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Evergreen Wind Power II, LLC, and Maine GenLead, LLC seek Corps permit to place fill material to build wind power facility

CONCORD, Mass. – The Evergreen Wind Power II, LLC and the Maine GenLead, LLC, are seeking a permit from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District to conduct work in waters of the United States and impact wetlands between Oakfield and Chester, Maine, in conjunction with the construction of a wind power facility.

The applicants propose to place temporary and permanent fill material in numerous waterways and wetlands between Oakfield and Chester, Maine, in order to construct a wind power facility and associated 59-mile electrical transmission line; and provide a direct interconnect between the energy generation in Oakfield and the Bangor Hydro-Electric Company's existing Keene Road substation in Chester to a new substation servicing the Oakfield Wind Project in Oakfield.

The project area encompasses 12 towns and townships. Approximately 60 percent of the 59 miles of new transmission line will be co-located and adjacent to existing corridors.

The proposed work includes the discharge of dredged or fill material to construct the "Revised Oakfield Wind Project" to include the upgrade of the previously permitted (Corps file #NAE-2009-00386) project. The Oakfield Wind Project has not been constructed and is being revised to change the turbine types; to add temporary and permanent meteorological tower locations; to change the turbine pad size, turbine locations, road widths, and some road locations; to eliminate the northern substation; to add 25 turbines in new project areas; to add a new substation; and to add an approximately 59-mile 115-kilovolt generator lead transmission line extending from an existing substation in Chester to a new substation servicing the Revised Oakfield Wind Project.

Approximately 35.2 miles of the new line will be located adjacent to existing utility corridors. The purpose of the Oakfield Wind Project is to expand a commercially viable, low-impact wind energy project in Maine. The purpose of the proposed 115-kV transmission line is to provide a direct interconnect between the energy generation in Oakfield and the Bangor Hydro-Electric and ISO New England transmission system to accommodate the increased energy output of the Oakfield Wind Project.

Approximately 2.55 acres of permanent fill is to be placed in freshwater wetlands; approximately 24.3 acres of temporary fill (construction mats) is to be placed in freshwater wetlands; approximately 137.5 acres of freshwater wetlands will be impacted in conjunction with vegetation clearing; and approximately 455 linear feet of freshwater stream impact will be incurred in conjunction with culvert placement.

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U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS – NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT
696 VIRGINIA ROAD, CONCORD, MA 01742-2751
<http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>



Evergreen Wind Power II, LLC & Maine GenLead LLC seek Corps permit/2-2-2-2-2

To compensate for the project's unavoidable permanent and temporary impacts to wetlands and waterways, the applicants propose offsite preservation of approximately 2,100 acres of wetlands and uplands adjacent to the existing Mattawamkeag River Wildlife Management Area managed by the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries & Wildlife in Drew's Plantation in Penobscot County, Maine.

The proposed work may impact Essential Fish Habitat for Atlantic salmon. This habitat consists of stream and river bottom composed of silt, sand and gravel mixed with stones. Impact to this species is expected to be minimal with appropriate erosion control measures, in-stream work windows, clearing restrictions, and other best management practices. Therefore, the Corps has made a preliminary determination that the site-specific adverse effect will not be substantial. Further consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service regarding Essential Fish Habitat conservation recommendations is being conducted and will be concluded prior to the final permit decision. Similarly, consultation continues with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act since salmon in this location are part of a distinct population segment listed by the Service as endangered.

The application for the federal permit was filed with the Corps of Engineers in compliance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which regulates the discharge or fill of material in United States waters, including wetlands; and with Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act, which provides for federal regulation of any work in, or affecting navigable waters of the United States. The public notice can be viewed on the Corps website at <http://www.nae.usace.army.mil>. Select Regulatory/Permitting and then weekly public notices.

Public comments referencing this permit request (File # NAE-2011-01538) should be forwarded no later than Oct. 19, 2011 to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New England District, Maine Project Office (ATTN: LeeAnn Neal), 675 Western Ave., #3, Manchester, Maine 04351. Additional information is available from Permit Project Manager LeeAnn Neal at 207-623-8367 Ext. 2 or by email to leeann.neal@usace.army.mil.

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