

Baileyville Transcript

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

(DOCKET NO. PP-89-1)

In Re: Application to amend Presidential  
Permit; Bangor Hydro-Electric Company

November 17, 2004

AGENCY: Office of Fossil Energy, DOE

ACTION: Notice of application

BEFORE: Angella D. White, Notary Public, at the  
Woodland Elementary School, 23 Fourth Street,  
Baileyville, Maine, on Wednesday, November 17, 2004,  
beginning at 7:05 p.m.

DON THOMPSON & ASSOCIATES  
Court Reporting

Baileyville Transcript

3 23 Fourth Street, Baileyville, Maine, on Wednesday,  
4 November 17, 2004, beginning at 7:05 p.m.)

5 \* \* \* \* \*

6 MS. OSBORNE: Hello. My name is Carolyn Osborne.  
7 I'm with the Department of Energy from Washington,  
8 D.C. And I'm here to welcome you to a scoping meeting  
9 that we're having for an environmental study that  
10 we're going to be doing.

11 I'm in the department of -- the Office of  
12 Environment in the department and particularly in an  
13 office that oversees the activities under the National  
14 Environmental Policy Act. We call that NEPA. And  
15 I'll probably slip into that acronym as I talk.

16 I want to also thank the school here, the  
17 Woodland Elementary School, for hosting us. It's a  
18 very nice facility for a meeting.

19 We're here to hear comments from the public on  
20 our study. And what the study is for is for a  
21 proposed amendment to a permit that the Bangor Hydro  
22 Electric Power Company already has. They've received  
23 a permit for a line in '96 and they wish to amend that  
24 permit. And they will -- I will call on them to  
25 explain briefly their project and their proposal.

3

1 What I'm going to do first is tell you about the  
2 NEPA process so you understand what this meeting is  
3 and what's going -- going to happen afterward. Then  
4 we'll tell you a little bit about the permit that I'm  
5 talking about that the department gives.

6 And then I'm going to introduce the people that  
Page 2

## Baileyville Transcript

7 are here because there are a lot of people involved in  
8 this study and you should know who is here. You may  
9 want to talk to them when we take a break. And then  
10 I'm going to have the company describe its proposal.  
11 And then I'll tell you some of the ways that we record  
12 our comments. So those are the topics I'm going to go  
13 through very briefly.

14 The Department of Energy gets involved in this  
15 proposal because it is going to cross the border to go  
16 international, the transmission lines. And we think  
17 that -- whenever we have a proposal of some sort or an  
18 action to take, we do an environmental study. We  
19 think that this one has potential for significant  
20 impact, so we're going to do a bigger study of the  
21 Environmental Impact Statement or EIS, which involves  
22 a great deal of public participation.

23 We published a notice of intent to prepare this  
24 statement November 2nd. And in that statement we --  
25 in that notice we announced three meetings. This one

4

1 in Baileyville and two tomorrow, Lincoln at 1 and in  
2 Brewer at 7 again. And the comment period -- we want  
3 your comments to help us scope out this -- this study,  
4 what should we include in this study. So we call it  
5 scoping.

6 And we want your comments -- either tonight you  
7 tell us, or you can hand us something written, you can  
8 mail us -- although, be aware the mail comes to us  
9 slowly because it's screened -- you can e-mail us, you  
10 can fax us and we have a website that I'll give you.

## Baileyville Transcript

11           So we take your comments in any way, but we want  
12           to hear from you preferably by December 2nd. We gave  
13           a 30-day time frame. Because it will help us to know  
14           the issues, understand the impacts that you want us to  
15           look at when we start to write the study.

16           What follows are a couple of things. We will  
17           prepare a study and then issue it for public comments  
18           so that you can actually comment to us on what we did  
19           write down, what we did look at, what we did analyze  
20           for environmental impacts. We aim to do this in June  
21           -- by June and have a 45-day comment period on that  
22           statement -- on that draft statement.

23           We would then consider the comments that we got,  
24           again, writing, talking to us, sending them in,  
25           e-mailing them. And we will prepare a final

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1           Environmental Impact Statement that gives a response  
2           to all your comments. We aim to do that in the fall.

3           I can't really specify -- it depends on the  
4           complexity of the issues that we run into and the  
5           number of comments that we get on the draft statement  
6           how long it actually takes us to do the final. No  
7           sooner than 30 days after we issue a final EIS we'll  
8           make a decision.

