Vegetation Management Plan – Revision 1

Hoffman Falls Wind

Towns of Fenner, Eaton, Nelson, and Smithfield

Madison County, New York

Revision	Date	Pages Affected
0	02/06/2026	All
1	04/24/2026	2, 4-8

liberty renewables

Hoffman Falls Wind LLC

90 State Street
Albany, New York 12207

April 2026

Contents

Tables

Acronym List

ORES	Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission
MET	Meteorological tower
ADLS	Aircraft Detection Lighting System
O&M	Operations and Maintenance
POI	Point of interconnection
NYCRR	New York Codes, Rules and Regulations
ISCMP	Invasive Species Control and Management Plan
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
VIMMP	Visual Impacts Minimization and Mitigation Plan
NYSAGM	New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets
NYSDEC	New York State Department of Environmental Conservation
BMP	Best Management Practices
VIMMP	Visual Impacts Minimization and Mitigation Plan

Glossary of Terms

Permittee	Hoffman Falls Wind LLC (the Permittee) a wholly owned subsidiary of Liberty Renewables Inc. (Liberty), the entity seeking a siting permit for Hoffman Falls Wind (the Facility) from the Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission (ORES) under Article VIII of the New York State Public Service Law.
Facility	Refers to the proposed 109.8-megawatt utility-scale wind energy generating project. Associated support facilities will include 18 wind turbines, an underground medium voltage collection system, gravel access roads, a permanent meteorological (MET) tower, an aircraft detection lighting system (ADLS) tower, temporary construction laydown areas, a temporary concrete batch plant, an operations and maintenance (O&M) facility, a medium voltage-to-transmission voltage collection substation, a point of interconnection (POI) switchyard, and a short 115kV overhead transmission line that will connect the Facility to the high voltage electrical grid.
Facility Site	A boundary area encompassing all parcels that are proposed to host facility components.
Project	The development, construction, operation, and maintenance of the Hoffman Falls Wind Facility.

1.0 Introduction

On December 22, 2025 the Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission (ORES) issued a Siting Permit to Hoffman Falls Wind LLC (Hoffman Falls Wind or Permittee), a subsidiary of Liberty, for a major renewable energy facility (Project or Facility) located on private lands in the Towns of Fenner, Eaton, Nelson, and Smithfield, Madison County, New York (Facility Site).

The purpose of this Vegetation Management Plan is to outline the vegetation management practices that the Permittee will implement to remove existing vegetation, manage and control unwanted vegetation growth, and ensure the establishment of appropriate vegetation during the construction and operation of the Facility. This Plan has been developed in compliance with Title 16 New York Codes, Rules and Regulations (NYCRR) Section 1100-10.2(e)(4) and Section 6.1(e)(4) of the Siting Permit issued by the Office of Renewable Energy Siting and Electric Transmission (ORES) under Article VIII of the Public Service Law. The Permittee will make adherence to this Plan an obligation for its contractors and will provide copies to employees and contractors involved in the construction and restoration activities associated with the Project.

2.0 Ecological Communities and Impacts

Vegetation management for the Hoffman Wind Facility is based on detailed surveys of the Facility Site's plant communities. These surveys included remote land cover mapping, field surveys, invasive species inventories, and wetland and stream delineations conducted between 2023 and 2025. The Permittee's Application and subsequent Permit Modification request provides specific details on ecological communities found within the Facility Site and anticipated impacts. As detailed in these analyses, the most prevalent ecological community type within the Facility Site is row cropland. Forested uplands comprise much of the balance of the Facility Site. The Facility has been designed to avoid and/or minimize impacts to sensitive communities such as wetlands, concentrating impacts to already disturbed areas and/or uplands, while also reducing the need to clear forested communities as much as possible. Temporary impacts will be restored to the pre-existing conditions after construction is complete. Areas subject to permanent conversion impacts will be maintained in an early successional state throughout operations. Permanently impacted areas will maintained as built facilities throughout operations.

Invasive species are abundant along public roadsides, existing farm lanes, hedgerows, successional areas, and small wooded areas. Invasive species were also found in high cover at the edges of agricultural fields. The most heavily infested areas are those in a successional state (e.g., successional hardwoods/shrublands/old field), especially within hedgerows and along forest edges. More information about the invasive species found within the Facility Site can be found in the Invasive Species Control and Management Plan (ISCMP; Appendix H).

