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August 14, 2009

Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary
Nathaniel J. Davis, Sr., Deputy Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE,
Washington, D.C. 20426

Re: Verplanck Pumped Storage Project, # 13358

Dear Ms. Bose,

Scenic Hudson, Inc. is a 46-year-old nonprofit environmental organization and separately incorporated land trust dedicated to protecting and enhancing the scenic, natural, historic, agricultural and recreational treasures of the Hudson River and its valley.

We are writing to request status as an intervenor in order to be able to participate in the environmental review of the above-referenced project.

Scenic Hudson was founded in 1963 by citizens concerned about Con Edison's proposed pumped storage hydroelectric project and the potential adverse impacts on the scenic and natural resources at Storm King Mountain, also on the Hudson River approximately 19 miles north of the site of the proposed project at Verplanck Quarry.

Con Edison's proposed pumped storage plant resulted in "The Scenic Hudson Decision," which helped establish citizen standing in environmental issues. Further, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which requires environmental review for projects likely to impose an adverse impact on the environment, was passed into law in response to the battle over Storm King. Because the Verplanck Pumped Storage Project is likely to have an impact on the environment, Scenic Hudson recommends the strictest compliance with all NEPA requirements.

Scenic Hudson is deeply concerned that our current dependence on fossil fuels is unsustainable for a number of reasons, including poor air quality and associated health risks, the need for energy independence, and carbon emissions that have contributed to global climate change and

sea level rise. The development of new technologies must be encouraged in order that existing power plants can be replaced with clean energy sources.

To address these issues, New York State has adopted an energy plan that sets as a goal to increase the proportion of renewable generation to 30 percent of electricity demand by 2015. Further, on August 6, 2009 Governor Paterson signed Executive Order No. 24, which sets an ambitious goal to reduce NYS greenhouse gas emissions by 80 percent by the year 2050 (known as the “80 by 50” goal), using the baseline year of 1990.

By providing a cleaner, renewable source of energy to generate electricity during times of peak usage during the day and, potentially, using wind energy at night to pump water back into the quarry, the underground hydroelectric project in Verplanck could help New York State meet its energy goals.

However, like all power plants, site specific environmental impacts must be identified, studied, and addressed. Below are issues that should be given a hard look during this process:

- Groundwater
 - Impacts on the water table
 - Analysis of groundwater flow
 - Impacts on drinking water supply
- Surface water
 - Impacts on riparian habitats
 - Impacts on critical aquatic habitats
 - Impacts on surface water flow
 - Impact of temporary dock in Hudson River
- Wildlife
 - Impact on aquatic and terrestrial flora and fauna, particularly species listed in the natural heritage Program
 - Loss of habitat
- Air
 - Impacts of vehicle emissions
 - Impacts of mining operations
 - Impacts of obtaining energy for pumping when not using wind generated power
- Seismic activity
 - Impacts on geology
 - Worst case scenario
- Energy supply and demand
 - Identify current supply and demand for area served
 - Identify potential conservation measures

- Community features
 - Impact on local residences and community facilities
 - Mitigation strategies for impact on local residences and community facilities
- Construction phasing
 - Identify construction schedule and logistics
- Adjacent industrial uses
 - Identify the potential risk of construction and operation with LaFarge plant, Indian Point Nuclear facilities, and proposed project by applicant at Tompkins Cove
 - Identify the cumulative impact the LaFarge plant, Indian Point Nuclear facilities, and proposed project by applicant at Tompkins Cove and this proposal in such close proximity.

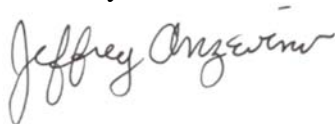
In addition, Scenic Hudson requests that the need for this project be demonstrated and alternatives to the project design and operations be identified and the associated impacts compared.

Scenic Hudson is gravely concerned about the implications of global climate change, sea level rise, and the host of impacts that have resulted from our reliance on fossil fuels as a source of energy. It is encouraging that entrepreneurs are investing in the development of alternative energy resources that could help the State of New York achieve its renewable energy goals in order to achieve carbon neutrality.

However, as watchdogs of the Hudson River's scenic and ecological resources since 1963, we also understand that before this project moved to the next phase of approval, its environmental and community impacts must be considered.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey Anzevino, AICP
Assistant Director of Land Use Advocacy