9           And the decision -- although my Office of  
10          Environment and the NEPA -- the office of NEPA policy  
11          and compliance, which helps assist the process and  
12          approve some of the statements, we do not get involved  
13          in the decision making. The decision making is done  
14          in the Office of Fossil Energy, it's different people.

## Baileyville Transcript

15           They use the information in the statement to make  
16 a decision. And they'll decide whether to amend the  
17 permit and they'll -- they'll choose among  
18 alternatives that were analyzed in the statement. And  
19 that decision making happens no sooner than 30 days  
20 after the final impact statement. It's called a  
21 Record of Decision.

22           And it usually indicates what the permit is going  
23 to be because it's a decision to -- to amend a permit,  
24 not issue a permit, take away a permit, any of the  
25 alternatives that we look at. It cannot decide

6

1           anything that was not analyzed in the statement.  
2 That's the process.

3           The first step, we're scoping out, we'll be  
4 writing a draft by June, a final in the fall, a Record  
5 of Decision, hopefully, by the end of the year.

6           Now, the permit -- I'm not from that permitting  
7 office. I can tell you who the person is to talk to  
8 if you want more details on the permitting process.  
9 But it's called a Presidential Permit. It allows  
10 facilities to be constructed, operated, connected and  
11 maintained at the border. There are -- there are many  
12 factors to consider when issuing a permit.

13           One of them is the environmental study that we're  
14 doing -- that we're starting and you're going to give  
15 us input tonight. The other factor -- the other major  
16 input and factor is reliability of the United States  
17 electric system and the grid that's looked at from  
18 many different aspects. And then there may be other

Baileyville Transcript

19 factors that come into play that make the decision  
20 whether or not to issue a permit and for what routes  
21 we might issue one.

22 This isn't your only chance to comment on this  
23 document. You can -- you can comment throughout the  
24 process. We just give you the stages where it's more  
25 useful for you to comment to us.

7

1 Also, when we're -- when the office that issues  
2 the permit is considering factors, it consults with  
3 the Department of State and it consults with the  
4 Department of Defense.

5 It's important to know that granting a permit  
6 from the department does not mean the line will be  
7 built. As I mentioned, the company has a permit it  
8 received in '96. It did not build that line. Our  
9 permit doesn't make a company build a line, it just  
10 says, yes, you may for the purpose of crossing the  
11 border. And that's the process.

12 There's people here that I want to introduce you  
13 to. First is a person who is sitting back at the desk  
14 and welcomed you, it's Odessa Hopkins. I hope if  
15 you're here you have signed the sheet of paper so we  
16 can send you things in the future. She also arranged  
17 with Carol from the school for the coffee and the  
18 cookies and the room. So thank you to them. And  
19 that's who Odessa is. If you want anything, any  
20 addresses or anything sent to you, ask Odessa.

21 We also have people here from Argon National  
22 Laboratory, which is the laboratory that will be

Baileyville Transcript

23 preparing the Environmental Impact Study. And the  
24 team will be held -- will be led by Bill Viniakour who  
25 is sitting there at the end of the -- of the aisle.

8

1 He will be working with Tim Allison, who is behind  
2 him, John Krumme who is next to him. And I think  
3 there was another person, but I don't see him.

4 It's important to say a couple of things about  
5 this. Argon will prepare the document at the  
6 direction of the Department of Energy. It's our  
7 document. They will have to, of necessity, get some  
8 information from the company. But know that they work  
9 at the direction of the Department of Energy in doing  
10 this Environmental Impact Study.

11 Next to introduce to you is Angella White who is  
12 our court reporter. And I wanted to say that what we  
13 want to make sure is that we don't forget anything  
14 that anybody says tonight, so we have a record of what  
15 was said at the meeting. And I'll tell you more about  
16 what you need to tell her when you give comments when  
17 we get to that part.

18 At this point I want to introduce representatives  
19 from the company that's asking for the permit. And  
20 I've asked them to speak for about five minutes or  
21 however long it will take to give you perspective on  
22 what they are proposing to do with the transmission  
23 line to bring electricity to and from Canada.

24 But first, LuAnn Ballesteros is from Bangor Hydro  
25 Electric. She will be telling you about the project.

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Baileyville Transcript

1 Next to her is Gil Paquette who is working as port to  
2 Bangor and has provided the maps in the back that I  
3 hope you will look at and ask some questions. We will  
4 take a break and you can ask questions, details about  
5 the project, if you wish.

6 We also have Robin McAdam in the back who is with  
7 the parent company of Bangor Hydro. And Juliet Brown  
8 who is legal counsel.

