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Randolph, NH
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Senator Martha Fuller Clark
Chair, Northern Country Transmission Commission
State House Room 302
107 N. Main St.,
Concord, N.H. 03301

January 16, 2010

Dear Senator Clark:

I urge the North Country Transmission Commission to include consideration of community benefits as it develops a framework for any expansion or upgrade of the Coos Transmission Loop, including the method for sharing costs and benefits.

The Commission's enabling legislation, SB 85, requires this as one of the Consultant's duties with the following language: "Community benefits" shall be included as part of deliberation and as part of the final framework."

While Coos County can and should be part of the solution for the region's renewable energy needs, we must ensure that renewable energy production and transmission in Coos County result in long-term, tangible benefits for local communities and our natural resource base. Our natural assets *are* the primary economic asset of the North County, providing a basis for our important forest products and services and tourism and recreation sectors.

Consideration of long-term community benefits for Coos County and surrounding communities is consistent with goals of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*:

1. Preserve and create jobs and promote economic recovery;
2. Assist those most impacted by the recession;
3. Provide the investments needed to increase economic efficiency by spurring technological advances in science and health;
4. Invest in transportation, environmental protection, and other infrastructure that will provide long-term economic benefits, and
5. Stabilize state and local government budgets to minimize/avoid reductions in essential services and counterproductive state and local tax increases.

It is also consistent with goals of the AARA funded State Energy Program:

1. Increase energy efficiency to reduce energy costs and energy usage for homes, businesses, and government;
2. Reduce reliance on imported energy;

3. Improve the reliability of electricity, fuel supply and the delivery of energy services;
and
4. Reduce the impacts of energy production and use on the environment.

Specific community benefits defined for any specific project will depend on the community's needs and the size and type of the proposed development. I ask that the Consultant be required to work with local community organizations to identify specific Community Benefits for inclusion in the Northern Loop action plan.

In addition, I ask for the inclusion of social and environmental accounting of community benefits at this stage in the development of the transmission framework, and the addition of the *Coos Community Benefits Alliance* to the list of organizations the consultant is required to meet with.

Agreement on long-term community benefits for the Coos Region, in advance of any transmission upgrade or expansion, can help ensure that residents of the region share in the benefits of this major project.

Please let me know if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Sally Manikian

Cc:
Fred King, Colebrook
Representative William Remick, Lancaster
Meredith Hatfield, Consumer Advocate