3.0 Vegetation Management

Vegetation management is a critical component to the Hoffman Falls Wind Project, ensuring the balance between construction, environmental stewardship, and operational efficiency. This Plan outlines strategies

to manage vegetation at temporarily and permanently disturbed areas across all phases of the Project, including construction, restoration, and ongoing operations and maintenance. The approach prioritizes minimizing environmental impacts, controlling invasive species, maintaining site stability, and adhering to regulatory requirements.

During construction, vegetation management will focus on clearing necessary areas while preserving sensitive habitats, stabilizing disturbed soils, and preventing the spread of invasive species. Restoration efforts will ensure disturbed areas are returned to their original or intended conditions, supporting agricultural productivity, wetland health, and visual harmony.

Throughout the operational phase, vegetation management will ensure safe access to infrastructure, maintain adequate ground cover, and control invasive species to support long-term site sustainability. By integrating proactive strategies, detailed monitoring, and adaptive management practices, the Permittee aims to protect natural resources while facilitating efficient wind energy production.

3.1 Construction

Vegetation management activities during construction will involve clearing vegetation, removing root systems and stumps within designated areas, and stabilizing and seeding disturbed areas temporarily and/or permanently during construction and restoration. Information on the clearing and disposal of trees and brush is provided in the approved Tree Clearing Drawings and the Construction Operations Plan for General Construction (Appendix B). The restoration plan in Section 3.2 includes detailed instructions for seeding, planting, maintenance, and managing invasive species. Construction practices will aim to limit the spread of invasive plants while ensuring the Facility Site is prepared for the Project. In areas where invasive species are found, they will be treated and removed before disturbing the soil, following the guidance in the ISCMP (Appendix H).

3.1.1 Temporary Seeding

Temporary seeding will be used during construction at the Facility Site to stabilize disturbed soil, prevent erosion, suppress invasive species, and enhance the success of permanent vegetation during restoration. Temporary seed mixes are selected for germination and establishment success and are designed to establish quickly, providing both immediate ground cover and long-term resilience, thereby improving soil health by reducing wind and water erosion. These mixes include regionally appropriate and agriculturally common species to ensure rapid growth and compatibility with the Facility Site. Potential temporary seed mixes are provided in Table 1, but will be finalized by the contractor. Although specific details may vary in the final seed mixes used, they will be functionally equivalent to what is proposed in this Vegetation Management Plan.

Temporary seeding will be implemented in areas where construction activities have paused or where disturbed soils, stockpiles, or slopes are at high risk for erosion. In these cases, temporary seed mixes will be applied promptly, ideally within 14 days of the cessation of construction if soil disturbance is under 5 acres and within seven days if soil disturbance is over 5 acres, as outlined in the approved Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). For times outside optimal planting windows for permanent seeding, cover crop seed mixes will be used to maintain soil stability and provide a protective ground cover until

permanent seeding can occur. Temporary seeding will involve methods such raking and/or decompacting the soil, followed by broadcast or drill seeding to encourage germination and rapid establishment.

A cover crop is typically used as part of the permanent seeding process to further stabilize the soil and suppress weeds while allowing slower-growing, permanent seed mixes to establish without competition. This approach also enhances water infiltration and minimizes environmental pressures on the permanent vegetation. Cover crops are easy to manage and terminate, with mowing or crimping as a common method to avoid the risk of herbicide impact on perennial species.

Table 1. Potential Temporary Seeding / Cover Crop Details

Common Name	Variety	Rate (PLS;[1] lbs/ac)		Application Period
		Temporary Seeding	Cover Crop	
Grain Oats	*n/a*	96	30	May 1 – June 30
Winter Rye	Aroostook	100	10	November 1 – October 31

3.1.2 Visual Mitigation Planting

Visual mitigation plantings will be implemented at select locations across the Facility Site in accordance with the approved Visual Impacts Minimization and Mitigation Plan (VIMMP) and approved Screen Planting Plan. Pursuant to 16 NYCRR Section 1100-3.2(a)(2) and consistent with 16 NYCRR Section 1100-10.2, the Permittee will comply with all vegetation management requirements detailed in these plans.

During construction and restoration, plantings will be monitored regularly for health and will receive supplemental watering as needed, coordinated with environmental monitors and on-site workers. Invasive species in proximity to these plantings will be managed in line with the approved ISCMP, with strict monitoring of herbicide use to avoid negatively affecting the health of the plantings. These efforts ensure that visual mitigation plantings not only minimize the visual impacts of the Project but also enhance local biodiversity and habitat value.