9 Is this a good time to have you --

10 MS. BALLESTEROS: Sure.

11 MS. OSBORNE: -- give an overview?

12 MS. BALLESTEROS: Sure. Thank you. As Carolyn  
13 said, I'm LuAnn and I'm Bangor Hydro's --. You cant  
14 hear me? Now? Better now? Still no?

15 (A discussion was held off the record due to  
16 microphone difficulties.)

17 MS. BALLESTEROS: I'm LuAnn Ballesteros, I'm the  
18 corporate communications officer for Bangor Hydro and  
19 in charge of stakeholder management for this project.  
20 As Carolyn said, I've been asked to give some  
21 background on the project, specifically the Maine DEP  
22 permitting history; New Brunswick Power Line, sort of  
23 their history; and a little bit about our route  
24 alternatives.

25 And as you know, we're proposing a 345 kilovolt

10

1 transmission line that will go from Orrington, Maine  
2 to Baileyville, Maine and then connect to a proposed

Baileyville Transcript

3 line that NB Power is going to build on the other side  
4 of the border.

5 With respect to the Maine DEP -- pardon me while  
6 I read this, it's kind of long. Bangor Hydro received  
7 the original state permit in 1992 to build a 345 kV  
8 transmission line from Orrington to Baileyville,  
9 Maine, with permit extension requests granted by the  
10 Department of Environmental Protection in '94 and '96.

11 In 1999 Maritimes & Northeast Pipeline  
12 constructed a pipeline in close proximity to the  
13 permitted line along County Road in Milford and along  
14 the Stud Mill Road from the intersection of County  
15 Road to Baileyville, Maine.

16 In 2001, acting on a request from BHE for a third  
17 extension of the relevant state environmental permits,  
18 the Board of Environmental Protection, Maine's primary  
19 environmental review entity, conducted a hearing and  
20 indicated, in a draft order, a preference to use a  
21 route more closely consolidated with established  
22 linear corridors. The order was never finalized  
23 because Bangor Hydro withdrew -- withdrew the request  
24 for an extension.

25 With respect to the NB Power Line, in 2003 NB

11

1 Power received approval from the National Energy Board  
2 to construct and operate a 345 kV line from  
3 Pt. Lepreau, New Brunswick to a point on the  
4 international border near Baileyville, Maine.  
5 Following approval of the Canadian portion of the  
6 project, Bangor Hydro evaluated various system and

Baileyville Transcript  
7 alternative route options that met the project purpose  
8 and at the same time responded to the routing issues  
9 previously raised by the Board of Environmental  
10 Protection and certain stakeholders.

11 Bangor Hydro then came up with several route  
12 alternatives. The route alternatives evaluated  
13 included the Previously Permitted Route Alternative,  
14 otherwise though known as PPR; the Consolidated  
15 Corridors Route Alternative, CCR; and the MEPCO South  
16 Alternative.

17 After considerable evaluation of data, Bangor  
18 Hydro has selected a preferred route that incorporates  
19 a majority of the Consolidated Corridors Route  
20 Alternative. The route does deviate from co-location  
21 with existing rights-of-way in two locations based on  
22 input that we've received from various stakeholders.

23 First, Bangor Hydro's preferred route deviates  
24 from existing utility corridors for a distance of  
25 approximately 13 miles as the route heads in an

12

1 easterly direction from the existing MEPCO line to the  
2 Stud Mill Road. The second deviation is near the  
3 Maritimes & Northeast pipelines Baileyville Compressor  
4 Station. Near the station, the line deviates to the  
5 north to maintain an approximate 3,600-foot distance  
6 between the transmission line and the compressor  
7 station.

8 During a break or after we're done, if anybody  
9 wants an explanation of the difference between any of  
10 those route alternatives and our preferred route, feel

Baileyville Transcript

11 free to ask Robin, Juliet, Gil or myself and we'll be  
12 happy to explain. Thanks.

13 MS. OSBORNE: Thank you. I don't know if you  
14 noticed, on the back table the company has provided  
15 some maps that you can take with you which show the  
16 alternative routes.

17 Okay. We are here to hear your comments. I'm  
18 going to call the names that have indicated they want  
19 to speak first, but I only have one. So you may -- if  
20 you haven't said you wanted to speak, you may speak.  
21 Normally we would limit people to five minutes. I  
22 don't think we have to worry about that at this point.

23 When you do speak, I would ask that you say your  
24 name and spell your name for the reporter so that we  
25 -- we have your name correct. She may at -- at times

13

1 when you're talking indicate that she wants you to  
2 spell something or say something again if she didn't  
3 catch it.

