/16 - 4/14; Early Access Allowed for Active Season Matting Only, See Map 2

CITY OF
KEENE
102-1

Old Gilsum Rd

DRUM
OWNER



Construction Sequence:

1. Wetland boundaries to be clearly marked prior to the start of construction; Wetlands were reviewed/delineated by Normandeau Associates, Inc. in September 2025. The wetland delineations were completed in accordance with the criteria described in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual Technical Report Y-87-1 (January,1987) and the Regional Supplement for the Northcentral and Northeast Region (January, 2012) and meet the criteria for wetland delineation in accordance with the NH DES administrative rules Env-W t 301.01.
2. MODIFICATIONS IN ACCESS ROUTES, WORK PAD LOCATIONS OR OTHER WETLANDS IMPACT AREAS MUST BE APPROVED BY EVERSOURCE AND IN COMPLIANCE WITH NHDES WETLANDS RULES FOR MINIMUM IMPACT:
 ENV-WT 307 - GENERAL REQUIREMENTS
 ENV-WT 313.03 - AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION
 ENV-WT 521 - UTILITY PROJECT SPECIFIC CONDITIONS
3. Sediment and erosion control measures shall be installed in accordance with the plans and detail provided, as necessary.
4. Wetland impacts associated with wetland crossings are required for access between structures within the right of way. Construction activities shall occur during periods of low flow.
5. Adequate precaution shall be exercised to avoid spillage of fuel oils, chemicals, or similar substances; no fuels, lubricants, chemicals or similar substances shall be stored beneath trees or in the vicinity of any wetlands, river, stream or other body of water; or in the vicinity of natural or man-made channels leading thereto. No power equipment shall be stored, maintained, or fueled in any area adjacent to a wetland, river, stream or other body of water.
6. Remove completely all contamination from any spillage of chemicals or petroleum product with complete rehabilitation of the affected area.
7. Access routes have been selected to prevent degradation of the right-of-way and minimize environmental impact. Operations shall be confined to the specified access routes within the proposed wetland impact area. Access routes shall not exceed a 16 foot-width.
8. Impact to vegetation within wetlands will be limited to the extent necessary to place the timber mats where required.
9. Low growing varieties of vegetation adjacent to wetlands shall be preserved to the extent possible. Stumps and rocks shall not be removed, and there shall be no excavations, fills or grading done adjacent to wetlands, unless minor excavations is needed for access.
10. Timber mats will be used along access routes within and adjacent to wetland areas. These mats are constructed of heavy timbers or composite material, bolted together, and are placed end-to-end in the wetland to support heavy equipment. All timber mats shall be placed and removed so as not to cause any ruts, channels or depressions, or otherwise cause any undue disturbance to wetlands.
11. If timber mat BMP is not sufficient due to high water, additional bmp's may include the placement of geotextile fabric, 3"-4" stone, and gravel to provide a suitable road bed. A temporary culvert may be required in areas of high flow to maintain hydrologic connectivity. All material will be removed from jurisdictional areas after construction completion.
12. No material shall be placed in any location or in any manner so as to impair surface water flow into, through or out of any wetland area. No installation shall create an impoundment that will impede the flow of water or cause flooding.
13. No material shall be taken from the wetlands area except that which must necessarily be removed for the structure or foundation placement or stabilization. All excess material taken from the wetland will be removed from the site.
14. Any proposed support fills shall be clean gravel and stone, free of waste metal products, organic materials and similar debris and shall not exceed the amount permitted. This allowable fill is the only fill that may remain in the wetland after construction. All cut and fills slopes shall be seeded/loamed within 72 hours of achieving finished grade; sooner if heavy rains forecasted.
15. Install new poles in the locations designated on the permitting plans.

16. Cable installation will be performed in a manner so as to avoid, or limit to the maximum extent possible, traversing wetlands with heavy equipment. In some cases, a helicopter may be used during the installation to minimize impacts.
17. Removal of the old pole will occur once the cable has been installed on the new structure. The old structures will be removed from the site. Poles will be cut at the ground surface. Footings will be abandoned in place to minimize impacts.
18. All swamp mats, material, and debris will be removed from the work area upon the completion of construction.
19. Upland disturbed areas shall be restored and stabilized upon completion of construction. Work pad restoration should include reducing the work pad to a 30 by 60 foot area, and reducing slopes to a maximum of 25%. Stockpiled material should be spread to reduce any unnecessary slopes. Gravel work pads and slopes should be scarified to a minimum of 3" before spreading topsoil/loam.
20. All temporary wetland impacts will be re-graded to original contours following construction. New England erosion control/ restoration mix, available through New England wetland plants, Inc., 820 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002, 413-548-8000, or equivalent seed mix shall be applied in wetland areas that are not inundated, as necessary.
21. Sediment and erosion control measures will be evaluated and removed if necessary upon the completion of construction.

Winter Construction Notes:

1. To adequately protect water quality during cold weather and during spring runoff, the additional stabilization techniques, described below, shall be employed during the period from October 15 through May 1. The area of exposed, unstabilized soil shall be: (1) Limited to one acre; and (2) Protected against erosion by the methods described in this section prior to any thaw or spring melt event.
2. All proposed vegetated areas having a slope of less than 15% that do not exhibit a minimum of 85% vegetative growth in a manner that is evenly distributed over the site with no large areas of bare soil by October 15, or that are disturbed after October 15, shall be seeded and covered with 3 to 4 tons of hay or straw mulch per acre secured with anchored netting or tackifier or with at least 2 inches of erosion control mix meeting the criteria of Env-Wq 1506.05(b), and
3. All proposed vegetated areas having a slope of 15% or greater that do not exhibit a minimum of 85% vegetative growth in a manner that is evenly distributed over the site with no large areas of bare soil by October 15, or that are disturbed after October 15, shall be seeded and covered with a properly installed and anchored erosion control blanket or with at least 4 inches of erosion control mix meeting the criteria of Env-Wq 1506.05(b).
4. Anchored hay mulch, erosion control mix, and Erosion control blankets shall not be installed over snow greater than one inch in depth or on frozen ground.
5. All proposed stabilization in accordance with, above, shall be completed within a day of establishing the grade that is final or that otherwise will exist for more than 5 days
6. All ditches or swales that do not exhibit a minimum of 85% vegetative growth in a manner that is evenly distributed over the site with no large areas of bare soil by October 15, or that are disturbed after October 15, shall be stabilized temporarily with stone or erosion control blankets appropriate for the design flow conditions, as determined by the permit holder's engineering consultant.
7. After October 15, incomplete road or parking areas where active construction of the road or parking area has stopped for the winter season shall be protected with a minimum 3-inch layer of base course gravels meeting the gradation requirements of NHDOT Standard Specification for Road and Bridge Construction, 2016, Table 304-1, Item No. 304.1, 304.2, or 304.3.

