

FOR CONSIDERATION

December 18, 2024

TO: The Board of Trustees

FROM: John Rhodes

SUBJECT: Consideration of Approval of the Findings Statement for the Bridgehampton to Buell Underground 69kV Cable Project

Requested Action

The Board of Trustees (the “Board”) of the Long Island Power Authority (“LIPA”) is requested to adopt a resolution approving the Findings Statement in accordance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) for the Bridgehampton to Buell Underground 69kV Cable Project (the “Proposed Action”), which resolution is attached hereto as **Exhibit “A”**.

Background

PSEG Long Island has proposed to install a new underground 69kV transmission cable from the Bridgehampton Substation located on Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike in the Town of Southampton to the Buell Substation located on Cove Hollow Road in the Town of East Hampton. The original route and associated SEQRA documents, including the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”), evaluated a 5.2-mile underground cable within the existing LIPA right-of-way (“ROW”). Due to the location of the existing ROW within the Long Pond Greenbelt, an ecologically significant area, LIPA, serving as Lead Agency pursuant to SEQRA, determined the Proposed Action may have significant adverse effects on the environment and issued a [Positive Declaration](#), which required the preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”). In advance of the DEIS, in accordance with SEQRA, LIPA issued a Draft Scope, which was published for public comment on May 12, 2021. On June 30, 2021, the [Final Scope](#) for the Proposed Action was issued, incorporating all public comments received. The scoping documents functioned as the table of contents for the impacts and issues studied in the DEIS.

The Board accepted the DEIS at its meeting on May 18, 2022. Thereafter, PSEG Long Island conducted a public hearing on the DEIS to solicit comments on the proposed construction and route. PSEG Long Island received over 340 comments. Many of the comments expressed concern about potential adverse environmental impacts associated with installing the underground cable within the Long Pond Greenbelt and other sensitive areas. PSEG Long Island took into consideration these comments, other concerns, and the potential for proposed alternatives, in the DEIS with the intention to mitigate or avoid such impacts. Subsequently, the underground cable route was redesigned to proceed north from the Bridgehampton Substation through the existing roadway rights-of-way before turning southeast to the Buell substation. A version of the new route was reviewed as Alternative 2 in the DEIS (the Northerly Underground Circuit alternative). This new route is referred to as the Preferred Alternative in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (“FEIS”).

The route map is more particularly shown as Figure 1 within the FEIS and attached to this memorandum as **Exhibit “B”**. The route is approximately 7.6 miles and no longer runs through the Long Pond Greenbelt. A version of the new route was reviewed in detail as an alternative in the DEIS as the Northerly Underground Circuit alternative. This route is now known as the Preferred Alternative in the FEIS. The Board accepted the FEIS at its meeting on November 13, 2024.

Discussion

As required by SEQRA, the Findings Statement “identifies the social and economic, as well as environmental, considerations that have been weighed in deciding to approve or disapprove an action. A positive findings statement means that, after consideration of the final EIS, the project or action can be approved, and the action chosen is the one that minimizes or avoids environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable. For an action that can be approved, an agency’s findings statement must articulate that agency’s balancing of adverse environmental impacts against the needs for and benefits of the action.”¹ The Findings Statement is attached hereto as **Exhibit “C.”**

Recommendation

Based upon the foregoing, it is recommended that the Trustees adopt the resolution in the form attached hereto as **Exhibit “A.”**

Attachments

- Exhibit “A”** Resolution
- Exhibit “B”** Route Map
- Exhibit “C”** Findings Statement

¹ Department of Environmental Conservation, *The SEQRA Handbook, 4th Edition, 2020, Chapter 5: Environmental Impact Statement*, pg 145.