4 This -- this isn't intended to be a dialogue,  
5 we're not going to cross-examine you if you comment.  
6 We really just want to hear what you have to say and  
7 consider -- be able to consider it later when we're  
8 preparing our study.

9 We will be here until 9. We have coffee, we have  
10 cookies. We will go off the record at some point and  
11 have an informal conversation. If there is something  
12 that comes up in that time and you want to have  
13 something formally entered into our notes, we will  
14 just open the record again and have it recorded.

Baileyville Transcript

15 So at this point I will call Scott Beal to speak,  
16 if you're comfortable. Also, if you're with an  
17 organization, I would like to know -- we would like to  
18 know that, if you're representing an organization.

19 MR. BEAL: I am. Thank you, Ms. Osborne. My  
20 name is Scott Beal -- S-c-o-t-t -- B-e-a-l. I'm  
21 manager of compliance and technology for Domtar  
22 Industries, a pulp and paper facility located here in  
23 Baileyville.

24 I rise in support of this project. And I might  
25 add, it is unwavering and enthusiastic and unbridle.

14

1 I can't imagine for the life of me anybody being in  
2 opposition to run a -- the 345 kV line known as the  
3 Northeast Liability Interconnect.

4 The project amendment that has been -- been  
5 filed, from what I understand of this project, has  
6 been very well thought out by Bangor Hydro, it's been  
7 given great deference in terms of all aspects and  
8 particularly the route, the consolidated corridor.  
9 Obviously, in -- in my own opinion, from what I do for  
10 a living, I think it makes an abundance of sense.  
11 It's clearly a win, win situation, in my judgment.

12 Again, from what I know of the project, that  
13 electrons will have the ability to flow either  
14 direction, north or south, depending on the season,  
15 cooling for the US in the summer, heating for Canada  
16 in the winter.

17 This project will benefit New England, it will  
18 benefit Maine and it will benefit our Canadian

Baileyville Transcript

19

neighbors to the north.

20

Perhaps selfishly -- and I -- I freely admit that

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-- I -- I am here tonight to voice strong support in

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terms of what it could mean -- and I say potentially

23

-- what it could mean to our facility here in

24

Baileyville. We manufacture hardwood market pulp,

25

fully bleached and uncoated free sheet paper.

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Everything we do is on a big scale. We use a lot of

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power, we use a lot of water. We employ a lot of

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people, we contribute significantly to the economy.

4

And we're always looking, just like everyone else

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in the regulated community, to do things faster,

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cheaper, better and more economical. With the advent

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of this project comes the potential of infrastructure

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that is sorely needed in this part of the state, in my

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humble judgment.

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We have a natural gas pipeline within the status

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throw now of our mill with the -- with the Maritimes &

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Northeast project that came through a few years ago.

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With this line we now have an opportunity -- and I'll

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stress an opportunity and I'll throw around the words

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potentially quite carefully -- we have an opportunity

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to consider a critical mass coming into place.

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And that being the potential infrastructure where

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we could be considered to host a merchant cogen plant

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at our facility whereby we would be the heat site.

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And now we have finally a connection to the US

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electrical grid. As Bangor Hydro has stated in the

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record, this part of the state is not tied and

23 connected electrically to the United States.

24 So while I'm saying potential and opportunity and  
25 I'm careful as to what this could mean to us, it is

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1 not lost on the management team at Domtar as to what  
2 this could bring to us. But the fact is this  
3 opportunity would be foremost -- would be foreclosed  
4 upon and precluded in total if it isn't run.

5 Now, you may hear some commentary, Ms. Osborne,  
6 with respect to environmental impact and I know you're  
7 going to study that quite carefully. And I have great  
8 confidence that you will be very pleased with the  
9 considerations that have been afforded in terms of  
10 mitigating any environmental impacts.

11 And I just want to say that, that I look forward  
12 to following this project and working with Bangor  
13 Hydro in any capacity that -- that we may have going  
14 forward. And certainly I'd be happy -- I would be  
15 happy to track this project and work with the DOE and  
16 exercise our opportunities to provide comment wherever  
17 possible.

18 Thank you. And I'll sit down and -- and I'll let  
19 the line of speakers progress. Thank you.

20 MS. OSBORNE: Is there anybody else in the  
21 audience that wants to say anything at this point?

22 We'll break for ten minutes or so. But if  
23 something comes up that you want to say, either just  
24 informally, that's fine, or we can come back on the  
25 record. But we will be here until 9 if your neighbors

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Baileyville Transcript

1 are at home and you think they want to come somewhere  
2 for coffee and cookies. We'll stop right now.