Erosion Control Notes:

1. Installation of erosion control grindings and/or silt fences shall be complete prior to the start of work in any given area. Erosion controls shall be used during construction and removed when all slopes have a healthy stand of vegetation cover.

2. In areas that will not be paved, "stable" means that: (A) A minimum of 85% vegetative cover has been established in a manner that is evenly distributed over the site, with no large areas of bare soil; (B) A minimum of 3 inches of non-erosive material such as stone or riprap has been installed; or (C) Erosion control blankets have been installed in accordance with Env-Wq 1506.03.
3. Note that all cut and fill slopes shall be seeded/loamed within 72 hours of achieving finished grade
4. As required, construct temporary berms, siltation fences, sediment traps, etc. to prevent erosion & sedimentation of wetlands.
5. The work area shall be graded and otherwise shaped in such a manner as to minimize soil erosion, siltation of drainage channels, damage to existing vegetation, and damage to property outside limits of the work area. Erosion control grindings will be necessary to accomplish this end.
6. Any stripped topsoil shall be stockpiled, without compaction, and stabilized with BMPs.
7. Permanent or temporary cover must be in place before the growing season ends. When seeded areas are not mulched, plantings should be made from early spring to May 20 or from August 15 to September 15. No disturbed area shall be left exposed during winter months, plant annual ryegrass prior to October 15th.
8. Erosion controls shall be inspected weekly and following any rainfall event that produces 0.5 inch or more of precipitation within a 24-hour period.
9. Timber mats must be removed after one growing season.
10. Any erosion control matting used shall be wildlife friendly. No welded plastic webbing, netting, or other similar form shall be used in erosion/siltation controls to avoid entrapment of snakes and other wildlife within the project area.
11. Unless otherwise authorized by NHDES, the Applicant shall keep a sufficient quantity of erosion control supplies on the site at all times during construction to facilitate an expeditious (i.e., within 24 hour) response to any construction related erosion issues on the site.
12. Discharge from dewatering of work areas shall be to sediment basins that are: a) located in uplands; b) lined with hay bales or other acceptable sediment trapping liners; and c) set back as far as possible from wetlands and surface waters.
13. Mulch used within any wetland/stream bank restoration areas shall be natural straw or equivalent non-toxic, non-seed-bearing organic material.
14. When using an erosion control mix berm, the berm must be a minimum of 12" high, as measured on the uphill side of the barrier, and a minimum of two feet wide at the base.

General Notes

1. Base plan provided by Eversource Energy. Eversource Energy provided the utility design.
2. Site plan is for permitting and construction purposes only and does not represent a property boundary survey.

Plant Protection – General Avoidance and Minimization Measures

3. Limit removal of vegetation to that necessary for construction of the project. Limit tree clearing to the minimum required width to meet safety clearances, leave root systems in place, except over underground installations or where other earthwork must be conducted. Leave herbaceous and shrub vegetation intact wherever practicable.
4. Precautions shall be taken to prevent import or transport of soil or seed stock containing nuisance or invasive species such as Purple Loosestrife, Knotweed, or *Phragmites*. The contractor responsible for work shall appropriately address invasive species in accordance with the NH DOT "Best Management Practices for Roadside Invasive Plants (2008)".
5. To prevent the introduction of invasive plant species to the site, the Applicant's contractor(s) shall clean all soils and vegetation from construction

Eversource L163
 Line Maintenance Project
 Keene, Nelson, Stoddard & Antrim, NH
 Sheet N-1 of 6
 Date: 3/4/2026 Revised: 06/03/2026



equipment and matting before such equipment is moved to the site.

Wildlife Protection – General Avoidance and Minimization Measures

1. Limit the removal of vegetation to that necessary for construction of the project; this will leave associated wildlife habitat as intact as possible.
2. All erosion control materials used will be wildlife-friendly. No welded plastic webbing, netting, or other similar form with openings greater than 1/8-inch shall be used in erosion/siltation controls to avoid entrapment of snakes and other wildlife within the project area.
3. Timber matting will be used in all wetland areas and will remain in place for the shortest duration possible; if possible, passageways will remain open at the wetland crossing to allow for reptiles to cross under the mat-bridge/pathway; matting will remain up to several weeks
4. Daily sweeps by contractors for all turtle and snake species will be performed when work will occur;
5. Any observations of listed species will be reported and no wildlife will be harmed; contact numbers and fliers will be included on the environmental plans
6. Erosion controls will be installed, monitored and maintained to protect adjacent upland and wetland areas from sedimentation and degradation; disturbed areas will be temporarily and permanently stabilized and seeded with a native seed mix; the applicable utility maintenance BMPs will be followed

SPECIFIC WILDLIFE BMPs

New Hampshire Fish and Game Conservation Measures for DCT25-2881 in Accordance with Env-Wq 1504.18 – Wildlife Protection Notes (Received 12/30/25):

Based on the proposed activities, Bald Eagle, Dwarf Wedge Mussel, and Common Loon are not expected to be impacted.

Regarding the conservation measures below, please refer to the following definitions:

- A trained individual is any contractor who has gone through project-species protection education conducted by a qualified biologist on the protected wildlife species at the site.
- A qualified biologist is an individual who has experience and knowledge of protected wildlife that may be found in the project area and has been previously approved by NHFG to conduct the requested site activities. If not previously approved, the credentials of the individual shall be provided to NHFG no less than 30 days in advance of conducting site activities if approval for the individual to conduct the requested activity has not been issued previously.

Please refer to the following conservation measures to avoid and minimize impacts to Spotted Turtle and Wood Turtle:

1. All operators and personnel working on or entering the site shall be made aware of the potential presence of these species and shall be provided flyers that help to identify these species, along with NHFG biologist contact information. Please refer to the [NHFG website](#) for updated Protected Species Flyers.
 - a. Protected species information (e.g. identification, observation and reporting of observations, when to contact the NHFG biologists immediately) should be communicated during meetings prior to work commencement throughout the construction phase of the project. See Construction Notes Sheet 3.

