

**Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission
Docket 5011**

**In Re: The Narragansett Electric Company
D/B/A National Grid
Review Of Proposed Power Purchase Agreements
Pursuant to RIGL §39-26.1**

**Direct Testimony of Aaron Svedlow
On Behalf of Gravel Pit Solar II, LLC**

March 13, 2020

1 **I. INTRODUCTION**

2 **Q. Please state your name and business address.**

3 A. Aaron Svedlow, 7 Pine Grove Way, Falmouth, Maine 04105.

4
5 **Q. Please state your relationship with Gravel Pit Solar II, LLC.**

6 A. I am the President of North Light Energy, LLC (North Light). North Light is developing
7 the Gravel Pit solar electric facility (Facility) on behalf of D. E. Shaw Renewable
8 Investments, L.L.C. (DESRI), and I am acting as the Director of Development for the
9 Facility.

10

11 **Q. Please describe your educational and professional background.**

12 A. I earned my B.S. from the University of New Hampshire, and an M.S. from the
13 University of Southern Maine.

14

15 My company leads northeast project development for DESRI. I have developed and
16 permitted more than 1 GW of solar and wind across the U.S., including over 400 MW in
17 the northeast. I previously served as Director of Development for NextEra Energy
18 Resources, as Vice President for Ranger Solar, and as a project director at Tetra Tech.

19

20 **Q. What are your responsibilities as Director of Development of the Facility?**

21 A. I am responsible for the management and oversight of project development including
22 managing the interconnection process with ISO NE, overseeing the engineering of the
23 Facility, public relations, and securing the necessary real estate rights for the Facility.

24

25 **Q. What is the purpose of your testimony in this docket?**

26 A. On February 4, 2020, the Narragansett Electric Company d/b/a National Grid (National
27 Grid) filed a proposed Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) with Gravel Pit for review and

1 approval by the Rhode Island Public Utilities Commission (Commission) under the
2 Rhode Island Long-Term Contracting Standard For Renewable Energy, R.I. Gen. Laws
3 §§ 39-26.1-1, et. seq (LTCS). The proposed PPA provides for National Grid’s purchase
4 of energy and associated renewable energy certificates from the Facility for a twenty-year
5 service term.

6
7 In this docket, National Grid is requesting that the Commission approve the PPA, and I
8 am testifying in support of National Grid’s request and to testify about the Gravel Pit
9 Solar project.

10
11 I am also requesting that the Commission approve the PPA.

12
13 **II. OVERVIEW OF THE PROJECT**

14 **Q. Please provide a brief description of the Facility.**

15 A. The Facility is a proposed 50 megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) photovoltaic solar
16 energy generation facility that will provide Rhode Island with renewable energy. The
17 Facility will be located in East Windsor, Connecticut. The Facility will interconnect with
18 the existing Eversource transmission system at 115 kilovolts (kV).

19
20 **Q. Does the Facility meet the definition of “newly developed renewable energy
21 resource” as set forth in the LTCS?**

22 A. Yes. As a solar electric generation facility, it is an eligible renewable energy resource as
23 defined by R.I. Gen. Laws § 39-26-5, and the Facility has not begun operation, nor, at the
24 time of selection, had we implemented investment or lending agreements necessary to
25 finance the construction of the Facility.

1 **Q. What is the anticipated commercial operation date of the Facility?**

2 A. The Project is scheduled to go into commercial operations January 15, 2023.

3

4 **Q. Does Gravel Pit believe it will be able to meet this date?**

5 A. Yes. Achieving the scheduled commercial operations date is largely a function of two
6 things. Obtaining permits in a timely fashion and installation of the solar arrays. The
7 team developing the Facility has extensive experience developing similar utility-scale
8 solar facilities in the region. Based on that experience developing, permitting and
9 constructing solar projects, the schedule is, in my opinion, credible.

10

11 **Q. Has Gravel Pit started the interconnection process?**

12 A. Yes, Gravel Pit has ISO-NE queue position 892. The Facility is in the System Impact
13 Study (SIS) phase and according to ISO-NE the expected SIS completion date is May 5,
14 2020.

15

16 **Q. Has Gravel Pit started permitting the Project?**

17 A. Gravel Pit has completed the majority of the required site characterization studies to
18 support permit applications including, but not limited to, topography surveys,
19 geotechnical tests, and wetland delineations. Preliminary civil and electrical design have
20 been completed, and we expect to file permits with the Connecticut Siting Council later
21 this year.

22

23 **III. THE PPA**

24 **Q. Are you familiar with the PPA that is before the Rhode Island Public Utilities
25 Commission in this docket?**

26 A. Yes.

27

1 **Q. What was your role in the development of the PPA?**

2 A. At the conclusion of the competitive bid process, Gravel Pit was notified that it had been
3 selected to negotiate a PPA. Thereafter, negotiations began with National Grid under my,
4 and Hy Martin's, direction and supervision.

5
6 **Q. Did the final PPA that National Grid submitted to the Commission result from
7 arms-length negotiations?**

8 A. Yes. The final PPA was the result of extensive arms-length negotiations between the
9 parties.

10

11 **Q. Does the PPA contain a condition that it shall not be effective without Commission
12 review and approval?**

13 A. Yes. Section 8.1 of the PPA contains this provision.

14

15 **Q. What is the price in the PPA?**

16 A. The price is \$52.95/MWh, which remains flat for the 20-year term of the PPA. As a
17 result, the Facility provides a newly developed renewable energy resource at a cost that
18 will help stabilize long-term energy prices.

19

20 **IV. BENEFITS**

21 **Q. Please describe the environmental benefits of the Facility.**

22 A. As a newly developed renewable energy resource, the Facility will provide clean,
23 renewable energy without producing greenhouse gas emissions or associated waste. As a
24 renewable resource, the Facility will displace the need for fossil fueled generation and
25 will reduce greenhouse gases. The Facility will also help Rhode Island meet the goals of
26 the Resilient Rhode Island Act.

27

1 **Q. Are you familiar with the pre-filed testimony of Stephen A. McCauley and**
2 **Katherine Wilson?**

3 **A.** Yes.
4

5 **Q. The pre-filed testimony of Stephen A. McCauley and Katherine Wilson references**
6 **Gravel Pit's commitment to investing at least \$300,000 in Rhode Island's new**
7 **energy workforce training. Can you provide some additional detail on this**
8 **commitment?**

9 **A.** Gravel Pit has committed to invest at least \$300,000 in Rhode Island programs that train
10 tomorrow's workforce, including apprenticeship and training programs to support Rhode
11 Island's growing renewable energy workforce. Renewable projects create jobs, and we
12 want to help Rhode Island's workforce be the most skilled and competitive workforce in
13 the region.
14

15 **V. CONCLUSION**

16 **Q. Does this conclude your testimony?**

17 **A.** Yes. In addition, I will be available for further questions and to provide additional
18 information at the public hearing in this docket.
19

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

I hereby certify that on March 13, 2020, I sent a copy of the within to all parties set forth on the attached Service List by electronic mail and copies to Luly Massaro, Division Clerk, by electronic mail and regular mail.

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