

Good evening. My name is Tom Colgan. I work for Wagner Forest Management, a company based in Lyme, New Hampshire, with an office in Errol, New Hampshire. Wagner Forest Management owns and operates 100,000 acres or more of working forest in Coos County, much of which was depicted upon an earlier slide this evening that Mr. Quinlan showed of where the proposed route of the project would go through the Northern Pass. We employ many local residents who harvest a sustainable supply of raw materials used in wood businesses based in northern New Hampshire. I'm here tonight in support of the Northern Pass project. Twenty-four miles of the proposed route will be over our land. When we were first approached by the Northern Pass folks about a right-of-way over our land, we spent an enormous amount of time talking to them, working with them, using our firsthand local knowledge of the property to ensure that it was going to cross our land in the most environmentally friendly way possible. That location you see on the map is where we wanted it as much as and more so than where Northern Pass wanted it. You've heard and will continue to hear many people espousing the importance of and necessity to bury the entire line through the entire 192 section miles of the proposed project. Our 24-mile section is proposed to be above ground, and that's exactly where we want it. In a working forest, you want to be able to see the obstacles that might be in your way. I can see a power line above the ground. I can't see one buried. With all the skidders, the harvesters, trucks, bulldozers, the excavators that work every day, that's the last thing I want to do is be worried about any issues that occur with the equipment that we use. And for the comments that it's an incalculable, I think, quote of disturbance of the aesthetics of the property, it's a perfectly compatible use with a working forest. It's compatible with all the recreational uses that go on on our land, and it's a privilege that we offer the local public. Our company believes that climate change is real, and we do more than just believe the talk about it. We walk the talk. We have been a developer of a wind project and we still manage a wind project in Maine. We're been an investor in Granite Reliable project in northern New Hampshire. We used to be a part-owner of the largest wood pellet business based in Jaffrey, New Hampshire, New England Wood Pellets. So we walk the talk. And when I look at this project, it will bring renewable energy. Baseload hydropower. We also have solar panels on our property, on our office, that we put up with our own money, and I can tell you if I had to live with only the power it generated every day I would be cold and dark, and my computer would not work. It's as simple as that. It's a laudable cause, but it's not always the answer. It's part of the big choices that one should have. In closing, I'd like to say in this day and age when nearly every societal issue comes up it seems to be so partisan and polarizing, I'm grateful that the state legislature years ago set up the SEC to be a thoughtful arbiter of large projects like Northern Pass. There's always going to be impacts, there's always going to be many different opinions on what it should be, but I want to thank you for making the personal and professional commitment shepherding this process to a decision that is in the best interests of the people and the policies of the state.