2. Work (including mobilization and demobilization) shall occur from October 16th to April 14th in the following areas to protect turtles during the active season. The activities outlined in condition 3 are exempt from this TOY restriction:
 - a. Structure 193 to 188.
3. Proposed matting shall be placed prior to the start of the inactive season (October 16th to April 14th) so as to prevent accidental placement atop hibernating turtles.
 - a. This condition shall apply to the following areas:
 - i. The wetland along Old Gilsum Road
 - ii. Stream S201
 - iii. Stream S202
 - iv. Stream S203
 - b. Immediately prior to matting placement in these wetlands, the area shall be swept by a qualified biologist or herpetologist. They shall watch for signs that turtles are being disturbed in the area (ex. Heads coming above water, animals moving in water).
 - c. The qualified biologist or herpetologist shall ensure no turtles are impacted by the installation of matting.
4. The Ecological Review Section prefers work occur between October 16th and April 14th in the following areas. If work must occur in these areas during the active season for turtles (April 15th to October 15th) please refer to conditions 5 and 6.
 - a. Structures 6 to 1
 - b. Structures 117 to 107
5. For work activities occurring during the active season for turtles (April 15th to October 15th) in the locations outlined in condition 2, a trained individual shall be on site for all work activities (including vehicle travel and matting placement). The following list of activities shall be completed by the trained individual:
 - a. Searching for, identifying, documenting, reporting and relocating protected and other wildlife found within the active work zone or in areas where negative impacts may occur.
 - b. Inspecting all adjacent work areas immediately prior to daily construction activities and movement of equipment, for snakes and turtles.
 - c. Progressing immediately ahead of equipment to inspect access roads, work pads, and matted areas.
 - i. Ideally the number of trained individuals would equal the number of operating construction vehicles. If not feasible, the number of trained individuals shall be sufficient to monitor all active work areas and equipment movement within the ROW. Multiple trained individuals are needed if work is occurring in several distinct areas of the ROW, in which case each area would require a sufficient number of trained individuals.
 - d. Inspecting areas before and during the installation and removal of all temporary gravel and construction pads.
 - e. Inspecting areas where necessary improvements to existing access roads occur.
 - f. Inspecting newly matted access roads immediately prior to mowing and matting placement.

- g. Inspecting areas immediately prior to the start of gravel placement.
 - h. Inspecting existing access roads during top-dressing.
 - i. Contacting NHFG biologists in accordance with reporting conditions for protected species.
6. Turtles may be attracted to disturbed ground during nesting season (May 15th to July 15th). Turtle nests are protected by NH laws (RSA 212-B:4, Fis 1401.03). If a nest is observed or suspected, operators shall contact NHFG immediately for further consultation. See Species Flyers on Construction Notes Sheet 3.
 - a. The nest or suspected nest shall be marked (surrounding roped off or cone buffer deployed) and avoided; this shall be communicated to all personnel onsite.
 - b. Site activities shall not occur in the area surrounding the nest or suspected nest until further guidance is provided by NHFG.
 - c. To minimize the potential for nesting to occur within the project site, for areas identified in condition 4, during the nesting season (May 15th to July 15th):
 - i. Avoid stockpiling of materials that may be used for nesting (loose disturbed soil, sandy mounds, loose small gravel, soil mounds that will be reworked) or;
 - ii. Loose disturbed soil, sandy mounds, or loose small gravel shall be silt fenced around the perimeter of the base or covered with tarps or other construction materials at the end of the work day to prevent turtles from nesting in this material (note turtles can move into a site overnight to nest – be observant for of tracks and nesting signs). Silt fence should be checked daily for potential wildlife entrapment.
 7. The following shall be adhered to regarding vernal pools and potential vernal pools:
 - a. Flag the vernal pool prior to work and avoid impacts to the greatest extent practicable based on structure location, engineering and construction constraints.
 - b. Establish a 50’ no disturb vegetative buffer wherever possible.
 - i. Impacts within 50 feet of vernal pools shall be limited to maintenance-related activities including construction access and work pads.
 - ii. To the extent practicable, disturbances will be confined to previously used or regularly maintained routes and work pads, minimizing new habitat disturbance or fragmentation.
 - iii. Following construction, temporary timber matting will be removed, and vegetation will be allowed to regrow naturally.
 8. All work activities shall be restricted to the defined roads, construction areas, and staging areas, with no equipment or materials staged or stored outside of the defined areas as shown on plan sheets dated October 31, 2025.
 9. Work, pull pads, and access shall be minimized to the greatest extent possible.
 10. Upland work pads for one or two pole H-Frame structures shall be reduced post-construction to 30’ x 60’. Three pole structures or areas with irregular topography may need more than a 30’ x 60’ upland area to access all poles. These atypical scenarios are

noted on plan sheets dated October 29, 2025. Upland areas consisting of compacted gravel shall not require reseeding.

11. In order to prevent turtles from nesting in existing access roads, all permanently stabilized access roads within suitable nesting habitat (i.e., sandy, friable soils) in areas identified in conditions 2 and 3 shall be top-dressed with processed stone and/or gravel and compacted in such a way as to make the roads unsuitable for nesting. This shall be completed prior to May or after October.
12. Turtles may nest within trail corridors, edges of trails and bridge/crossing abutments if the substrate and sun exposure is favorable. Hatchlings that emerge in the fall will emerge from nest chambers typically in August and September and can be difficult to see (quarter in size). Please be mindful of young turtles when conducting work activities. Report all observations of hatchlings - see NHFG biologist reporting contact information.
13. All manufactured erosion and sediment control products, with the exception of turf reinforcement mats, utilized for, but not limited to, slope protection, runoff diversion, slope interruption, perimeter control, inlet protection, check dams, and sediment traps should not contain plastic, or multifilament or monofilament polypropylene netting or mesh with an opening size of greater than 1/8 inches.
14. In the event a protected species is observed on the project site during the term of the permit, the species shall not be disturbed, handled, or harmed in any way prior to consultation with and implementation of corrective actions recommended by the Ecological Review Section unless the protected species is discovered within the active work zone in direct harm from project activities. If this situation occurs:
 - a. Site operators shall be allowed to relocate wildlife encountered.
 - b. Wildlife shall be relocated in close proximity to the capture location but outside of the work zone and in the direction the individual was heading.
 - c. NHFG biologists shall be contacted immediately if this action occurs.
15. All observations of threatened or endangered species on the project site shall be reported immediately to the NHFG nongame and endangered wildlife environmental review program by phone at 603-271-2461 and by email at NHFGreview@wildlife.nh.gov, with the email subject line containing the DataCheck tool results letter assigned number, the project name, and the term Wildlife Species Observation. Photographs of the observed species and nearby elements of habitat or areas of land disturbance should be provided to NHFG in digital format at the above email address for verification, as feasible.
16. The Ecological Review Section, its employees and authorized agents, shall have access to the property during the term of the permit.

Eversource L163
Line Maintenance Project
Keene, Nelson, Stoddard & Antrim, NH
Sheet N-3 of 6
Date: 3/4/2026 Revised: 06/03/2026



**NEW HAMPSHIRE
SPECIES OF CONCERN**
WOOD TURTLE



Report Sightings: Contact Wildlife Biologist Josh Megyesy at (603) 271 – 1125 or the Wildlife Division at (603) 271 – 2461. Observation reports can be sent to RAARP@wildlife.nh.gov. Photographs and exact locations are strongly encouraged.



