

**DRAFT SCOPE FOR THE  
DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (DEIS)**

**“BRIDGEHAMPTON TO BUELL (BTB) NEW 69 kV UNDERGROUND TRANSMISSION CABLE”**

Towns of Southampton and East Hampton  
Suffolk County, New York  
May 4, 2021

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**1.0 Introduction**

This document is the Draft Scope of the issues and analyses to be included in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed Bridgehampton to Buell (BTB) New 69kV Underground Transmission Cable. The Applicant is PSEG Long Island (PSEGLI) as Agent for the Long Island Lighting Company d/b/a LIPA, a wholly owned subsidiary of the Long Island Power Authority (LIPA) and the DEIS will be prepared by PSEGLI with support from a team of professionals.

**2.0 Brief Description of the Proposed Action**

The Proposed Action is the installation of a new underground 69kV transmission cable from the Bridgehampton Substation located on Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike in the Town of Southampton to the Buell Substation located on Cove Hollow Road in the Town of East Hampton (approximately 5.2 miles). The new underground cable is designed to be installed below grade within the existing LIPA owned and/or controlled overhead right-of-way (ROW). Existing overhead circuits are currently located within the ROW and will remain under the Proposed Action. The Proposed Action is intended to address transmission system constraints resulting from increased load demand from customers on the South Fork of Long Island.

In addition to the underground cable, fourteen manholes will be installed along the Proposed Action route. Approximately 4,000 linear feet of the cable extending east from the Bridgehampton Substation to the west side of Widow Gavits Road will be installed via horizontal directional drill (HDD) with a single manhole installed within the previously disturbed area west of Widow Gavits Road. Approximately 100 linear feet of the cable located west of Cove Hollow Road and beneath the LIRR will be installed via jack & bore. The remaining portions of cable installation will be installed via trenching.

To facilitate the temporary use of HDD equipment and pipe laydown during construction, a 0.9 acre portion of the LIPA owned and/or controlled overhead ROW north of the existing Bridgehampton Substation will be cleared; a 0.36 acre portion of the cleared area will also require grading to facilitate construction. A single manhole will be located within this cleared area. Approximately 0.31 acres of clearing and 0.11 acres of grading within the area north of the existing Bridgehampton substation will occur within 535' of a known Tiger Salamander breeding pond. Due to the potential temporary loss of habitat, a Part 182 Incidental Take permit will be required. PSEG Long Island is currently discussing with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) appropriate mitigation measures, which will ensure a net conservation benefit to the species is achieved upon completion of the Proposed Action. Potential mitigation

measures include, but are not limited to, the installation of a Tiger Salamander culvert to connect existing fragmented habitats.

Additionally, portions of the ROW may require stabilization in order to allow machinery access for the installation of the underground cable and manholes. Stabilization may include grading or excavation of existing soils and temporary placement of Recycled Concrete Aggregate (RCA).

### **3.0 Potentially Significant Adverse Impacts**

The following potentially adverse impacts of the Proposed Action will be described and evaluated in the DEIS.

#### **Impacts on Land:**

- *The Proposed Action may involve construction on slopes of 15% or greater.*

Portions of the proposed route of the underground transmission cable have slopes 15% or greater. Existing slopes of this magnitude often result in the need for greater erosion control and sedimentation measures and have wider ranging impacts on the preservation of natural ecosystems. As a result, construction in slopes of this grade will be assessed for potential impacts.

- *The Proposed Action may result in increased erosion, whether from physical disturbance or vegetation removal (including from treatment by herbicides).*

The total disturbance associated with the Proposed Action is 18.70 acres. The portions of the underground transmission cable and associated underground vaults that will be constructed in areas that are currently vegetated will be evaluated for a potential increase in erosion of the project area. The current land use or coertype of the Proposed Action and proposed disturbance are noted in the following table.

Land Use or Coertype	Proposed Action (acres)	Proposed Disturbance (acres)
Roads, Buildings, and other paved or impervious surfaces	2.43	0.59
Forested	3.13	0.77
Meadows, grasslands or brushlands (non-agricultural, including abandoned agricultural)	23.59	12.64
Wetlands	0.71	0
Non-vegetated (bare rock, earth or fill)	6.54	4.70
<b>Total</b>	<b>36.40</b>	<b>18.70</b>

#### **Impacts on Surface Water:**

- *The Proposed Action may involve construction within or adjoining a freshwater or tidal wetland or water body.*

The Proposed Action includes the installation of underground transmission cable below two (2) regulated freshwater wetlands associated with the Long Pond wetland complex between Bridgehampton-Sag Harbor Turnpike and Widow Gavits Road. Also additional freshwater wetlands associated with the Long Pong wetland complex and adjacent un-named wetland complexes are located to the north and south of the existing overhead ROW will be adjacent to the Proposed Action. Approximately 450' west of the Bridgehampton Substation, the pipe laydown area required to facilitate the HDD will cross the southern portion of a regulated freshwater as well as enter the adjacent area of an additional freshwater wetland.. Potential impacts to these wetlands from the Proposed Action will be examined in further detail.