3.2 Restoration

Restoration of the Facility will begin promptly after ground disturbance is completed for each activity, focusing on stabilizing disturbed areas and returning them to their original or intended use. Restoration will follow a systematic approach to ensure compliance with approved permits, environmental guidelines, and the approved SWPPP. Temporarily disturbed areas will be restored as soon as possible once construction has progressed or ceased in the area, ensuring that the ground remains bare for the least amount of time as possible.

3.2.1 General Restoration Measures

Restoration of the Facility shall include planting of native vegetation based on on-site surveys of vegetation cover types and growth habits of undesirable vegetation species, and restoration of disturbed areas, ruts, and rills to original grades and conditions with permanent re-vegetation and erosion controls appropriate

for those locations. The Project shall attain eighty (80) percent vegetative cover across all disturbed soil areas by the end of the first full growing season following restoration.

All construction-related debris, such as surplus materials, scrap, and temporary gravel or fill, will be removed from the site and disposed of at authorized facilities. Temporary features will be dismantled to subgrade levels, and the subsoil will be decompacted in accordance with New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC)'s Deep-Ripping and Decompaction Manual to restore natural soil structure. Preserved topsoil will then be re-established, ensuring disturbed areas, including ruts and rills, are restored to their original grades or designed contours.

To stabilize the soil and reduce the risk of invasive species colonization, approved seed mixes will be applied alongside soil amendments in accordance with the SWPPP and this Plan. Stabilization measures will include seeding with temporary or permanent vegetation, covering with weed-free mulch, and installing erosion control features as necessary. All unnecessary field stakes, signs, and flagging will be removed, and disturbed areas will be monitored to ensure an 80% vegetative cover is established. Corrective measures, such as soil testing, additional seeding, and soil amendment applications, will be undertaken for any areas that fail to meet stabilization criteria within one growing season. Invasive species management may be necessary during the restoration phase to meet required standards (see Section 4.0 for more details).

3.2.2 Agricultural Lands

Restoration of agricultural lands will be conducted in coordination with landowners and farm operators to support the continuation of agricultural production. Row crop fields may be planted with a cover crop unless agricultural activities are expected to resume immediately post-construction. Hayfields and pastures will be reseeded with appropriate mixes selected in consultation with the landowner in order to maintain consistency with the adjacent areas. To promote long-term productivity, soil testing may be performed to determine optimal fertilizer application rates, ensuring that restored areas match or exceed the conditions of adjacent undisturbed lands.

3.2.3 Wetland and Stream Adjacent Areas

The Facility will not impact state- or federally jurisdictional wetlands or streams. The Permittee shall implement the approved Wetland Restoration and Mitigation Plan and complete restoration in wetland and stream adjacent areas that are impacted during construction. The Project shall restore temporarily disturbed areas, ruts, and rills within adjacent areas to original grades and conditions. Temporary soil stockpiles shall not be located within wetlands or adjacent to streams.

Immediately upon completion of construction activities, and as consistent with existing land use/land cover, regulated wetland and stream adjacent areas shall be seeded with an appropriate species mix for upland areas adjacent to wetlands and streams. See Tables 1 and 2 for proposed seed mixes that will be utilized for temporary and permanent seeding in upland areas.[1] Final seed mixes will be selected by the contractor and may be modified with species that provide equivalent strength, vigor, and ecosystem functions and

[1] The Permittee is proposing no impacts within wetlands or streams. Impacts will occur in upland areas only. No seed mixes specific to wetlands or streams are required.

values. Any modifications to the proposed seed mixes will be coordinated with the Environmental Monitor and must be approved by NYSDPS/ORES prior to application. Seeding can occur anytime throughout the year (except when the ground is snow covered); however, some species do require cold stratification before they germinate. Seeding in the fall or winter will allow for this stratification as well as increasing seed-to-soil contact through precipitation and the freeze-thaw cycle, although some seed may be lost to decay and wildlife consumption over the winter.

If seeding bare ground, the cover crop should be seeded at the same time as the seed mix with no need to terminate the cover crop later. If a temporary cover crop was seeded ahead of time, termination may be necessary ahead of seeding if the cover crop is too dense, causing excessive competition and shading for the native seedlings. Termination methods may include mowing, crimping, or herbicide applications. As long as the cover crop residue is not too thick that it will negatively impact seed-soil contact of the native seeding, it should be left in place to help conserve moisture and suppress weeds. Wetland and stream adjacent areas will be monitored to achieve an eighty (80) percent cover of appropriate herbaceous species, as specified in regulatory guidelines.

