

**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND AND PROVIDENCE PLANTATIONS  
ENERGY FACILITY SITING BOARD**

**In re: The Narragansett Electric** :  
**Company d/b/a National Grid** : **Docket No. SB-2012-01**  
**Interstate Reliability Project** :

National Grid's Responses to the  
EFSB's 1<sup>st</sup> Set of Data Requests

REQUEST EFSB 1-8:

Section 8.11 (page 8-22) states, "The rating panel recommended that National Grid evaluate the feasibility of screen plantings to mitigate the visual impact of the project." Did National Grid conduct this evaluation and what were the results? How will screen plantings be utilized during the life of this project?

RESPONSE:

It is standard practice for National Grid to evaluate the feasibility of screening on its rights of way (ROW) as the rating panel recommended and to offer to abutters to the ROW additional screening that is consistent with National Grid's vegetation management plan. The primary goals of the vegetation management plan are to: (1) provide for safe and reliable delivery of electric power; (2) provide access for maintenance of the electric facilities; and (3) maintain a fully vegetated ROW with a diverse native low growing plant community.

Visual screening within a ROW is provided by the low growing deciduous and non-deciduous (evergreen) plant community. In locations along a ROW that are close to homes and other visually sensitive areas, taller shrubs are allowed to grow, and are sometimes planted, to provide screening. In these locations, non-deciduous trees are preferred to provide all-season screening. The appropriate size, maturity, spacing and species selection are somewhat specific to each site, but plantings within the ROW are generally restricted to species with a mature height that does not exceed 15 feet in areas directly under the wires, or 20 feet in the area between the wires and the edge of the ROW. National Grid has a list of native plants that are compatible with ROW vegetation management objectives.

Beyond the edge of the ROW, the vegetative screening of transmission line facilities involves site-specific considerations, including the location of the view point, topography, existing vegetation, etc. National Grid's arborists, foresters, and landscape consultants have discussed National Grid's post-construction landscape restoration plan

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Daniel McIntyre and David Beron

with abutters to the ROW and has reached verbal agreements with some of the abutters to provide (a) replacement screening and (b) the use of a landscaper and/or landscape architect to assist in the planning and installation of such screening.

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