

Vermont Public Utility Commission
112 State Street
Montpelier, VT 05620

August 15, 2023

To the Commission,

We are writing to express our support for the proposed changes to the Net-Metering Rule, specifically limiting forest clearing for net-metered sites and improving the process for obtaining preferred site letters. Limiting forest clearing to three cumulative acres is particularly important, because Vermont forests perform critical ecosystem services including absorbing and sequestering carbon dioxide — a greenhouse gas. The Vermont Forest Carbon Inventory estimates that an average acre of Vermont forest stores 389 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalents and sequesters an additional 1.3 metric tons each year (Kosiba 2021). Placing a limit on forest clearing will reduce the carbon footprint of large solar arrays and increase the amount of “carbon free” electricity generated. In addition, by keeping more forest intact this change to the Net-Metering Rule will help prevent erosion on steep slopes and preserve Vermont’s scenic vistas, tourism and recreation industries, and employment opportunities.

Secondly, we wish to thank you for hearing our concerns and requiring that Applicants provide adjacent landowners with 45-day advance notice prior to submitting an Application for a Certificate of Public Good (GPG) to the Commission. This change will make the preferred site letter process more transparent because stakeholders will have enough details about a project to determine how it might impact them. In addition, stakeholders will be aware that their local government will be reviewing a solar project and perhaps, signing a preferred site letter.

Sincerely,

Joy Kenseth

133 Upper Loveland Road
Norwich VT 05055

Daniel and Jennifer Goulet

185 Upper Loveland Road
Norwich VT 0505