All disturbed stream banks shall be mulched within two (2) days of final grading, stabilized with one hundred (100) percent natural or biodegradable fiber matting, and seeded with an appropriate seed mix, as outlined in the SWPPP.

3.2.4 Upland Areas

All temporary disturbance or modification of established upland vegetation communities that occurs as a result of Facility construction, restoration, or maintenance activities shall be restored to the pre-existing vegetative conditions by re-grading and re-seeding with an appropriate naturalized seed mix after disturbance activities are completed, unless permitted for forest conversion, returning to agricultural production, or otherwise specified by the landowner. These temporarily disturbed or modified areas include all areas within the Facility Site that do not have impervious cover, such as temporary roads, material and equipment staging and storage areas, and electric line rights-of-way. See Tables 1 and 2 for proposed seed mixes that will be utilized for temporary and permanent seeding in upland areas.[2] Final seed mixes will be selected by the contractor and may be modified with species that provide equivalent strength, vigor, and ecosystem functions and values. Any modifications to the proposed seed mixes will be coordinated with the Environmental Monitor and must be approved by NYSDPS/ORES prior to application.

Seeding can occur anytime throughout the year (except when the ground is snow covered); however, some species do require cold stratification before they germinate. Seeding in the fall or winter will allow for this stratification as well as increasing seed-to-soil contact through precipitation and the freeze-thaw cycle, although some seed may be lost to decay and wildlife consumption over the winter. Mowed lawn areas should be reseeded with a typical commercial lawn mix suitable for the location, or as specified by the landowner.

[2] The Permittee is proposing no impacts within wetlands or streams. Impacts will occur in upland areas only. No seed mixes specific to wetlands or streams are required.

If seeding bare ground, the cover crop should be seeded at the same time as the native or naturalized seed mix with no need to terminate the cover crop later. If a temporary cover crop was seeded ahead of time, termination may be necessary ahead of seeding if the cover crop is too dense, causing excessive competition and shading for the native seedlings. Termination methods may include mowing, crimping, or herbicide applications. As long as the cover crop residue is not too thick that it will negatively impact seed-soil contact of the native seeding, it should be left in place to help conserve moisture and suppress weeds.

Table 2. Potential Upland Seed Mixes

Name	Variety	Rate (PLS[1]; lbs/ac)
Red Clover[2] OR Common White Clover[2]	Acclaim, Rally, Red Head II, Renegade Common	8
Creeping Red Fescue	Common	20
Smooth Bromegrass OR Ryegrass (perennial)	Common Pennfine/Linn	2 5

[1] Pure live seed (PLS)
[2] Add inoculant immediately prior to seeding

3.3 Operations and Maintenance

Vegetation management during the operational phase of the Project will focus on maintaining site stability, controlling invasive species, and ensuring safe and efficient operation of the Facility. A long-term vegetation management plan with recommendations based on on-site surveys of vegetation cover types and growth habits of undesirable vegetation species will guide these efforts, incorporating routine inspections, maintenance activities, and adherence to relevant regulatory requirements, including the Facility-specific SWPPP and ISCMP (Appendix H).

3.4.1 Host Landowner Notification Procedures

The Permittee will coordinate with and notify host landowners of vegetation management activities conducted during construction and operations in accordance with the agreements reached with the Permittee.

3.4.2 Routine Maintenance

Regular maintenance will include mechanical and manual methods such as mowing, trimming, and cutting to manage vegetation growth around key Facility components, including access roads, substations, and turbine foundations. Vegetation will be kept at appropriate heights to maintain clear access and avoid potential operational issues. For example, areas around security fencing and adjacent to access roads will be mowed or brush-hogged periodically to prevent overgrowth and ensure safe and efficient site access.

Herbicide treatments or other chemical controls may be applied selectively by certified professionals in compliance with NYSDEC regulations. In areas where livestock grazing is a viable option, this method may

also be incorporated to manage vegetation in alignment with the Facility's agricultural co-utilization objectives.