RESOLUTION APPROVING THE FINDINGS STATEMENT FOR THE BRIDGEHAMPTON TO BUELL UNDERGROUND 69KV CABLE PROJECT

WHEREAS, on April 6, 2021, LIPA determined that the proposed installation of an underground 69kV transmission cable between the Bridgehampton and Buell substations via an existing LIPA ROW (referred to as the “Proposed Action” in the DEIS and the “DEIS Proposal” in the Findings Statement) had the potential for significant adverse environmental impacts and issued a Positive Declaration, in accordance with the State Environmental Quality Review Act (“SEQRA”) and its implementing regulations at 6 NYCRR Part 617; and

WHEREAS, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (“DEIS”) was prepared to identify, discuss, and evaluate the Proposed Action’s potential significant adverse environmental impacts and associated proposed mitigation, which DEIS was accepted by the Board in May 2022; and

WHEREAS, the original route and associated SEQRA documents, including the DEIS, evaluated a 5.2-mile underground cable within the existing LIPA right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, PSEG Long Island conducted a public hearing on the DEIS to solicit comments on the proposed construction and route. PSEG Long Island received over 340 comments. Many of the comments expressed concern about the potential adverse environmental impacts associated with installing the underground cable within the Long Pond Greenbelt and other sensitive areas; and

WHEREAS, PSEG Long Island took into consideration these comments, other concerns, and the potential for proposed alternatives considered in the DEIS to mitigate or avoid those impacts and subsequently redesigned the underground cable route to proceed north from the Bridgehampton Substation through the existing roadway rights-of-way before turning southeast to the Buell substation, which redesigned route is approximately 7.6 miles and no longer runs through the Long Pond Greenbelt; and

WHEREAS, a version of the new route was reviewed in detail as an alternative in the DEIS as the Northerly Underground Circuit alternative (Alternative 2), was referred to as the Preferred Alternative in the FEIS, and is referred to as the “Proposed Action” in the Findings Statement; and

WHEREAS, as required by SEQRA, the FEIS addresses all substantive comments provided by the public, involved agencies, and other interested parties at the DEIS hearing and in writing through the end of the DEIS review comment period. In addition, the FEIS also addresses all substantive comments provided by the public, involved agencies, and other interested parties that were provided up until the submittal of the FEIS.

WHEREAS, as provided for in SEQRA, the FEIS incorporates by reference the DEIS, so that the combination of these two documents constitutes the entire Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”) for the Proposed Action, as amended; and

WHEREAS, the FEIS was approved by the Board on November 13, 2024; and

WHEREAS, the Board has reviewed the SEQRA Findings Statement and the Certification of Findings, dated December 18, 2024, and determines the contents thereof meet the requirements of SEQRA.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, the Board of Trustees hereby approves the Findings Statement pursuant to SEQRA 6 NYCRR 617.11; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby certify that the requirements of Article 8 of the New York State Conservation Law and the implementing regulations of the NYSDEC, 6 NYCRR Part 617, have been met; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby certify that consistent with the social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, the Proposed Action is one that avoids or minimizes adverse environmental impacts to the maximum extent practicable; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby certify that consistent with the social, economic and other essential considerations from among the reasonable alternatives available, adverse environmental impacts will be avoided or minimized to the maximum extent practicable by incorporating as conditions to the decision those mitigative measures that were identified as practicable, as set in the Findings Statement; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby authorizes LIPA's Senior Vice President of Transmission and Distribution to execute the Findings Statement and Certification of Findings; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees hereby directs the filing of the applicable notice of the Findings Statement and distribution of copies of the Findings Statement in accordance with the requirements of SEQRA.

Dated: December 18, 2024



FIGURE 1
PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE ROUTE MAP
BRIDGEHAMPTON TO BUELL NEW 69KV UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION CABLE
 Sources: NYS Orthoimagery, 2023; Suffolk County GIS, 2024



Bridgehampton to Buell New 69kV Underground Cable Project

Findings Statement

Presented by: Jason Horowitz, *Assistant General Counsel*

December 18, 2024



Proposed Action Recap

Project Scope and Need

- Installation of a new underground 69kV cable from the Bridgehampton Substation to the Buell Substation (approximately 7.6 miles).
- Cable installed beneath existing paved roadways.
- Construction methods:
 - Open Trench
 - Horizontal Directional Drill
 - 15 Manholes
 - 1 Long Island Rail Road Crossing

