

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>For Office Use Only</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Executive Office of Environmental Affairs</p> <p>MEPA Analyst: <i>Aisling Eglinton</i></p> <p>Phone: 617-626-<i>1024</i></p>
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NPC

Notice of Project Change

The information requested on this form must be completed to begin MEPA Review of a NPC in accordance with the provisions of the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act and its implementing regulations (see 301 CMR 11.10(1)).

Project Name: Russell Biomass Power Plant		EOEA #: 13635
Street: Station Road		
Municipality: Russell (plant, truck access); Russell, Montgomery and Westfield (transmission line)	Watershed: Westfield River	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 18 0677641 E; 46 72945 N	Latitude: 42°11'20"N Longitude: 72°50'55"W	
Status of project construction: 0%complete		
Proponent: Russell Biomass LLC		
Street: 101 Hampton Road		
Municipality: Pomfret Center	State: CT	Zip Code: 06259
Name of Contact Person From Whom Copies of this NPC May Be Obtained: Rebecca Sherer, P.E.		
Firm/Agency: Tighe & Bond, Inc.	Street: 53 Southampton Road	
Municipality: Westfield	State: MA	Zip Code: 01085
Phone: (413) 562-1600	Fax: (413) 562-5317	E-mail: rlsherer@tighebond.com

In 25 words or less, what is the project change? **The truck access route has been changed from Main Street to Frog Hollow Road and a proposed extension to connect to Route 20.**

See full project change description beginning on page 3.

Date of ENF filing or publication in the Environmental Monitor: **September 24, 2005**
 (publication in Environmental Monitor)

Was an EIR required? Yes No; if yes,
 was a Draft EIR filed? Yes (Date: June 29, 2007 - Concurrent with NPC) No
 was a Final EIR filed? Yes (Date: February 15, 2008) No
 was a Single EIR filed? Yes (Date:) No

Have other NPCs been filed? Yes (Date(s): June 29, 2007 – Concurrent with DEIR) No

If this is a NPC solely for lapse of time (see 301 CMR 11.10(2)) proceed directly to **“ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES”** on page 4.

PERMITS / FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE / LAND TRANSFER

List or describe all new or modified state permits, financial assistance, or land transfers not previously reviewed:

Are you requesting a finding that this project change is insignificant? (see 301 CMR 11.10(6))

Yes No; if yes, attach justification.

Are you requesting that a Scope in a previously issued Certificate be rescinded?

Yes No; if yes, attach the Certificate

Are you requesting a change to a Scope in a previously issued Certificate? Yes No; if yes, attach Certificate and describe the change you are requesting:

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Previously reviewed	Net Change	Currently Proposed
LAND			
Total site acreage	20 (facility) 64 (transmission line) 2 to 8 acres (switching station)	 6.3 acres (truck access)	20 (facility) 64 (transmission line) 2 to 8 acres (switching station) 6.3 acres (truck access)
Acres of land altered	39.2	6.3	45.5
Acres of impervious area	10 acres	2.8 acres	12.8 acres
Square feet of bordering vegetated wetlands alteration	49,000 sf	1,973 sf	50,973 sf
Square feet of other wetland alteration	2,660 lf Bank 8,200 sf BLSF	-97 lf Bank 16,820 sf BLSF	2,563 lf Bank 25,020 sf BLSF (no change in flood storage capacity)
Riverfront Area impacts do not include previously degraded areas.	296,600 sf Riverfront Area	12,520 sf Riverfront Area	309,120 sf Riverfront Area
Acres of non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways	0	NA	0

STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage	62,930 sf	NA	62,930 sf
Number of housing units	0	NA	0
Maximum height (in feet)	135 (building) 300 (stack)	NA	135 (building) 300 (stack)
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day	212	82	294 (accounts for expected peaks in truck trips)
Parking spaces	22 + 6 truck queuing spaces	NA	22+ 6 truck queuing spaces
WATER/WASTEWATER			
Gallons/day (GPD) of water use	886,000	NA	886,000
GPD water withdrawal	662,000 (average) 885,000 (maximum)	NA	662,000 (average) 885,000 (maximum)
GPD wastewater generation/ treatment	2,880 (sanitary) 101,000 (cooling/average) 133,000 (cooling/maximum)	NA	2,880 (sanitary) 101,000 (cooling/average) 133,000 (cooling/maximum)
Length of water/sewer mains (in miles)	0	0	0

Does the project change involve any new or modified:

1. conversion of public parkland or other Article 97 public natural resources to any purpose not in accordance with Article 97? Yes No

2. release of any conservation restriction, preservation restriction, agricultural preservation restriction, or watershed preservation restriction? Yes No

3. impacts on Estimated Habitat of Rare Species, Vernal Pools, Priority Sites of Rare Species, or Exemplary Natural Communities? Yes No

4. impact on any structure, site or district listed in the State Register of Historic Place or the inventory of Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth?