Photo credit: New Hampshire Fish and Game

Specific Information:

- Adults are 5 – 8 inches long.
- Neck and front limbs are orange.
- Associated with streams and rivers where they hibernate. Use surrounding fields, forests, and floodplains extensively during active period.
- Turtles are frequently concealed by leaves and undergrowth and may not be easily visible.
- Turtles are most active from April 15 – October 15.
- During nesting season (May 15 – July 15) turtles are attracted to disturbed ground.



Photo credit: New Hampshire Fish and Game



Photo credit: New Hampshire Fish and Game

This species is protected under Fis 1400.

DO NOT DISTURB OR HANDLE WILDLIFE UNLESS AUTHORIZED BY NH FISH AND GAME
11/12/25



**NEW HAMPSHIRE
STATE THREATENED**
SPOTTED TURTLE



Report Sightings: Contact Wildlife Biologist Josh Megyesy at (603) 271 – 1125 or the Wildlife Division at (603) 271 – 2461. Observation reports can be sent to RAARP@wildlife.nh.gov. Photographs and exact locations are strongly encouraged.



Photo credit: New Hampshire Fish and Game

Specific Information:

- Adults are 3 – 5 inches long
- Shell is black or brown, fairly flat, and with yellow spots.
- Uses variety of wetlands and moves extensively over land.
- Turtles are frequently concealed by leaves and undergrowth and may not be easily visible.
- Turtles are most active from April 15 – October 15.
- During nesting season (May 15 – July 15) turtles are attracted to disturbed ground.



Photo credit: New Hampshire Fish and Game



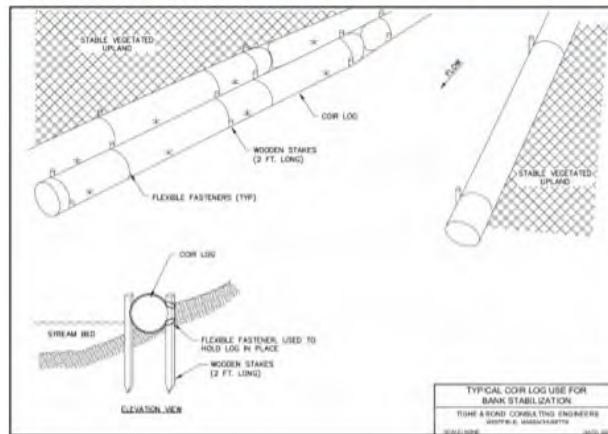
Photo credit: New Hampshire Fish and Game

This species is protected under RSA 212-A and Fis 1000.

DO NOT DISTURB OR HANDLE WILDLIFE UNLESS AUTHORIZED BY NH FISH AND GAME
11/12/25

Eversource L163
Line Maintenance Project
Keene, Nelson, Stoddard & Antrim, NH
Sheet N-4 of 6
Date: 3/4/2026 Revised: 06/03/2026

Best Management Practice 4: Coir Logs



Description:

Coir logs, straw wattles, fiber rolls, or SiltSoxx™ consist of compressed weed-free straw fiber or other natural material, placed within a photodegradable mesh cylindrical sock.

Applications:

- Streambank, wetland, and slope protection
 - Check dam applications
 - Perimeter and stockpile containment
 - Slope stabilization by shortening slope length, reducing runoff velocity, and trapping mobile soil particles
 - Provides substrate for plant growth upon decay of fiber roll and protects new vegetation growth

Installation:

- For slope stabilization, it is critical that coir logs are installed perpendicular to soil movement and parallel to the slope contour.
- If additional length is needed for application, ends should be overlapping at least 6 inches.
- If used in slope stabilization, construct trenches half the diameter of the log in which to place the roll. Lay the coir log along the trench, snugly fitting it against the soil. Ensure no gaps exist between the soil and the fiber roll.
- Install stakes at least every three feet apart along the length of the roll. Additional stakes may be driven on the downslope side of the trenches on highly erosive or very steep slopes.

Best Management Practice 5: Silt Fence



Description:

Silt fence is a temporary sediment barrier consisting of filter fabric attached to supporting posts and entrenched into the soil. This barrier is installed across or at the toe of a slope to intercept and retain small amounts of sediment from disturbed or unprotected areas.

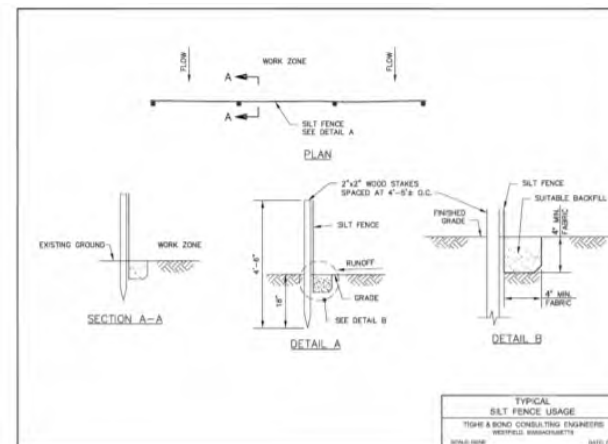
Applications:

Consider using silt fence barriers where:

- Flow to the silt fence from a distributed area occurs as overland sheet flow
- Sedimentation can pollute or degrade adjacent wetlands or watercourses
- Sedimentation will reduce the capacity of storm drainage systems or adversely affect adjacent areas.
- **Silt fence should not be used in areas of concentrated flows or across streams, channels, swales, ditches or other drainage ways.**

Installation:

- Install silt fence following the contour of the land as closely as possible.
- The height of the barrier shall not exceed 36 inches.
- Posts shall be placed at a maximum of 10 feet apart at the barrier location and driven securely into the ground (minimum of 12 inches).
- A trench shall be excavated approximately 6 inches wide and 6 inches deep along the line of posts and upslope of the barrier in accordance with recommendations
- The filter fabric will extend a minimum of 8 inches into the trench which shall be backfilled and the soil compacted over the filter fabric.
- Fabric barriers shall be removed after the upslope area has been permanently stabilized.
- Filter barriers shall be inspected immediately after each rainfall and at least once daily during prolonged rainfall and any required repairs shall be made immediately.
- Sediment deposits should be removed when they reach approximately one-half the height of the barrier.



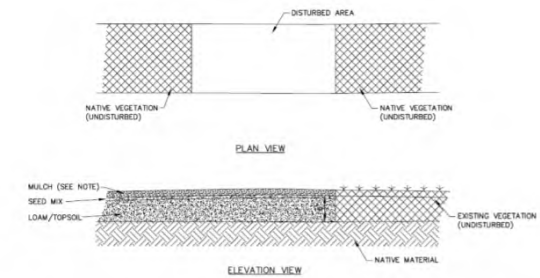
Best Management Practice 16: Temporary or Permanent Mulch



Description:

Temporary mulching is the application of plant residues or other suitable materials to the soil surface. Permanent mulching consists of the application of long-term surface cover such as bark, woodchips or erosion control mix. Permanent mulch can be used as a permanent ground cover, an overwinter stabilization mulch or left to naturalize.

