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Haul Route Wetland and Waterbodies Study

**Haul Route Wetlands and
Waterbodies Study for the
Noble Ball Hill Windpark**

**Towns of Hanover and Villenova
Chautauqua County, New York**

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Prepared for:

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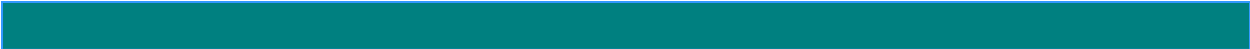



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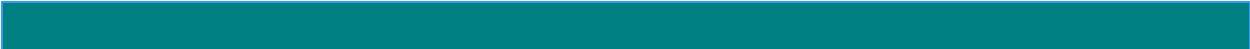
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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CWA	Clean Water Act
E & E	Ecology and Environment, Inc.
ECL	(New York State) Environmental Conservation Law
DEIS	draft environmental impact statement
MW	megawatt
Noble	Noble Ball Hill Windpark, LLC
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
NYS	New York State
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
ROW	right-of-way
USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey

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Introduction

This study has been prepared to support the Ball Hill Windpark (the Project) Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for Noble Ball Hill Windpark, LLC (Noble) and to support the Joint Permit Application submitted to the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) for the Project. This report addresses the areas of potential road improvement along segments of the Haul Route that are located within the Project Area (the Local Haul Route). These areas are being considered for the delivery of equipment during the construction of the Project. The proposed Haul Route alternatives and potential improvements to existing roads that may be required to accommodate the equipment and delivery vehicles are included in the Transportation Haul Route Study prepared by ESS Group, Inc. The Transportation Haul Route Study, which includes detailed drawings of the proposed road modifications, can be found in Appendix N of the DEIS (see Appendix D of the Joint Permit Application). This study only considers the Local Haul Route, or those intersections along the Haul Route that are located within the Project Area (herein referred to as the study area).

Noble has identified a potential need to expand existing roads to facilitate equipment access to the Project Area. Currently, Noble is negotiating access agreements with landowners to allow expansion of roadways to meet Project-specific needs. For this reason, access has not been granted to date for the properties where improvements are being considered. Based on the results of the field reconnaissance, upon selection of the preferred Haul Route, more formal delineations may be required due to the likely presence of jurisdictional wetlands at intersections which may require improvements.

Ecology and Environment, Inc. (E & E) conducted roadside surveys at all intersections within the Local Haul Route study area as per the Transportation Haul Route Study. The purpose of the surveys was to determine the presence or absence of wetlands and waterbodies at each Local Haul Route intersection, that are or have the potential to be regulated by the USACE under Section 401 and 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) and have the potential to be regulated by NYSDEC under Article 24, Freshwater Wetlands Act, and Article 15, Protection of Waters Program. This document is intended to provide the results of those surveys. Because property access was not secured for the properties, E & E reviewed existing

mapping and aerial photography and verified the presence or absence of wetlands in the field through roadside observations.

Section 1 of this report provides a general Project description and a description of the Haul Route, Section 2 outlines the regulatory framework that governs activities in wetlands and waterbodies, Section 3 outlines the methodologies used to conduct field surveys, Section 4 provides the results of field surveys including a description of the preliminary data review for the Local Haul Route intersections, and Section 5 provides the references used in compiling this report. Figure 1 depicts the Project Area for the Ball Hill Windpark. Figure 2 depicts the Project facilities, and Figure 3 depicts a topographic map of the Ball Hill Windpark. Figure 4 depicts United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) National Wetland Inventory (NWI) maps and NYSDEC Freshwater Wetlands maps. Figure 5A depicts the Haul Route alternatives outside of the study area and Figure 5B depicts the Local Haul Route alternatives within the area investigated for this study. Figures 6A through 6C depict the potentially affected intersections on the Local Haul Route within the study area for each of the Haul Route alternatives. Figures 7-E1 through 7-NW4 in Appendix A depict the wetland and water features noted at the potentially affected intersections during field surveys.

Project Description

- Installation and operation of 60 wind turbines (49 in the Town of Villenova and 11 in the Town of Hanover) with a capacity of 90 megawatts (MW) within an approximate 13,658-acre Project Area in the Towns of Villenova and Hanover (see Figure 1).
- Construction and use of approximately 16 miles of access roads (13 miles in the Town of Villenova and 3 miles in the Town of Hanover) that will connect each wind turbine to a town or county roadway to allow equipment and vehicle access for construction and subsequent maintenance of the facilities as well as emergency services, if needed. After construction, the 35-foot access road will be scaled back to 16 feet, allowing Noble to use the existing roadway for maintenance and operational purposes; and
- Construction and use of an electrical collection system that will allow delivery of electricity to a new substation to be constructed in the Town of Hanover. Where practical, the electrical collection system will be installed underground along the same right-of-way (ROW) corridor as the access roads. A total of 23.8 miles of collection lines (including underground collection lines co-located with access roads) will be installed (18.7 miles in the Town of Villenova and 5.1 miles in the Town of Hanover). Approximately 8.5 miles will be installed within new ROWs over private lands between turbines (7.3 miles in the Town of Villenova and 1.2 miles in the Town of Hanover). As currently designed, nearly the entire collection system will be installed underground. A total of 174 feet (0.03 miles) of overhead collection lines will be