#### **Impacts on Groundwater:**

- *The Proposed Action may result in temporary new or additional use of groundwater or may have the potential to introduce contaminants to groundwater or an aquifer.*

Approximately 4,000 linear feet (LF) of the new underground transmission cable will be installed via HDD. During construction the total anticipated water usage/demand per day will be 15,000 gallons to facilitate the drilling operations. Evaluation of water withdrawals of this magnitude on the local water supply and groundwater elevation will be undertaken.

#### **Impact on Flooding:**

- *The Proposed Action may result in development within a 100 year floodplain*

Approximately 150 LF of the Proposed Action will be located within FEMA Flood Hazard Zone A. An evaluation of the Proposed Action in relation to the flood zone will be undertaken.

#### **Impact on Plants and Animals:**

- *The Proposed Action may cause reduction in population or loss of individuals of threatened or endangered species as listed by New York State or the Federal Government, that use the site or are found on, over, or near the site.*

PSEGLI contacted the New York Natural Heritage Program (NYNHP) on December 18, 2019 to determine if there are records of any rare, threatened or endangered species that exist within the Proposed Action area. On January 15, 2019, NYNHP returned records of 14 potential rare, threated or endangered species on, over, or near the site. Clearing and grading will be required within the 535' regulatory buffer of the New York State (NYS) listed endangered tiger salamander. Clearing and grading activities within the 535' buffer have the potential to cause the loss of suitable habitat during construction, resulting in a potential significant impact to the species. Impact of the Proposed Action on the other threatened and endangered species also will be evaluated.

- *The Proposed Action may result in the reduction or degradation of a habitat used by any rare, threatened or endangered species, as listed by New York State or the federal government.*

Clearing and grading will be required within the 535' regulatory buffer of the NYS listed endangered tiger salamander. Clearing and grading activities within the 535' buffer have the potential to cause the loss of suitable habitat during construction, resulting in a potential significant impact to the species. Impact of the Proposed Action on the habitat and species will be evaluated.

- *The Proposed Action may result in a reduction or degradation of any habitat used by any species of special concern and conservation needs, as listed by New York State or the Federal government.*

The Proposed Action is located within a significant occurrence of pitch pine-oak forest natural community, north of the East Hampton Airport. The community provides habitat for the coastal barrens buckmoth, a NYS listed Special Concern species. Impact of the Proposed Action on the habitat and species will be evaluated.

- *The Proposed Action may result in the removal of, or ground disturbance in, any portion of a designated significant natural community.*

The Proposed Action passes through three significant natural communities designated by NYNHP; Coastal Plain Pond Shore, Coastal Oak-Heath Forest and Pitch Pine-Oak Forest. The Proposed Action has the potential to impact the quality of these habitats through construction related disturbance.

**Impact on Historic and Archeological Resources:**

- *The Proposed Action may occur wholly or partially within, or substantially contiguous to, an area designated as sensitive for archaeological sites on the NY State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) archaeological site inventory.*

Approximately 2.4 miles of the new underground transmission cable and associated underground vaults will be installed within areas designated as archaeologically sensitive areas by SHPO. Installation of the cable and vaults through excavation has the potential to impact archaeological resources within the ROW.

- *The Proposed Action may result in the destruction of alteration of all or part of the site or property.*

Approximately 2.4 miles of the new underground transmission cable and associated underground vaults will be installed within areas designated as archaeologically sensitive areas by SHPO. Installation of the cable and vaults through excavation will permanently alter a small portion of the surface of the ROW and the entirety of the subsurface of the ROW, potentially impacting archaeological resources.

**Impact on Open Space and Recreation:**

- *The Proposed Action may result in the temporary loss of current or future recreational resource.*

The Proposed Action is partially situated within the Long Pond Greenbelt and is also partially situated within land owned and utilized by a private hunting club. In addition to the Long Pond Greenbelt, adjacent parks along the route include Buckskill Nature Preserve and Millers Ground Preserve. Several named and unnamed trails also cross the ROW. The remainder of the route is situated within an existing utility ROW comprised of municipal and private ownership. During construction activities, access to these resources will be restricted for safety purposes resulting in a potential temporary impact on open space and recreational resources.