Mulching reduces erosion potential by protecting the exposed soil surface from direct impact by rainfall.



Considerations:

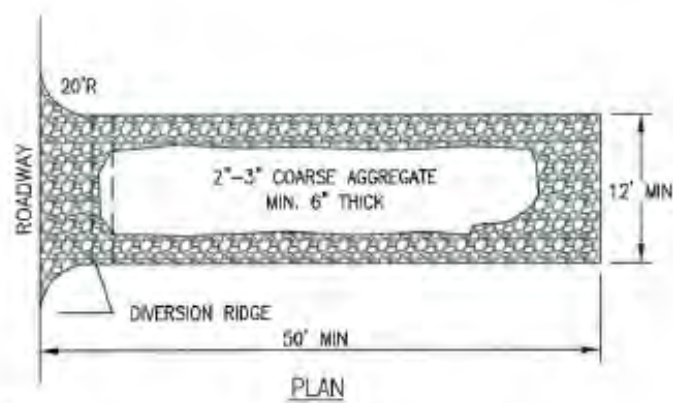
- Apply temporary mulch within 100 feet of streams, wetlands and in lake watersheds within seven days of exposing soil or prior to any storm event.
- Immediately mulch areas that have been temporarily or permanently seeded, following seeding.
- For areas that cannot be seeded within the growing season, mulch for over-winter protection. Seed the area at the beginning of the next growing season.
- Mulch anchoring should be used on slopes with gradients greater than 5% in fall (past September 15), and over-winter (October 15 – May 1).

Installation:

Hay or Straw Mulches:

- Use air-dried organic mulches including weed-free hay and straw free of undesirable seeds and coarse materials.
- Application rate should be two bales (70-90 pounds) per 1,000 square feet or 1.5-2 tons (90-100 bales) per acre to cover 75-90% of the ground surface.
- Anchor hay or straw mulch to prevent displacement by wind or flowing water using jute or biodegradable plastic netting or in some cases, organic tackifier.
- When mulch is applied to provide protection over winter (past the growing season), apply it to a depth of four inches (150-200 pounds of hay or straw per 1,000 square feet, or double standard application rate). Seeding cannot generally be expected to grow up through this depth of mulch and will be smothered. If vegetation is desired, remove mulch in the springtime and seed and re-mulch the area.

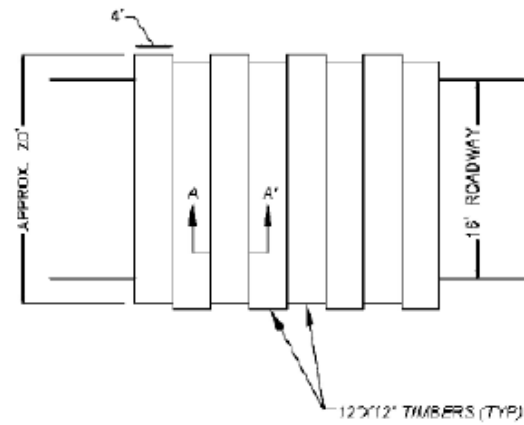
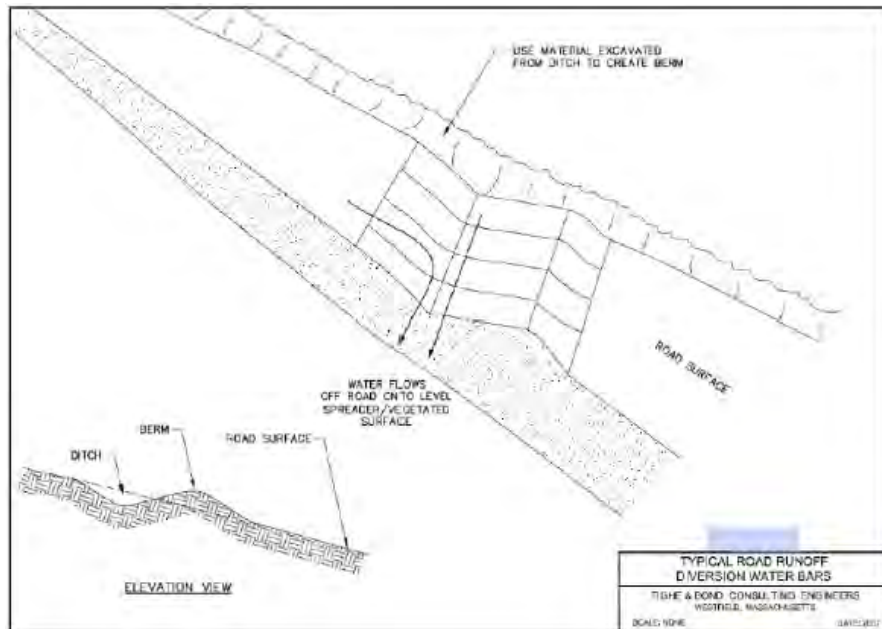
Eversource L163
Line Maintenance Project
Keene, Nelson, Stoddard & Antrim, NH
Sheet N-5 of 6
Date: 3/4/2026 Revised: 06/03/2026



NOTES:
1. THE ENTRANCE SHALL BE MAINTAINED IN A CONDITION THAT WILL PREVENT TRACKING OR FLOWING OF SEDIMENT ONTO PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAYS. THIS MAY REQUIRE TOP DRESSING, REPAIR AND/OR CLEANOUT OF ANY MEASURES USED TO TRAP SEDIMENT.
2. WHEN NECESSARY, WHEELS SHALL BE CLEANED PRIOR TO ENTRANCE ONTO PUBLIC RIGHT-OF-WAY.

CONSTRUCTION ENTRANCE

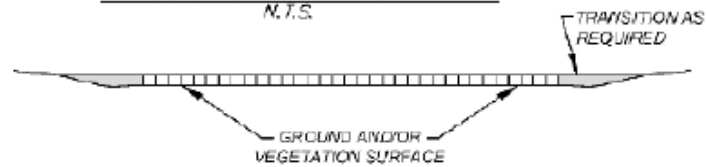
NOT TO SCALE



TYPICAL SWAMP MAT PLAN VIEW
N.T.S.



TYPICAL MAT SECTION A-A
N.T.S.



TYPICAL SWAMP MAT SECTION DETAIL
N.T.S.

