
Memorandum

TO: NESCOE, PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

FROM: CHelsea MATTIODA, STEFAN KOESTER, WOODYDYNNE DEJEANLOUIS, ARIELLA FUZAYLOV – SYNAPSE ENERGY ECONOMICS

DATE: NOVEMBER 22, 2024

RE: FEEDBACK ON NESCOE’S POTENTIAL TRANSMISSION NEEDS FOR A LONGER-TERM TRANSMISSION PLANNING RFP

Effective, efficient, and wholistic transmission planning will be paramount for ensuring our electric-system’s reliability as we prepare for load growth and the clean energy transition in New England. Synapse believes that the Longer-Term Transmission Planning process developed by NESCOE and ISO New England is an important step in that preparation and a major achievement for the region. Longer-term transmission planning will ensure that we maintain a reliable grid and prevent ratepayers from overpaying for inefficient transmission solutions.

Synapse represents consumer advocates and consumers throughout New England in the NEPOOL stakeholder process to ensure ratepayers receive reliable and affordable energy as we transition to a clean and sustainable grid. Synapse Energy Economics, representing the Maine Office of the Public Advocate, and PowerOptions in the End User Sector, respectfully offers the following feedback on NESCOE’s first RFP request in the Longer-Term Transmission Planning process.

Synapse recognizes what a momentous occasion this RFP request represents following years of diligent efforts by NESCOE, ISO-NE, and stakeholders to develop this proactive planning process. We acknowledge that this first RFP is an opportunity to prove out this process, and we understand how important it is that the RFP and any selected projects are successful.

Synapse understands the need to address bottlenecks on the Maine-New Hampshire interfaces. These issues are projected to worsen in the future and cannot be addressed by relocating storage south of these interfaces. We support addressing these constraints through transmission solutions. The region’s markets will benefit from enhanced reliability and be in a better overall position to integrate affordable resources in the future.

NESCOE plans to focus the first LTTP solicitation on increasing transfer capability to allow more power to flow from Maine and New Hampshire into southern New England by addressing known constraints at the Maine-New Hampshire interface and Suroweic-South interface. Synapse supports a flexible approach to addressing these constraints that allows NESCOE and ISO-NE to evaluate a higher number and more varied set of potential solutions that will increase competition and increase the likelihood of

identifying a cost-effective solution. Synapse encourages NESCOE to include a recommendation that bids utilize alternative transmission technologies (ATTs) and particularly storage options when demonstrated to be cost-effective. With NESCOE's support, electric storage facilities can now be planned and operated as transmission-only assets ("SATOAs"),¹ and we believe that SATOAs have the potential to offer innovative, cost-effective transmission solutions beyond traditional poles-and-wires investments.

Synapse appreciates this opportunity to offer feedback to NESCOE at this stage and supports NESCOE's plan to maintain high levels of stakeholder engagement throughout this initial RFP and overall LTTP process. We hope that NESCOE provides clear and detailed updates as it clarifies this RFP request and then moves on to consider potential solutions evaluated by ISO-NE later in the process. Synapse urges NESCOE to provide full presentations to PAC at key milestones and before major decisions to allow for meaningful stakeholder engagement.

¹ FERC. Order Accepting Tariff Revisions, Docket No. ER23-739-000, October 19, 2023.

