Appendix 2
Operations Project Authorization Form

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Project Title: Reliability Tree Removal (REL) Program	**Project Number: REL2025 (CTREL25)**
Date Prepared: 11/11/2024	**Company:** Eversource CT
Organization: Asset Management	**Class(es) of Plant:** Other
Project Initiator: [redacted]	**Project Category:** Annual - General
Project Manager: [redacted]	**Project Type:** Specific
Project Sponsor: [redacted]	**Capital Investment part of original Operating Plan:** Yes
Estimated in service date: 12/31/2025	**Emergency Related Request?** No
Eng./Constr. Resources Budgeted? No	**Facility Type** (check all that apply)**:** ☐ PTF ☐ non-PTF ☐ Distribution
Total Gross Capital Request: 15.3 M	**Authorization Type:** Full Funding

Executive Summary

Briefly describe (in a few sentences) the overall description of the project (do not include technical details)

- An authorization of $15,300,000 is requested for the Connecticut Distribution Reliability Tree Removal (REL) capital project (id: REL2025) which is part of Eversource CT's annual distribution vegetation plan.

- The REL project focuses removal of trees in poor performing isolating device zones to improve system reliability and resiliency. The data driven selection of circuit segments is based on a weighted evaluation of customers interrupted (CI), customer minutes interrupted (CMI), cost per customer, and customer served at the isolating device level. Tree removals will be performed to obtain full clearance, remove hazard trees and higher risk trees, trees that are not hazardous but more likely to fail (due to species, lean or site conditions).

Project Costs Summary

See APS3 and APS8 requirements and consult with Plant Accounting for capital/O&M determination. Use published loaders for benefits, materials, and invoices, maintained by the Director, Budget and Internal Reporting.
Note: Dollar values are in thousands
For projects with an O&M component necessary for project completion (eg: training), please note in the appendix what those costs will be and the CCC/business area responsible.

Capital Costs	Year 20__	Year 20__	Year 20__+	Total
Direct Capital Costs				
Internal Labor				$ -
Outside Services	14,841			$ 14,841
Materials				$ -
Removals				$ -
Risk and Contingency				$ -
Other				$ -
Subtotal	$ 14,841	$ -	$ -	$ 14,841
Indirect Capital Costs				
Indirect/Overheads (including benefits)	459			$ 459
Capitalized interest or AFUDC, if any				$ -
Subtotal	$ 459	$ -	$ -	$ 459
Total Capital Project Costs	**$ 15,300**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 15,300**

Costs by Entity				Total
Direct Capital	15,300			$ 15,300
Indirect Capital				$ -
Removal net of salvage				$ -
Total Capital Project Costs by Entity	**$ 15,300**	**$ -**	**$ -**	**$ 15,300**

Technical Justification:

Project Need, Objective and Justification

The Reliability Tree Removal (REL) project uses a data driven approach to target vegetation on poor performing circuit segments. While the Enhanced Tree Trimming (ETR) project is focused on removing risk and hazard trees along circuits scheduled for maintenance trimming in the current year, the REL project is designed to address emergent reliability concerns on circuits across Connecticut regardless of the scheduled circuit year.

The REL program removes trees that have the potential to impact the utility plant thereby extending the life of the plant. The REL program meets the three tests for capitalization:

- Substantial investment towards asset life extension
- One time program cost as the activity can only be performed once
- Standalone program which will be budgeted, charged and tracked separately

Justification:
The 2025 Vegetation Management distribution program requires expenditures across Connecticut Eversource operating company to address hazardous and risk tree removals. These activities improve the system's ability to survive major storms with less extensive damage. This will improve reliability performance across the service area.

Risk Assessment:
The Company has made commitments to customers and regulators to improve reliability and system resiliency. There are both operational and regulatory risks associated with a failure to approve this program. Operationally, there is an increased risk of more vegetation caused outages, both on normal days and during adverse weather. The Company is required to report on both maintenance costs and volume and risk/hazard tree removals on an annual basis. The Vegetation Management programs also receive intense scrutiny during storm cost recovery hearings and rate case proceedings, creating a regulatory risk for the Company.

Project Scope

The REL project will focus tree removals on circuit segments that are identified as poor performing. The REL specification seeks to obtain 10 foot clearance through tree removals. Eversource arborists will also seek removal of hazard and risk trees outside the trim zone that are more likely to fail to due species characteristics or environmental factors. The reliability analysis for 2025 REL segment selection is in progress in coordination with engineering and system planning. Vegetation management and engineering will work together to evaluate specific circuit segments and create recommendations on the most effective approach to improve reliability. Those best suited to vegetation management actions will be selected for REL tree removals.

Background

The REL project focuses tree removal efforts on circuit segments that have poor reliability. The isolating device segments are selected through a statewide analysis which considers the customers interrupted, the duration of events, the cost per customer and the total number of customers served downstream. In areas that have experienced repeat outages, removing trees will result in greater reliability and resiliency benefits compared to maintenance trimming. Arborists will target hazard and risk trees that are outside the trim zone but due to their height and location pose significant risk to the overhead conductors. The combination of establishing full clearance within 10 feet and selecting risk and hazard trees to remove from outside the clearance zone will result in fewer tree caused outages along the poor performing circuit segment.

Alternatives Considered:

Were alternative solutions considered/applicable? Include any cost/benefit analysis.

Alternatives were considered (please describe below)

One alternative is to only address poor performing areas through maintenance trimming which would not achieve the same overall reliability benefit. Failure to address vegetation issues or establishing ground to sky clearance along poor performing circuit segments would result in continued poor reliability for customers and negative impacts to Eversource reliability metrics and performance.

Eversource has delineated the benefits of tree removal programs to regulatory bodies in CT as an important component of the vegetation management program for both day-to-day reliability improvement and increasing system resiliency for adverse weather events. Additionally, the majority of our customer and community officials have come to appreciate the impact of these programs and expect the company to have robust line clearance efforts. The deferral of this proactive maintenance approach to address only specific instances of insufficient clearance runs counter to the goals of improved reliability and system resiliency.

Regulatory Approvals:

Are Regulatory body approvals needed for the project?

No

If yes, provide detailed regulatory approvals

Project Schedule

Milestone/Phase Name	Estimated Date
Work Scope and Segment Selection	On-going
Project Start	1/1/2025
Project Completion	12/31/25

Risks and Risk Mitigation Plans

List top risks and mitigation plans associated with this project. Include any contingency related to each risk. (Permitting/siting; environmental; outage constraints; customer/community outreach; material delivery; constructability challenges; excavation; etc.)

Future Financial Benefits:

If yes, provide a detailed explanation in the appendix section

No - project is not undertaken for financial benefits

References

Appendices (One-Line Diagrams, Images, etc.)

Reference appendices items in the appropriate section of the PAF and list items in the same order as referenced in the PAF