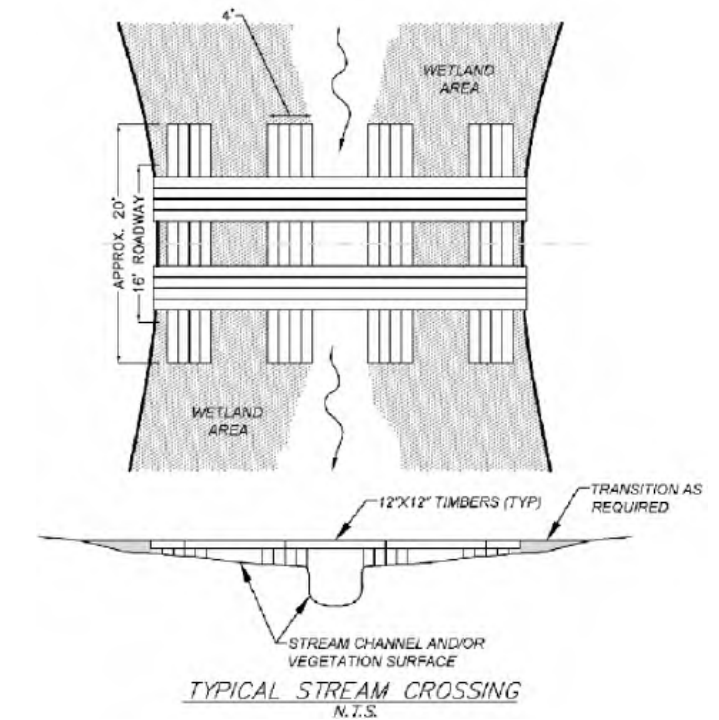
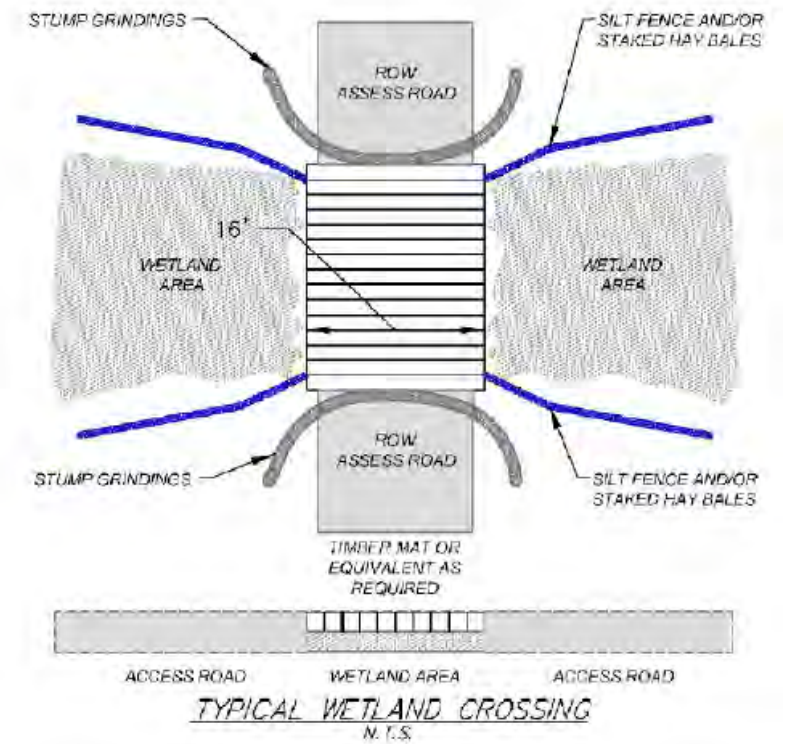
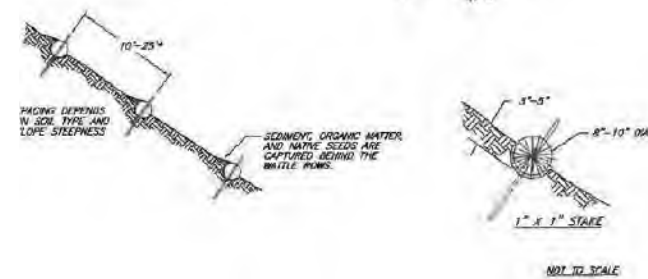
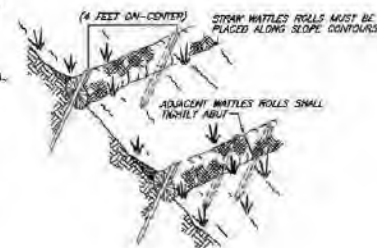
Best Management Practices (BMP's) for Straw wattles

Definition and purpose:
Straw wattles are burlap rolls filled with straw that trap sediment and interrupt water flow by reducing slope lengths.

- Applications:**
- Along erodible or unstabilized slopes
 - Spread overland waterflow
 - Trap sediment
 - Around storm drain inlets to slow water and settle out sediment
 - Overlap ends approximately 6 inches
- Installation:**
Straw wattles are installed parallel to slope contours and perpendicular to sheet flow.

Spacing* - Dependent on slope length, soil steepness and soil type (general range 10 - 25').

Trenching - 2"-5" inch trench
Stacking - at each end and four foot on center (i.e. 25 foot wattle uses 6 stacks)



Eversource L163
Line Maintenance Project
Keene, Nelson, Stoddard & Antrim, NH
Sheet N-6 of 6
Date: 3/4/2026
Revised: 06/03/2026

June 3, 2026

Megan A. Fortson, AICP
Planner, Community Development Department
City of Keene
3 Washington Street
Keene, NH 03431

Re: Eversource CUP (Project #: PB-26-15)
Request for More Information, May 29, 2026

Dear Ms. Fortson:

We have reviewed the City of Keene's comments dated May 29, 2026, and have included narrative *responses* in addition to attachments relating to your request. We have included the original request language and our *responses* in order, below.

1. ENGINEERING:

1. Reference is made to stonewall agreements but the intent of the comment is unclear.

Response: We have updated the call out on the first sheet of the plans to reflect the requirement noted in Comment 2, below. See updated plans provided via upload.

2. The existing stone walls identified for removal and resetting shall be confirmed reset in the same location by a Surveyor with a current license in the State of New Hampshire.

Response: We have updated the call out on the plans to reflect this condition of the permit.

3. Prior to construction, the applicant shall submit for and obtain an Encumbrance and/or Excavation permit, as applicable for the scope of the work that encumbers the existing road and/or excavation within the City's ROW.

Response: Eversource will obtain an Encumbrance and/or Excavation permit from the City for work and excavation within City land or for work within the City's ROW. Eversource will coordinate with Mr. Ruoff regarding these permits.

4. Prior to construction, the applicant shall coordinate access to Old Gilsum Road with the Parks & Recreation Department

Response: Eversource will coordinate prior to the start of construction with the Parks & Recreation Department regarding access using Old Gilsum road.

2. BUILDING/FLOODPLAIN

No comments. No Building Permit or Floodplain permit required.

3. ZONING

No Zoning issues, comments.

4. FIRE

No concerns from KFD.