Yes No; if yes, does the project involve any demolition or destruction of any listed or inventoried historic or archaeological resources? Yes No

5. impact upon an Area of Critical Environmental Concern? Yes No

If you answered 'Yes' to any of these 5 questions, explain below:

PROJECT CHANGE DESCRIPTION (attach additional pages as necessary). The project change description should include:

(a) a brief description of the project as most recently reviewed

(b) a description of material changes to the project as previously reviewed,

(c) the significance of the proposed changes, with specific reference to the factors listed 301 CMR 11.10(6), and

(d) measures that the project is taking to avoid damage to the environment or to minimize and mitigate unavoidable environmental impacts. If the change will involve modification of any previously issued Section 61 Finding, include a proposed modification of the Section 61 Finding (or it will be required in a Supplemental EIR).

(A) PROJECT DESCRIPTION AS PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED

Russell Biomass LLC (the Project Proponent) proposes to develop a 50 megawatt (MW) (nominal net design output) biomass-fired power plant. The facility will be located on approximately 20 acres in Russell, Massachusetts (see Figure 2-1 U.S. Geographical Survey (USGS) Site Locus in the Figures section). Approximately 510,000 tons of renewable biomass wood fuel will be consumed annually to produce heat to drive the turbine to generate electricity. The energy generated from the facility will be transmitted to the existing electrical grid and the net annual energy production will be approximately 400,000,000 kWh. The proposed Russell Biomass facility parcel is the site of the former Westfield River Paper Company. The mill complex has been abandoned since its shutdown in 1994. The project will result in the redevelopment of this brownfield site.

The facility will consist of a complete fuel receiving and handling system, either a single bubbling fluidized bed (BFB) or stoker fired boiler, a single condensing turbine, a mechanical draft evaporative cooling tower withdrawing make up water from the nearby Westfield River via an existing intake structure, air and water quality control systems, a biodiesel boiler start up system, and essential auxiliaries typical of a stand-alone power generating station.

A sizable portion of the proposed Russell Biomass facility will be used for the stockpile of 20 to 30 days of wood fuel storage to assure continuous, adequate supply for the plant. Transportation of wood fuel to the facility will necessitate approximately 75 to 80 deliveries daily via Main Street in the Town of Russell to supply approximately 2,000 tons per day. Combustion ash, a by-product of burning wood fuel, will be trucked from the site.

The facility will withdraw an annual average of 662,000 gallons per day (gpd) and a maximum daily volume of 885,000 gpd of water from the Westfield River. An average of 101,000 gpd and maximum of 133,000 gpd of treated industrial wastewater and some stormwater will be discharged at a point on the east bank of the Westfield River approximately 500 feet downstream of the Indian River Hydro Dam. Stormwater management systems, including detention basins with forebays, are proposed to address stormwater runoff from the site. An existing municipal water main supplies potable water to the property. On-site subsurface sewage disposal will be utilized to treat domestic plant wastewater.

Power will be conveyed from the plant to an interconnection point in Westfield at Western Massachusetts Electric Company's (WMECO's) existing 115 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, designated as line #1512, via a new 115 kV transmission line of approximately 5.1 miles in length. The transmission line will be configured as a radial connection (a single 115 kV transmission line). Ancillary facilities associated with the transmission line include a new 115 kV switching station in Westfield to connect the proposed transmission line with the existing transmission line. An on-site subsurface sewage disposal system will serve the switching station.

The new 115 kV transmission line will be constructed overhead and will include single and multi-pole structures. Guy wires and anchors will help support structures where the line turns an angle, at terminal structures, at structures with long spans and where significant changes in terrain occur. Spacing of structures ranges between 50 and 825 feet. The Proposed Project is depicted on Figures 2-1 and 2-2.

(B) MATERIAL CHANGES TO THE PROJECT AS PREVIOUSLY REVIEWED

The proposed Russell Biomass power plant facility site ("facility site") will be located off Station Road, at the base of Shatterack Mountain, on the east side of the Westfield River, in the Town of Russell, Massachusetts. Historic and existing access to the Russell Biomass power plant facility site from Route 20 is along Main Street in Russell to Station Road. The traffic impacts associated with the Russell Biomass power plant facility will be predominantly from the trucks delivering approximately 2,000 tons of wood chip fuel to the facility site, Monday through Friday.