**Impact on Critical Environmental Areas (CEAs):**

- *The Proposed Action may result in a reduction in the quality of the resource or characteristic which was the basis for designation of the CEA.*

Portions of the Proposed Action are located within the following CEAs:

- Town of Southampton Aquifer Overlay District
- Lands contemplated for acquisition by the County known as Long Pond
- Suffolk County South Fork Special Groundwater Protection Area
- Town of East Hampton Water Recharge Overlay District

An evaluation of the Proposed Action's impacts on the resources identified in each district will be required to determine the potential impacts to the CEA's.

**Impact on Noise, Odor, and Light:**

- *The construction of the Proposed Action temporarily may produce increases in sound above noise levels.*

The Proposed Action will utilize drilling and construction equipment in areas that are predominantly surrounded by open space and suburban residential uses. Increases in noise related to the use of construction equipment will occur during installation of the Proposed Action and may have an impact on the open space areas and nearby residences.

**4.0 Organization and Overall Content of the DEIS Document**

The DEIS must conform to the basic content requirements as contained in Title 6, New York Code of Rules & Regulations (6NYCRR) Part 617.9 (b). The outline of the DEIS should include the following sections:

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- 5.3 Alternative 3: New 69kV Circuit Underground South to Montauk Highway and North to Buell Substation.
- 5.4 Alternative 4: New Hybrid Overhead/Underground 69kV Circuit North to Sag Harbor and then South to Buell Substation.
- 5.6 Alternative 5: Separate existing Bridgehampton to Buell & Bridgehampton to East Hampton 69kV Double Circuit

## **6.0 References**

## **Appendices**

Appendices to include traffic impact analysis and noise assessment as well as additional technical studies as applicable to support the above scoped sections.

### **5.0 Detailed DEIS Scope**

New York's State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) requires that a DEIS should include a statement and evaluation of potential significant adverse impacts at a level of detail that reflects the severity of the impacts and the reasonable likelihood of their occurrence including short-term and long-term impacts. This section further describes the level and type of analysis expected with respect to the key potential environmental impacts of the Proposed Action. Each major section is followed by a description of the extent and quality of information needed to perform the evaluation of each of the impacted resources.

#### **Description of the Proposed Action**

##### **Description of the Project Area**

1. Describe the entire area that is subject to the Proposed Action, which include: a listing of all tax lots within the affected area, proposed uses of said tax parcels, and accompanying map illustrating the same.

##### **Background and History**

1. Describe the site and utility use history; include a full description of the existing and historic use of the site, a description of previous clearing activities, the status of the current use of the site, site ownership, and existing easements.

##### **Public Need and LIPA Objectives**

1. Relate the Proposed Action to LIPA's goals and objectives for the electric utility grid.
2. Discuss the public need for the Proposed Action.

##### **Objectives of the Project Sponsor**

1. Discuss the objectives of PSEGLI.

##### **Benefits of the Proposed Action**

1. Discuss the benefits of the Proposed Action on the electric utility grid and to the associated communities served.

##### **Proposed Action Location and Existing Site Conditions**

1. Describe the location of the site, using appropriate mapping and/or tables in terms of adjacent/nearby significant properties.
2. Utilize regional mapping resources to identify existing protected, unprotected and developed land.
3. Identify the existing conditions of the site in terms of a site survey, vegetative cover and current use of the area to describe the overall site conditions.

##### **Proposed Action Design and Layout**

1. Provide a table summarizing the breakdown of associated land use and development components of the Proposed Action.
2. Include a brief description of the overall Proposed Action layout; location/distribution of proposed structures on the site, services, access points, limits of site disturbance, and areas to remain undisturbed clearly identified.
3. Discuss all grading activities and identify all areas that will be disturbed and cleared.

4. Provide estimates of the volume of soil to be excavated, cut/filled, removed from site and the maximum depths of cut/fill.
5. Discuss conformance to NYSDEC State Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) stormwater and erosion control regulations for construction and post-construction conditions.
6. Describe the vehicle access points, construction roadway, and permanent access points for maintenance.
7. Discuss internal access path maintenance responsibilities and processes.
8. Include a description of the water supply and proposed wastewater handling from drilling activities and corresponding use of water supply.
9. Discuss the ownership of the properties and easements for the Proposed Action.