5. PLANNING

1. Posted Notice Requirement

Response: Eversource/Normandeau will obtain the sign from the Community Development Department and will place the sign at the entrance of Old Gilsum Road, as discussed, more than 10 calendar days before the public hearing.

2. Conservation Commission Referral

Response: Eversource will attend the regularly scheduled Conservation Commission meeting on Monday, June 15, 2026 at 4:30PM in Room 22 at the Keene Parks & Recreation Center located at 312 Washington St. The proposed site visit at 3:30PM on the same day has been cancelled.

3. Plans Set

Response: We will provide/upload a higher resolution version of the plans for review. The plans are lower resolution to reduce file size for easier sharing.

4. Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan

Response: A copy of the final Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan will be provided to the City for review prior to the start of work.

5. Conditions of Approval

Response: Thank you for sharing the anticipated Conditions of Approval for review.

Please feel free to contact Jeremy Fennell at jeremy.fennell@eversource.com or William McCloy at 802-861-7038 or at wmccloy@normandeau.com if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Principal Scientist



REVISIONS:

PROPOSED PARKING CONCEPT

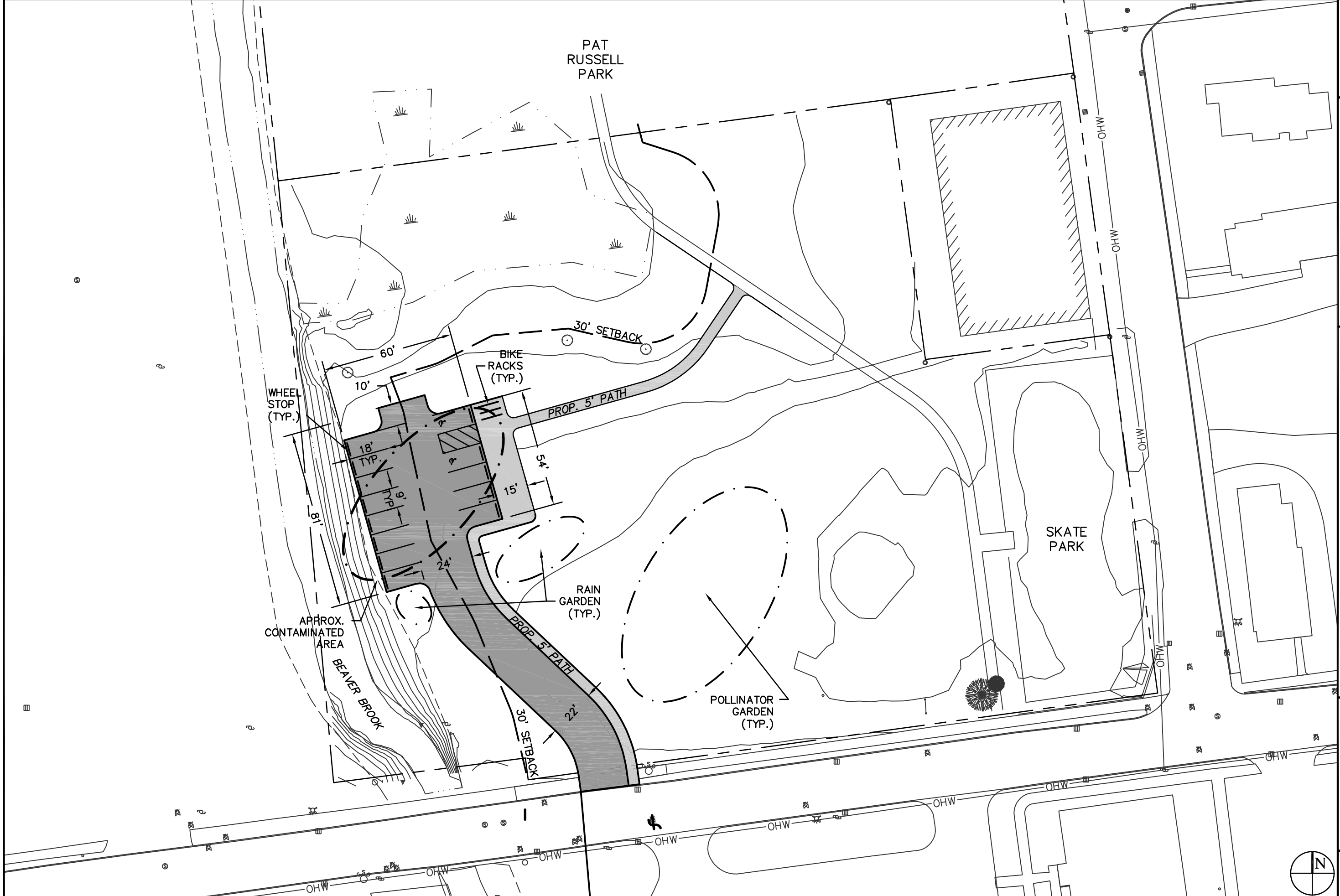
FORMER FINDINGS PROPERTY/ PAT RUSSELL PARK
WATER STREET
CITY OF KEENE, NEW HAMPSHIRE

Date: 05/19/2025

SCALE: 1"=40'

Drawn by: TJO

File: CONCEPT PLAN_R1.DWG



CITY OF KEENE CONSERVATION COMMISSION LAND PROTECTION CRITERIA

ADOPTED APRIL 2018
UPDATED FEBRUARY 2026

The City of Keene Conservation Commission, in making recommendations for land protection and acquisition to the City Council, shall give priority to land that supports or enhances the following resources or features. Land directly abutting existing conservation land is a high priority for protection. Expanding existing conservation areas is an efficient use of City resources and makes it easier to steward and manage land. The Conservation Commission will review potential land purchases that score high on the Priority Checklist.

The following criteria are a tool for the Conservation Commission and City Council to use when evaluating a project. Any project brought forward for City Council consideration shall meet at least two of these criteria:

1. Protect Surface Water Resources
 - a. Protect drinking water.
 - b. Maintain natural frontage on rivers, streams, lakes, ponds, and reservoirs.
 - c. Maintain or enhance wetlands, vernal pools, floodplains, buffer areas, and riparian zones.
2. Protect Groundwater Water Resources
 - a. Protect drinking water
 - b. Protect land overlying aquifers and aquifer recharge areas
3. Protect Forest Ecology
 - a. Maintain or enhance woodlands in association with other ecological attributes
 - b. Protect slopes with grades greater than 15%
 - c. Protect the integrity, biodiversity and health of Keene's urban forests
 - d. Expand large unfragmented blocks of forests
 - e. Support responsible forest husbandry.
4. Protect Agricultural Resources
 - a. Support existing farmlands and open fields with prime soils and other attributes that support agriculture or have the potential to support agriculture.
 - b. Land well suitable for agriculture that has state or locally important soils.
 - c. Land that is suitable for urban agriculture, such as community gardens.
5. Protect Wildlife and Natural Areas
 - a. Property with significant tracts of undeveloped habitat and corridors important for wildlife.
 - b. Maintain or enhance land containing ecologically significant or rare natural communities or species.
 - c. Priority land that is identified in the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan, Natural