The truck route to the facility site from Route 20 was originally proposed along Main Street. The Department of Public Utilities (DPU), in its November 14, 2008 Order on Motion for Reconsideration, granted Russell Biomass LLC (the Project Proponent) exemption from Section 3.2 of the Town of Russell's Zoning By-law for the structures that require height and setback requirements. The DPU placed a condition on the exemption indicating that to satisfactorily resolve the traffic issues, an agreement between the Town of Russell zoning authority and the Project Proponent would be required.

In order to comply with the DPU requirement to reach an agreement which addresses the Town's traffic-related concerns, the Project Proponent further evaluated its options for truck routes to the facility site. The alternatives analyzed are listed below and described in detail in the attached narrative.

- The existing route along Main Street
- Frog Hollow Road to a new one-mile private way extension around Turtle Bend Mountain to US Route 20
- River Road to a new one-mile private way extension around Turtle Bend Mountain to US Route 20
- Construction of a new bridge one mile south of the site across the Westfield River off of US Route 20
- Rail using the active CSX railroad
- Huntington Route - Carrington Road/Montgomery Road to Route 112 to Route 20
- Montgomery Route - Carrington Road to Russell Road to Main Road

Upon review of the potential options, the preferred alternative is the route from the Main Street bridge to Frog Hollow Road with a proposed private way extension from Frog Hollow Road to Route 20. Several layouts were analyzed for safety as well as avoidance and minimization of impacts to environmental resources and are described in the attached narrative. The Proposed Project Change is depicted on Figure 2-3.

(C) SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PROPOSED CHANGES PER 301 CMR 11.10(6)

The following discussion provides information relevant to the Secretary's consideration of environmental consequences per 301 CMR 11.10(6).

301 CMR 11.10(6)(a): Expansion in the physical dimensions of a project of 10% or more – Not Applicable

301 CMR 11.10(6)(b): Increase in the level of impacts previously reviewed of 25% or more of the level specified in any review threshold – The Proposed Project Change triggers MEPA Environmental Notification Form (ENF) review for impacts to ½ or more acres of "any other wetland" (i.e., Riverfront Area) and construction of a new roadway greater than ¼ mile in length. The Proposed Project Change does not trigger any MEPA EIR review thresholds.

301 CMR 11.10(6)(c): Change in the expected date for commencement of the project, commencement of construction, completion date, or schedule – The current anticipated construction commencement date is Spring 2010. The construction commencement date is dictated by the ongoing permitting processes and ensuing appeals.

301 CMR 11.10(6)(d): Change of the Project Site – Not Applicable

301 CMR 11.10(6)(e): New application for a permit or new request for financial assistance or land transfer – The new truck access route will require a new Order of Conditions from the Russell Conservation Commission; joint review of the Notice of Intent by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program; and an Access Permit from the Massachusetts Highway Department. The wetlands related impacts will be included in the applications for a MADEP Section 401 Water Quality Certification and an Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permit.

301 CMR 11.10(6)(f): For a project with net benefits to the environment, any change that prevents or materially delays realization of such benefits – Not Applicable

301 CMR 11.10(6)(g): For a Project involving a lapse of time, changes in the ambient environment or information concerning the ambient environment. The Proponent may include in a Notice of Project Change an explanation of why the Secretary should deem the change in the Project or the lapse of time to be insignificant in terms of its environmental consequences, with specific reference to these factors and other relevant information. – A “lapse of time” has not occurred relative to the proposed project.

(D) MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed project change is in itself a mitigation measure for truck traffic impacts on Main Street in Russell. Mitigation measures related to the proposed improvements to Frog Hollow Road and the construction of Frog Hollow Extension have been developed for impacts to wetland resource areas, for stormwater management, and for the curb cut onto Route 20. Mitigation Measures and revised Section 61 findings are provided in the attached narrative.

ATTACHMENTS & SIGNATURES

Attachments:

1. Secretary's most recent Certificate on this project (See Appendix A)
2. Plan showing most recent previously-reviewed proposed build condition (See Site Plans in Appendix D)
3. Plan showing currently proposed build condition (See Site Plans in Appendix E)
4. Original U.S.G.S. map or good quality color copy (8-1/2 x 11 inches or larger) indicating the project location and boundaries (See Figures 2-1, 2-2 and 2-3)
5. List of all agencies and persons to whom the proponent circulated the NPC, in accordance with 301 CMR 11.10(7) (See Circulation List in Appendix B)

Signatures:

5/26/09 William B. Hull

Date Signature of Responsible Officer
or Proponent

William B. Hull

Name (print or type)

Russell Biomass LLC

Firm/Agency

101 Hampton Road

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Pomfret Center, CT 06259

Municipality/State/Zip

(860) 974-0127

Phone

05/29/09 Rebecca L. Sherer

Date Signature of person preparing
NPC (if different from above)

Rebecca L. Sherer

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