### **Construction Process and Operations**

1. Discuss the anticipated construction process, methods, sequence, and schedule.
2. Describe the Proposed Action phasing, with anticipated milestones that initiate/conclude each phase.
3. Describe potential construction equipment storage/staging sites, delivery truck routes, hours of operations, and workers' parking areas.
4. Discuss amount of soil material to be removed from site, number of truck trips, and the duration of this phase of the Proposed Action.
5. Describe the measures taken to prevent/mitigate soil erosion during construction, the pertinent regulations and required plans and permits in this regard, and other actions taken to protect natural and sensitive areas.

### **Permits and Approvals Required**

1. Provide narrative of remaining SEQRA review steps.
2. Identify all the anticipated government and agency permits necessary to implement the Proposed Action as well as any covenants and easements.

### **Natural Environmental Resources**

#### **Soils and Topography**

1. Determine the topography of the site using available topographic information. High and low points will be identified, and a slope analysis presented and discussed.
2. Determine the existing soil types and the limitations/constraints on development of each pursuant to Suffolk County Soil Survey.
3. Collect soil borings to determine subsurface soil quality and depth to groundwater for high and low points.
4. Evaluate the grading proposed for the site, and the volume and disposition/origin of cut or fill.
5. Estimate the quantity of cut/fill to be removed from or placed on the site, the necessary approvals for such import/export of material, and proposed changes to topographic elevations.
6. Describe the mitigation of any issues of erosion, retention of soils, and protection of steep slope areas.
7. Identify any corrective measures necessary to overcome soil limitations.

#### **Water Resources**

1. Describe the existing groundwater, surface water, and drainage conditions on the site, including a discussion of the groundwater and surface water conditions and trends.
2. Describe any existing surface water systems on the Proposed Action site or nearby receiving waters with a focus on nearby water bodies including Long Pond and its associated wetlands.
3. Determine the elevation of the water table beneath the site which through a literature review and on-site soil borings.



4. Analyze other potential sources of water quality impacts related to construction activities, including the potential impacts that would be associated with a frac-out event.
5. Evaluate how the proposed stormwater management practices to be employed during construction activities will comply with NYSDEC SPDES General Permit 0-20-001.
6. Provide a discussion of the Proposed Action's impact on designated flood areas, if any.
7. Describe the water demands of the Proposed Action and the potential for impacts on water supply systems.
8. Provide communications from the Suffolk County Water Authority (SCWA) regarding the impact of the Proposed Action on the existing public water supply located within the vicinity of subject site, and its ability to provide adequate service to meet the water demands associated with the drilling activities associated with the Proposed Action.
9. Evaluate the Proposed Action's potential impacts on and consistency with the Nassau and Suffolk Counties comprehensive management plan for the special groundwater protection area program.
10. Provide sufficient details to address all regulatory approvals necessary for the project as they relate to water resources management so that a coordinated review of the DEIS with involved agencies can be performed.
11. Identify any mitigation measures proposed to minimize impacts to identified water resources.

#### **Ecology**

1. Inventory, document, and map existing habitats through aerial photography and an inspection of the site by a qualified biologist/ecologist.
2. Create this inventory to track the vegetation and wildlife habitats, concentrations of species, and general habitat characteristics throughout the subject site.
3. Analyze all of the existing natural communities in order to describe, map, classify, and rank them with respect to state and global rarity of the community type, consistent with the New York Natural Heritage Program's (NHP) natural community classification database.
4. Provide an inventory of flora and fauna, both observed and expected. Local vegetation types, including any occurrence of facultative wetland indicator plants and vernal ponding, will be fully described for any depressions, kettle holes, ravines, or lowlands. Significant natural features will be noted when encountered. Stands or clusters of unique and critical habitats will be mapped and described.
5. Describe the wetlands and aquatic habitats of Long Pond, and the trends of this habitat.
6. Contact the NHP for site file information concerning habitats, plant and animal species, and for field surveys and investigations of the property.
7. Identify and inventory potential impacts, as well as mitigation measures, from the Proposed Action on protected native plants, plant and animal species listed as endangered, threatened, special concern (or with other protective status) and significant habitat areas on or in the vicinity of the project site.
8. Describe the land clearing and changes in land cover and habitat for the project site including any changes in habitat.
9. Analyze impacts to vegetation, wildlife habitats, and individuals both quantitatively and qualitatively. Include any direct impacts due to change in habitat cover or indirect impacts on human activities, such as noise from construction activities in open space areas.
10. Identify the potential for any direct or indirect impacts on rare, threatened, or otherwise protected plant and animal species and their habitats.
11. Provide sufficient details to address all regulatory approvals necessary for the project as they relate to natural resources management so that a coordinated review of the DEIS with involved agencies can be performed.
12. Identify mitigation measures which may reduce potential ecological impacts.

