

Notice of Availability - Draft Environmental Assessment: In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act, the Isle au Haut Electric Power Company (IAHEPC), on behalf of the Northern Border Regional Commission (NBRC), has completed a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) evaluating the potential environmental impacts of the IAHEPC's proposal to install a new submarine cable (the Proposed Action). NEPA requires that federal agencies consider the effects of a proposed action and any reasonable alternatives on the human environment. This Draft EA evaluates the potential impacts that would result from the implementation of the Proposed Action as compared to the No Action alternative. The Draft EA is available upon request. Please send an email request to nepa@nbrc.gov. The Draft EA will be provided in electronic format unless a hard copy is specifically requested.

Project Title: Submarine Cable Project

Project Proponent: NBRC

Project Location: Isle au Haut, Maine

Purpose of the Proposed Action: The purpose of the proposed action is to replace the aging submarine electric cable servicing Isle au Haut to ensure long-term, reliable electric service for the island's residents, visitors, and businesses. The current cable, installed in 1983, has surpassed its expected lifespan and is increasingly strained by the island's growing power demands. The need for the project is driven by the aging infrastructure and increased energy consumption, which threaten the continued provision of dependable electricity to the Isle au Haut community.

Project Description: The Proposed Action involves the NBRC approving funds for the IAHEPC to install a new submarine electric power cable between Stonington, Maine, and Isle au Haut. The project will include trenching and burying the cable in the intertidal zone, laying the cable on the seafloor across East Penobscot Bay, and connecting it to existing power infrastructure at both locations. The new cable will be installed parallel to the existing one, which will remain in place as a backup. The project is expected to be completed within one week, in November 2025 or 2026.

Public Comments: NBRC is accepting comments on this Draft EA from October 2, 2024, through the end of the day of October 31, 2024. Comments should be submitted by email to nepa@nbrc.gov or mailed to The Clark Group LLC, 137 Elm Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.

Date of Posting: October 1, 2024