3 (Whereupon a recess was held at 7:30 p.m. and the  
4 hearing was dismissed at 9:00 p.m. this date.)

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CERTIFICATE

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I, Angella D. White, a Notary Public in and for the  
Page 15

Baileyville Transcript

4 State of Maine, hereby certify that on November 17, 2004,  
5 said hearing was stenographically reported by me to the  
6 best of my ability and later reduced to typewritten form  
7 with the aid of Computer-Aided Transcription, and the  
8 foregoing is a full and true record of said hearing.

9 I further certify that I am a disinterested person in  
10 the event or outcome of said hearing.

11 IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I subscribe my hand and affix my  
12 seal this 19th day of November 2004.

13

14

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17

ANGELLA D. WHITE, NOTARY PUBLIC  
Court Reporter

18

19 My commission expires  
20 May 17, 2010

21

22

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' 94 - 10: 10  
' 96 - 2: 23, 7: 8, 10: 10  
1  
13 - 11: 25  
18: 4, 18: 191: 18, 2: 4,  
1999 - 10: 11  
19th - 18: 12  
2  
2003 - 10: 25  
2: 4, 18: 4, 18: 128,  
23 - 1: 17, 2: 3  
2nd - 3: 24, 4: 12  
3  
30 - 5: 7, 5: 192: 5

Baileyville Transcript

345 - 9: 25, 10: 7,  
11: 2, 14: 2

4  
45-day - 4: 21  
7

7: 05 - 1: 19, 2: 4  
7: 30 - 17: 3

9  
9: 00 - 17: 46: 25

A  
ability - 14: 13, 18: 6  
abundance - 14: 10  
Act - 2: 142: 15  
Action - 1: 136  
activities - 2: 13  
addresses - 7: 20  
advent - 15: 6  
afforded - 16: 9  
ago - 15: 1212  
aided - 18: 7  
aisle - 7: 255: 2  
allows - 6: 91  
12: 16native - 11: 7,  
11: 15, 11: 16, 11: 20,  
5: 25, 9: 24, 11: 12, ,

amend - 1: 6, 2: 23,  
amendment - 2: 21,  
analyze - 4: 19  
Angella - 1: 16, 2: 1,  
announced - 3: 257  
application - 1: 13  
11: 5oval - 11: 1,  
approximate - 12: 5  
arranged - 7: 16: 5  
assist - 5: 118, 14: 7  
audience - 16: 213  
aware - 4: 8

B  
Baileyville - 1: 18,  
10: 15, 11: 4, 12: 3, 8,  
Ballesteros - 8: 24,  
Bangor - 1: 7, 2: 21,  
9: 18, 10: 6, 10: 23, 3,  
11: 23, 14: 6, 15: 21,  
based - 11: 21  
13: 20- 13: 15, 13: 19,  
2: 4inning - 1: 19,  
benefit - 14: 17,  
best - 18: 6  
Better - 9: 14  
12: 9een - 12: 6,  
big - 15: 16  
Bill - 7: 2420  
bleached - 14: 25  
11: 9d - 10: 18, 11: 1,  
7: 11, 10: 4, 11: 4: 11,  
12: 8, 16: 22, 9: 4,  
briefly - 2: 25, 3: 13  
Brown - 9: 73, 16: 2

Baileyville Transcript

11:3 switch - 9:22,  
10:3, 10:78, 7:9,  
built - 7:7

C

14:15a - 8:23,  
14:18ian - 11:5,

capacity - 16:13  
carefully - 15:15,  
Carol - 7:17  
9:20lyn - 2:6, 9:12,  
Ccr - 11:153  
certainly - 16:14  
certify - 18:4, 18:9  
charge - 9:19  
choose - 5:176  
close - 10:1211  
co - 11:2010:21  
coffee - 7:17, 13:9,  
cogen - 15:18  
coming - 15:1613:16  
4:18, 4:21, 6:22, 6:23,  
commentary - 16:5  
3:12, 4:3, 4:6, 4:11,  
8:16, 12:17 5:2, 5:5,  
communications - 9  
community - 15:5  
company - 3:10, :22  
9:7, 12:148:8, 8:19,  
compliance - 5:11,  
Compressor - 12:3  
Computer - 18:7:6  
18:7uter-aided -  
confidence - 16:8  
connected - 6:10,  
connection - 15:20  
6:12, 13:7, 15:16  
11:17derable -  
16:9i derations -  
considering - 7:28  
10:21, 14:8d -  
11:14, 11:19 -  
constructed - 6:10,  
consults - 7:2, 7:3  
conversation - :3  
cookies - 7:18,  
cooling - 14:15

correct - 12:258  
corridors - 10:22,  
Corridors - 11:15,  
counsel - 9:8  
10:14y - 10:13,  
court - 8:126, 8:4  
critical - 15:16:18  
cross-examine - :5  
crossing - 7:10