## **Human Environmental Resources**

### **Cultural Resources**

1. Determine potential presence of and, if determined to be present, the nature and extent of historic and/or pre-historic resources of the site by reference to materials of the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation (NYS OPRHP), to be documented with an appropriate map.
2. Contact NYS OPRHP to determine if a Cultural Resource Assessment (CRA) will or will not be solicited.
3. Prepare a Phase 1 CRA if deemed necessary by NYS OPRHP.
4. Identify any mitigation measures proposed which may reduce potential impacts to cultural resources.

### **Open Space and Recreation**

1. Inventory and describe existing open space and recreation areas on and adjacent to the site.
2. Evaluate the potential impact of the Proposed Action on use of existing Open Space and Recreational resources, including temporary public access impacts during construction.
3. Identify any mitigation measures proposed which may reduce potential impacts to open space and recreation.

### **Critical Environmental Areas**

1. Determine potential presence and extent of CEA's by reference to materials provided by the NYSDEC.
2. Evaluate the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on CEA's.
3. Identify any mitigation measures proposed which may reduce potential impacts to critical environmental areas.

### **Noise**

1. Evaluate existing noise environment in terms of ambient noise levels and proximity to sensitive receptors. Existing noise generators shall be discussed.
2. Analyze potential impacts of the Proposed Action to the existing ambient noise levels during construction and during operations, if any.
3. Identify any mitigation measures proposed which may reduce potential impacts to existing ambient noise conditions

### **Coastal Zone**

1. Determine potential presence and extent of New York State Coastal Zone by reference to materials provided by the New York State Department of State.
2. Evaluate the potential impacts of the Proposed Action on the Coastal Zone.
3. Prepare a Coastal Consistency Review.
4. Identify any mitigation measures proposed which may reduce potential impacts to the Coastal Zone.

## **Other Required Sections**

### **Construction Related Impacts**

1. Describe the impacts related to construction noise, air quality and dust, erosion and sedimentation, area receptors, applicable nuisance regulations, applicable agency oversight and safeguards, phasing of the project, staging areas, parking areas, operation areas, duration, hours, and related mitigation measures to reduce construction impacts.

**Cumulative Impacts**

1. Describe other pending projects in vicinity, determine potential for impacts due to implementation of the Proposed Action in combination with others and discuss/analyze potential cumulative impacts the natural and social environments.

**Adverse Impacts that Cannot be Avoided**

1. Provide a brief listing of those adverse environmental impacts described/discussed previously that are anticipated to occur, which cannot be completely mitigated.

**Irreversible and Irretrievable Commitment of Resources**

1. Provide a brief discussion of those natural and human environmental resources which will be committed to and/or consumed by the Proposed Action.

**Effects on the Use and Conservation of Energy Resources**

1. Discuss the effects of the Proposed Action on the use and conservation of energy.

**Growth-Inducing Aspects**

1. Provide an analysis of whether or not the Proposed Action may contribute to future growth in the area or result in secondary demands due to the employment.

**Alternatives**

**Alternative 1:** No Action

**Alternative 2:** New 69kV Circuit Underground North through Sag Harbor and then South to Buell Substation. Route will parallel existing gas circuit.

**Alternative 3:** New 69kV Circuit Underground South to Montauk Highway and North to Buell Substation.

**Alternative 4:** New Hybrid Overhead/Underground 69kV Circuit North to Sag Harbor and then South to Buell Substation.

**Alternative 5:** Separate existing Bridgehampton to Buell & Bridgehampton to East Hampton 69kV Double Circuit.

Each alternative will use appropriate graphics, text, tables and analytical data that detail:

1. Maps of proposed alternative routes
2. The qualitative and quantitative comparison of the environmental and human impacts of each of the alternatives and the Proposed Action;
3. Construction related impacts;
4. Potential mitigation; and
5. The comparison of each of the impact categories presented in this scope as they relate to each alternative and the Proposed Action.

This document is intended to fulfill the lead agency requirements for issuance of a Draft Scope for a DEIS in accordance with 6 NYCRR Part 617.8. The document assists the Lead Agency in evaluating the DEIS for content and adequacy for public review and assists the applicant in understanding the extent and quality of information needed to evaluate the proposed project and allow the Lead Agency and Involved Agencies to obtain the information necessary to reach an informed decision on the Proposed Action.