Addresses load growth projection of 2% per year for the next 10 years

Route Overview



Final SEQRA Step



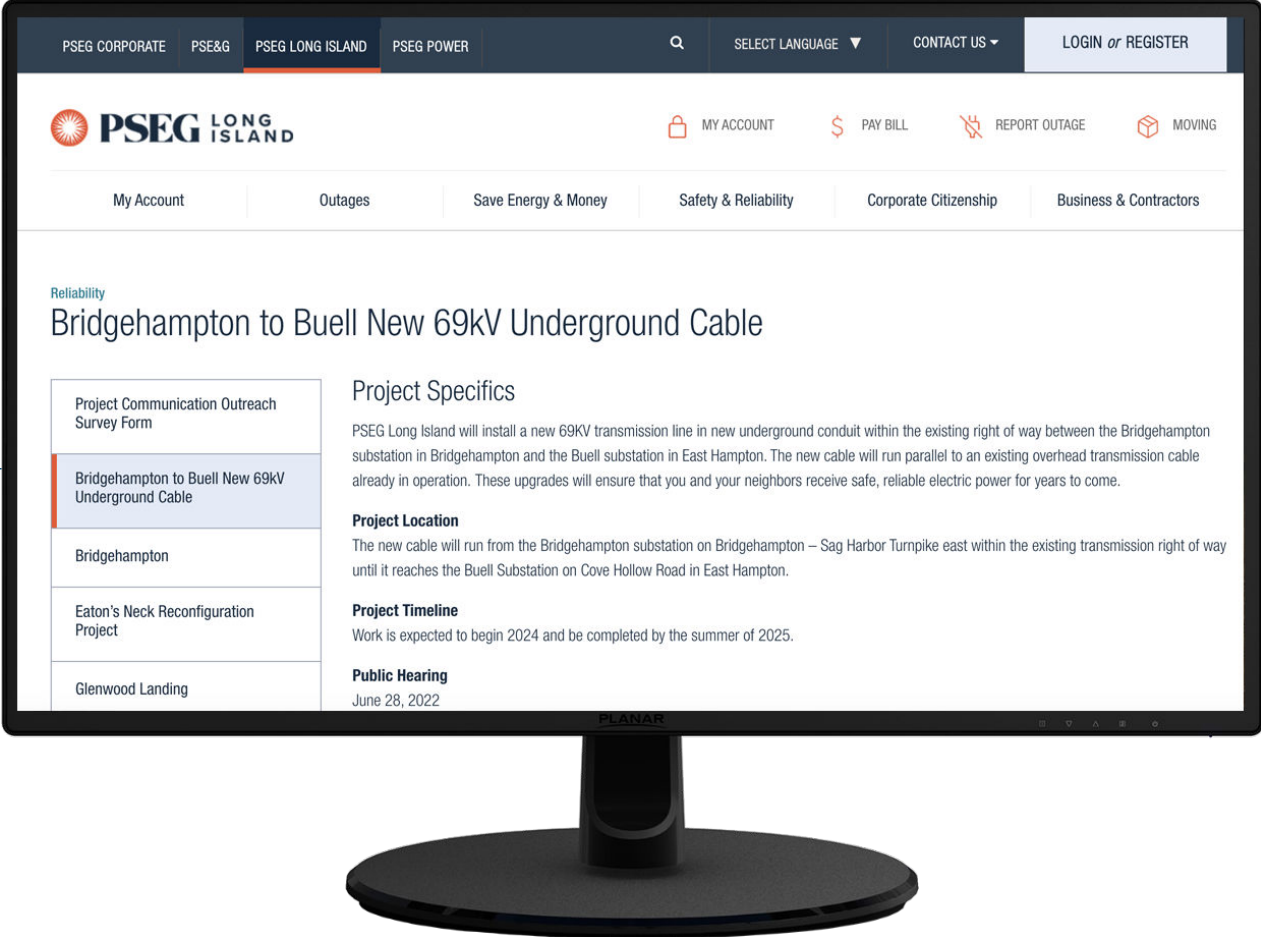
Summary of the Findings Statement

Description Of Lead Agency Activities Under SEQRA; Project Location and Description	Need, Objective And Benefits Of The Proposed Action	Consideration Of Potential Environmental Impacts, Facts And Conclusions Disclosed In The FEIS	Summary Of Mitigation Measures To Be Implemented For The Proposed Action



PSEG Long Island Project Page

[Visit PSEG Long Island's Project Page](#)



Questions?

Jason Horowitz
Assistant General Counsel

lipower.org

