



AT EASTERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY

## ENVIRONMENTAL PREFERENTIAL STANDARDS

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(Working Group)

The following preliminary/draft environmental preferential standards for electric transmission facilities are intended for discussion. As requested, these standards should be discussed and placed into an order of siting preference and priority, if such transmission facilities are found to be needed after a comparison of system alternatives.

- Avoidance of Sensitive Areas and Areas of High Value

The site location of a transmission option must be assessed to avoid or affecting sensitive environmental or cultural resources of high value, whenever possible.

Assessment of alternatives must be consistent with resource mapping and site-specific investigations designed to avoid sensitive areas and areas of high value. In addition, all alternatives must be compatible with existing infrastructure requirements.

- Use of Existing Corridors

Use existing corridors is preferred when such use will not compromise existing uses and/or cause significant adverse impact on environmental resources.

Use of existing corridors must be consistent with resource mapping and infrastructure mapping, and compatible with existing infrastructure requirements.

Such corridors may include existing utility corridors, transportation corridors, and infrastructure corridors. Expansion of the ROW at existing corridors is not encouraged, but is generally preferred to avoid development of new corridors. Appropriate buffers between utility corridors and sensitive environmental or cultural resources are preferred to be located within the ROW under the control of the utility owner, but buffers located outside of the ROW corridor should be considered as an attribute

- Use of Underground Technology

Use of underground technology is generally preferred over aboveground technology to minimize visual impact to cultural resources and residential development, but only when sensitive environmental resources including wetlands, critical habitat, and wildlife are not substantially affected, and when the use of underground technology is economic and reliable.

When and where the use of underground technology would compromise environmental resources, or when use of such underground technology would not be economic or reliable, above-ground technology shall be considered, but with appropriate use of buffers, low height or low-impact facility components, and other mitigating measures to minimize or eliminate visual impact to cultural resources and residential land use.

- Mitigation

Mitigation is preferred when construction and impact on environmental resources cannot be avoided. Mitigation shall be established through formal mitigation plans and development and management plans with the following measures, as necessary and appropriate:

- a) replacement of habitat, landscaping, and establishment of buffer;
- b) wetland replacement and restoration;
- c) specialized construction including selection of structures, configuration, and clearing;
- d) construction restrictions including specialized time of construction with consideration to spawning, migration, and recreational use;
- e) control of erosion and sedimentation;
- f) application of EMF Best Management Practices;
- g) control of future access;
- h) minimal length of route used to avoid impact on habitat;
- i) minimal time for construction to avoid impact on fisheries;
- j) minimal noise and use of explosives to avoid impact on residences, wildlife, and fisheries;
- k) detailed pre- and post-construction survey;
- l) use of pre-construction modeling to identify impacts to water quality;
- m) post-construction monitoring; and
- n) application of long-term ROW maintenance procedures

- Compensation

When compensation to offset environmental, community, and cultural impacts that cannot be avoided or fully mitigated is to be paid, compensation to public and non-profit organizations is preferred. Such compensation may be established as part of a formal compensation plan with compensation to be negotiated for the long-term loss of fisheries, wildlife, critical habitat, water quality, agricultural productivity, and aquaculture productivity. Compensation may include provisions for research for management, habitat replacement and restoration, open space preservation, and loss of economic productivity.