- Resource Inventories, or existing Land Management Plans.
 - d. Other lands which increase the diversity and viability of wildlife populations, including fields, riparian areas, land contiguous to existing protected natural areas, and land that can serve as a buffer to developed areas.
 - e. Unique geologic features.
6. Protect Cultural, Recreational, and Scenic Value
- a. Land that offers opportunities for outdoor recreation by the public.
 - b. Scenic views, ridgelines, and other aesthetic areas.
 - c. Landscapes that preserve the region's cultural and historic heritage.
 - d. Land that promotes connectivity of recreational networks.
7. Collaboration and Leverage
- a. Land with landowners or other collaborators interested in protection.
 - b. Land with ecological value that is vulnerable to development pressure
 - c. Land where there are landowners willing to support conservation and protection

Further Directions and Considerations

The Conservation Commission will evaluate whether the proposed project by itself fully protects the intended resource. If the resource cannot be fully protected without the conservation of additional nearby land, be it a wildlife habitat or a scenic vista, the likelihood of protecting the other properties should be weighed before moving forward with the project.

When reviewing proposed projects, the Conservation Commission shall give special attention and consideration to proposed projects that attract other funds for the purchase and/or maintenance of the land in question.

The City will consider on a case-by-case basis who will bear any costs associated with preparing a proposal for land protection.

The Conservation Commission's recommendation to City Council shall include a description of the natural resources and how the property meets the criteria in this checklist.

CITY OF KEENE CONSERVATION COMMISSION LAND PROTECTION CRITERIA

ADOPTED APRIL 2018
UPDATED FEBRUARY 2026

The City of Keene Conservation Commission, in making recommendations for land protection and acquisition to the City Council, shall give priority to ~~land~~ that supports or enhances the following resources ~~or features should be a priority for the City of Keene Conservation Commission as it makes recommendations to the City Council on land protection and conservation.~~ Land directly abutting existing conservation land is a high priority for protection. Expanding existing conservation areas is an efficient use of City resources and makes it easier to steward and manage land. ~~In addition to abutting lands, t~~The Conservation Commission will review potential land purchases that score high on the Priority Checklist.

The following criteria are a tool for the Conservation Commission and City Council to use when evaluating a project. Any project brought forward for City Council consideration shall meet at least two of these criteria:

1. Protect Surface Water Resources
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 - ~~a.~~b. Protect slopes with grades greater than 15%
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 - c. Priority land that is identified in the New Hampshire Wildlife Action Plan, Natural Resource Inventories, or existing Land Management Plans.
 - d. Other lands which increase the diversity and viability of wildlife populations, including fields, riparian areas, land contiguous to existing protected natural areas, and land that can serve as a buffer to developed areas.
 - e. Unique geologic features.
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- a. Land that offers opportunities for outdoor recreation by the public.
 - b. Scenic views, ridgelines, and other aesthetic areas.
 - c. Landscapes that preserve the region's cultural and historic heritage.
 - d. Land that promotes connectivity of recreational networks.
7. Collaboration and Leverage
- a. ~~To protect~~ land with willing landowners or other collaborators interested in protection.
 - b. Land with ecological value that is vulnerable to development pressure
 - c. Land where there are landowners willing to support conservation and protection

Further Directions and Considerations

The Conservation Commission ~~and City Council~~ will ~~determine~~ evaluate whether the proposed project by itself fully protects the intended resource. If the resource cannot be fully protected without the conservation of additional nearby land, be it a wildlife habitat or a scenic vista, the likelihood of protecting the other properties should be weighed before moving forward with the project.

When reviewing proposed projects, the Conservation Commission ~~and City Council~~ shall give special attention and consideration to proposed projects that attract other funds for the purchase and/or maintenance of the land in question.

The City will consider on a case-by-case basis who will bear any costs associated with preparing a proposal for land protection. All costs associated with preparing a proposal initiated by the Conservation Commission for City Council consideration, whether initiated by the City Government or by a private person or group, will be borne by the City unless a third party, including the landowner, is willing to fund all or part of these costs.

The Conservation Commission's recommendation ~~put forward by the City Administrator to City Council~~ shall ~~weigh the benefits of the proposed acquisition against the broader tax implications and municipal priorities that currently exist in the community~~ include a description of the natural resources and how the property meets the criteria in this checklist.



54 Portsmouth Street
Concord, NH 03301

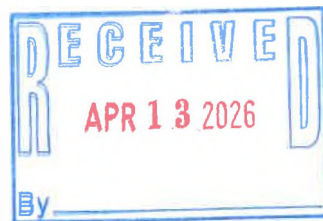
Tel. 603.224.9945

info@forestsociety.org

www.forestsociety.org

Follow @forestsociety

City of Keene
Conservation Commission
3 Washington St.
Keene, NH 03431



Dear Friends,

Your organization's annual membership in the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests is coming up for renewal. We hope you will continue your support!

As you know, New Hampshire's forests, mountains, waters, and wildlife weave together the fabric of our state. Your membership support not only helps the Forest Society accomplish tangible work on the ground – it is an expression of commitment to conserving the quality of life we all hold dear.

Thanks to members like you, our recent conservation successes include . . .

- Acquiring 1,328 acres in Bradford and Hillsborough – a key addition within one of the largest remaining areas of intact, ecologically significant forests south of the White Mountains, and an important wildlife corridor.
- Purchasing a conservation easement on 193 acres at the Morrill Farm Dairy in Penacook, that protects high-quality agricultural soils, floodplain forests, oxbow ponds, and over a mile of shoreline on the Merrimack River.
- Conserving the two largest unprotected tracts of land near the top of Mount Kearsarge, totaling 230 acres along the scenic access approach to the summit.
- Securing 30 acres on Mountain Road, adjacent to the Old Toll Road Trailhead in Jaffrey, where every year, an average of 12,000 people begin their hike to the summit of Mount Monadnock. This will buffer the trail from potential future development.
- Completing a new all-persons accessible trail to the Merrimack River at our headquarters in Concord, a beautiful and much-enjoyed destination.

Land conservation, sustainable forest management, trail care and maintenance, and vigilant advocacy are at the heart of the Forest Society's work – and this work benefits all of us here in New Hampshire.

Please renew today. That way, your membership gift will go right back to work – protecting New Hampshire's most beautiful and threatened lands for all to enjoy.

Sincerely,

Jack Savage
President

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P.S. We hope you can join us this year at a special event or field trip as we celebrate our 125th Anniversary! You'll find our events calendar at forestsociety.org/events.