Baileyville Transcript

D

data - 11: 17  
days - 5: 7, 5: 19  
deal - 3: 22  
decide - 5: 16, 5: 25  
5: 13, 5: 16, 5: 19, 5: 23,  
Decision - 5: 21, 6: 5  
deference - 14: 7  
Department - 1: 2,  
8: 6, 8: 9, 10: 10 7: 4,  
2: 12, 3: 5, 7: 6: 11,  
desk - 7: 133: 10  
deviate - 11: 209: 4  
12: 4ates - 11: 23,  
dialogue - 13: 42  
different - 5: 14,  
difficulties - 9: 16  
12: 1, 14: 14 8: 6, 8: 9,  
disinterested - 18: 9  
distance - 11: 24,  
Docket - 1: 4  
8: 5, 8: 7 - 6: 23,  
Domtar - 13: 21, 5  
Don - 1: 23  
down - 4: 19, 16: 18  
6: 4, 10: 2022, 5: 5,  
During - 12: 8

E

e-mail - 4: 9  
easterly - 12: 15  
economy - 15: 35: 6

1

either - 4: 6, 14: 13,  
Electric - 2: 22, 8: 25  
electrical - 15: 2117  
electricity - 8: 2323  
Elementary - 1: 17,  
employ - 15: 2  
Energy - 1: 2, 1: 12,  
8: 9, 11: 1, 5: 14, 8: 6,  
entered - 13: 13  
entity - 10: 19 13: 25  
5: 10ronment - 2: 12,  
2: 14, 3: 21, 5: 1, 7: 23,  
11: 9, 10: 10, 10: 18,  
2: 9, 3: 18, 4: 20, 6: 13,  
16: 10, 10: 19, 16: 6,  
evaluated - 11: 6, 1  
evaluation - 11: 17  
examine - 13: 5  
existing - 11: 21,  
expires - 18: 19  
12: 12in - 2: 25,  
extension - 10: 9,  
10: 17, 10: 24

F

facility - 2: 18,  
fact - 16: 23, 15: 19  
factors - 6: 12, 6: 19,  
fall - 5: 2, 6: 4

Baileyville Transcript

fax - 4: 105: 5  
filed - 14: 5  
5: 20, 6: 4: 25, 5: 6, 5: 7,  
finally - 15: 2022  
First - 7: 13, 11: 23  
12: 19 - 3: 1, 6: 3, 8: 24,  
flow - 14: 13 12: 21  
following - 16: 12  
foreclosed - 16: 3  
foremost - 16: 38  
form - 18: 613  
forward - 16: 11,

Fossil - 1: 12, 5: 14  
frame - 4: 137, 2: 3  
freely - 14: 2014: 25  
fully - 14: 25  
future - 7: 16

G

Gil - 9: 1, 12: 11  
granted - 10: 9  
great - 3: 22, 14: 7,  
grid - 6: 17, 15: 21

H

hand - 4: 7, 18: 11  
16: 14, 16: 152,  
heads - 11: 25: 24  
9: 14, 12: 17, 13: 6,  
hearing - 2: 1,  
18: 8, 18: 10, 18: 5,  
heating - 14: 15  
9: 15, 17: 3, 7: 24,  
help - 4: 3, 4: 13  
hereby - 18: 4  
home - 17: 1: 22, 9: 23  
hopefully - 6: 53  
host - 15: 1814  
humble - 15: 97  
8: 24, 9: 7, 9: 18, 10: 6,  
11: 18, 14: 6, 15: 21,  
Hydro's - 9: 13,  
Hydro-electric - 1: 7

I

imagine - 14: 1  
16: 6ct - 3: 20, 5: 20,  
7: 23, 8: 10: 21, 5: 1,  
4: 20, 16: 10: 14,  
include - 4: 4: 5, 8: 4  
incorporates - 3  
indicate - 13: 1  
12: 18ated - 10: 20,  
Industries - 13: 22  
informally - 16: 24

8: 8ormation - 5: 15,  
15: 7, 15: 17ure -  
11: 22 - 6: 15, 6: 16,

Baileyville Transcript

intent - 3:23:4  
international - 3:16,  
intersection - 10:14  
7:12, 8:11, 8:18  
5:12lved - 3:7, 3:14,  
issue - 4:17, 5:7,  
issues - 4:14, 5:4,  
issuing - 6:12

J

John - 8:2  
15:9ment - 14:11,  
June - 4:20, 4:21,  
6:4

K

kind - 10:69:25  
Krumme - 8:24, 14:2  
kv - 10:7, 11:2, 14:2

L

Laboratory - 7:22  
legal - 9:8  
Liability - 14:3  
limit - 12:21  
Line - 9:22, 10:25  
7:9, 8:23, 10:1, 10:3,  
12:1, 12:4, 12:6, 14:2,  
linear - 10:22  
living - 14:10  
location - 11:20  
look - 4:15, 4:19,  
looked - 6:17:11  
lost - 16:15:4  
9:17n - 8:24, 9:13,

M

mail - 4:8, 4:9  
Maine - 1:18, 2:3,  
10:9, 10:15, 11:4, 0:5,  
Maine's - 10:18

maintained - 6:11  
majority - 11:19  
9:19, 16:1 -  
manufacture - 1  
maps - 9:2, 12:15  
12:3, 15:11 10:11,  
mass - 15:1624  
14:23, 15:2514:22,  
3:2, 8:15 2:8, 2:18,  
mentioned - 7:7  
merchant - 15:182:1  
microphone - 9:16  
miles - 11:25 13:24  
mill - 15:11:13  
minutes - 8:20, :2  
mitigating - 16:10

N

name - 2:6, 12:24,  
names - 12:18  
7:21, 11:1 2:13,  
Nb - 10:3, 10:25  
Near - 12:4, 12:2

## Baileyville Transcript

need - 8: 16 8: 7  
nei ghbors - 14: 19,  
Nepa - 2: 14, 3: 2,  
never - 10: 22  
14: 17 9: 22, 11: 3,  
Next - 8: 11, 9: 1  
Normal ly - 12: 21  
14: 19 - 12: 5, 14: 14,  
12: 3, 14: 3, 15: 12,  
18: 3, 18: 17 16, 2: 2,  
noti ce - 3: 23, 3: 25  
noti ced - 12: 14  
1: 18, 2: 4, 3: 24, 18: 4,  
number - 5: 5

O

Obvi ousl y - 14: 9  
7: 20sa - 7: 14, 7: 19,  
5: 9, 5: 14 1: 12, 2: 11,

6: 7, 7: 1 2: 13, 5: 10,  
One - 6: 13 9: 18  
6: 21, 12: 19 3: 25,  
operate - 11: 2  
opi ni on - 14: 90  
16: 16 tuni ties -  
15: 14, 15: 15, 15: 24,  
opposi ti on - 14: 2  
order - 10: 20, 10: 22  
13: 17, 13: 18 -  
Orri ngton - 10: 1,  
Osborne - 2: 6, 9: 11,  
16: 20, 13: 19, 16: 5,  
outcome - 18: 10 14  
overvi ew - 9: 11  
own - 14: 9

P

14: 25 - 7: 15, 13: 22,  
pardon - 10: 51  
part - 8: 17, 15: 8,  
parti ci pati on - 3: 22  
14: 8i cul arl y - 2: 12,  
peopl e - 3: 6, 3: 7,  
12: 21, 15: 3 7: 21,  
peri od - 4: 2, 4: 21  
permi t - 2: 21, 2: 23,  
5: 23, 5: 24, 6: 6, 6: 12,  
7: 9, 8: 19, 10: 7, 10: 9  
Permi tted - 11: 13  
permi tting - 6: 6,  
person - 6: 7, 7: 13,  
perspecti ve - 8: 21  
pi pel i ne - 10: 12,  
pi pel i nes - 12: 3  
pl ant - 15: 18  
pleased - 16: 8  
17: 4 1: 19, 2: 4, 17: 3,  
12: 22, 13: 10, 13: 15,  
poli cy - 5: 10  
port - 9: 1: 14

possible - 16: 17  
 15: 7, 15: 17, 15: 24  
 15: 15tially - 14: 22,  
 10: 3, 10: 25, 11: 12,  
 Pp-89-1 - 1: 4  
 precluded - 16: 4  
 preference - 10: 20  
 11: 23, 12: 1011: 18,  
 4: 17, 4: 25, 8: 5  
 13: 8aring - 7: 23,  
 6: 9sidental - 1: 6,  
 Previously - 11: 13  
 process - 3: 2, 5: 11,  
 progress - 16: 197: 11  
 9: 5, 9: 19, 9: 21, 11: 6,  
 14: 5, 14: 12, 14: 17,  
 16: 15 15: 12, 16: 12,  
 3: 10, 3: 15, 3: 17  
 10: 2osed - 2: 21,  
 9: 25osi ng - 8: 22,  
 10: 18, 11: 10 10: 10,  
 provided - 9: 2,  
 proximity - 10: 12  
 Public - 1: 16, 2: 2,  
 public - 2: 19, 3: 22,  
 published - 3: 23  
 purpose - 7: 10, : 24  
 11: 7

Q

quite - 15: 15, 16: 74

R

raised - 11: 9  
 read - 10: 6  
 received - 2: 22, 7: 8,  
 recess - 17: 31: 22  
 9: 15, 13: 10, 13: 14,  
 Record - 5: 21, 6: 4  
 reduced - 18: 614  
 relevant - 10: 17  
 reported - 18: 5: 16

12: 24ter - 8: 12,  
 Reporting - 1: 24  
 8: 18esentatives -  
 13: 18senti ng -  
 10: 23st - 10: 16,  
 respect - 10: 5,  
 responded - 11: 8  
 review - 10: 19  
 rights-of-way -  
 rise - 13: 24  
 10: 15, 12: 23, 10: 14,  
 room - 7: 18, 12: 11  
 11: 19 - 11: 13, 11: 15,  
 11: 7, 11: 11, 11: 12,  
 11: 25, 12: 10, 14: 83,  
 routing - 11: 8 12: 16

Baileyville Transcript

run - 5: 4, 14: 2, 16: 4  
S  
School - 1: 17, 2: 2,  
school - 2: 16, 7: 17  
scoping - 2: 8, 4: 5,  
Scott - 13: 15, 13: 20  
seal - 18: 12: 9  
second - 12: 24  
selected - 11: 18  
send - 7: 16 14: 20  
sense - 14: 104  
several - 11: 11  
show - 12: 15, 14: 25  
signed - 7: 15  
significantly - 15: 3  
site - 15: 19  
situation - 14: 11: 25  
slowly - 4: 9  
sooner - 5: 7, 5: 19  
sort - 3: 17, 9: 22  
South - 11: 15  
specifically - 9: 21  
spell - 12: 24, 13: 2  
stakeholder - 9: 19

3

11: 10, 11: 22 -  
starting - 6: 14  
15: 8, 15: 227, 10: 17,  
statement - 3: 24,  
5: 20, 6: 1, 5: 15, 5: 18,  
statement - 3: 21,  
States - 6: 16, 15: 23  
station - 12: 4, 12: 7  
stenographically -  
step - 6: 3  
stop - 17: 24  
stress - 15: 14 2: 3  
Stud - 10: 14, 12: 2  
3: 8, 3: 18, 3: 20, 4: 3,  
13: 8, 16: 7 4: 17, 6: 13,  
subscribe - 18: 110  
support - 13: 24,  
system - 6: 17, 11: 6  
T  
table - 12: 14  
technology - 13: 21  
terms - 14: 7, 14: 22,  
They've - 2: 22  
Thompson - 1: 23  
throughout - 6: 23  
tied - 15: 221, 15: 14  
tomorrow - 4: 1  
8: 14, 14: 21: 6, 6: 15,  
total - 16: 42  
Transcription - 18: 7  
3: 16, 8: 22, 10: 1, 10: 8,  
true - 18: 8  
typewritten - 18: 6  
U  
unbridle - 13: 25

Baileyville Transcript

under - 2: 134: 25  
unwavering - 13: 2523  
16: 2311: 11, 13: 12,  
utility - 11: 24  
V

3

various - 11: 6,  
Vinkour - 7: 24  
voice - 14: 21  
W  
16: 21 - 12: 9, 13: 1,  
water - 15: 2 2: 7  
website - 4: 10  
Wednesday - 1: 18,  
welcomed - 7: 14  
Whereof - 18: 11  
8: 11, 18: 3, 18: 17,  
winter - 14: 16  
withdrew - 10: 23  
Woodland - 1: 17,  
words - 15: 14  
write - 4: 15, 4: 19  
written - 4: 74, 6: 4  
Y  
year - 6: 5  
years - 15: 12