3.4.3 Monitoring and Inspections

Vegetation inspections will be conducted regularly, with the frequency determined by growth rates across different areas of the Facility Site. At a minimum, key areas such as the substation, access roads, and areas adjacent to the Facility will be inspected annually. These inspections will evaluate vegetation density to ensure adequate ground cover, prevent erosion, and suppress invasive species. Hazardous vegetation, such as trees or other species posing a risk to infrastructure, will be identified and removed during these routine checks. In accordance with NYSAGM guidelines, monitoring of agricultural lands will be conducted three times during the growing season (spring, summer, and fall), for two complete growing seasons.

Facility inspections will include regular evaluations following storm events or other incidents to assess erosion, drainage, and potential hazards. Detailed procedures for inspecting Facility easements, addressing hazardous conditions, and implementing maintenance strategies are outlined in the SWPPP's Inspection and Maintenance Schedule. This proactive approach ensures ongoing site stability and compliance with regulatory requirements.

3.4.4 Adaptive Management

As the site matures, vegetation management practices will be adjusted based on monitoring results and site-specific conditions. Any erosion or drainage issues identified during inspections will be promptly addressed to maintain site stability. Vegetative screening, as outlined in the approved Visual Impacts Minimizations and Mitigation Plan, will also be maintained to ensure effective visual mitigation throughout the life of the Facility.

By combining proactive management, regular monitoring, and adherence to best practices, vegetation management during the operational phase of the Hoffman Falls Wind Project will ensure the Facility remains safe, efficient, and environmentally responsible.

3.4.5 Collection Substation and Operations Areas

Vegetation within the collection substation fence and adjacent areas will be closely managed to eliminate above-ground growth that could pose a safety risk or interfere with operations. Crushed stone will be used within and immediately around the substation to prevent vegetation establishment and mitigate risks associated with ground faults in the electrical system. Vegetation within five feet of the substation fence will be inspected regularly and removed using mechanical methods or pre- and post-emergent herbicides applied by certified professionals.

Surrounding the substation and O&M facility, vegetation will be maintained to ensure safe access and operations. This includes regular mowing, trimming, and invasive species management during the growing season. Yearly inspections will identify and address hazardous vegetation, such as "danger trees" that could fall and damage equipment. For areas near above-ground transmission lines, vegetation maintenance will prevent faults or outages caused by tree growth or sagging conductors, maintaining clearances as required by industry standards.

3.4.6. Wind Turbine Areas

All areas within 100 feet of wind turbine pads will be maintained in an early successional state following construction. Vegetation around wind turbines will be maintained regularly to facilitate safe inspections and prevent overgrowth. These areas will be mowed or trimmed as needed, depending on seasonal growth rates and site-specific conditions. Host landowners will be notified of vegetation management activities as outlined in their lease or easement agreements. Invasive species management will be conducted in accordance with the ISCMP (Appendix H), ensuring that non-native species are controlled to support vegetation and site stability.

3.4.7. Access Roads and Rights-of-Way

Access roads and collection line rights-of-way will be inspected and maintained to ensure safe and unimpeded access to the wind turbines and other infrastructure. Vegetation along access roads will be mechanically, biologically, or chemically controlled as necessary to prevent overgrowth and maintain road visibility. Vegetation within collection line rights-of-way will be managed on an as-needed basis, typically every two to five years, to maintain accessibility and prevent woody growth. Areas where agricultural production resumes post-construction will be maintained by the landowner or farmer in coordination with the Permittee.

3.4.8 Visual Mitigation Plantings

Visual mitigation plantings around the Facility Site will be maintained to ensure their success in screening and blending the Project into the surrounding landscape. These plantings, composed of native and shrub species, will be inspected annually during the first two growing seasons. Any plants that fail to thrive will be replaced during the appropriate planting season. Routine maintenance, including mowing and invasive species control, will support the health of the plantings and nearby pollinator habitats.

3.4.9 Post-Construction Stormwater Management

Stormwater management features, such as vegetated swales and filter strips, will be maintained in compliance with post-construction SWPPP requirements. Maintenance activities will include mowing vegetation within swales to maintain proper height, removing sediment and debris, and inspecting stormwater outlets to prevent erosion. These measures will help manage runoff, stabilize soils, and support the long-term functionality of the stormwater system.

4.0 Invasive Species Management

The Hoffman Falls Wind Project has developed an Invasive Species Control and Management Plan in compliance with 6 NYCRR Part 575, Article VIII of the NYS Public Service Law, and the issued Siting Permit. This plan provides a comprehensive framework for identifying, preventing, and controlling invasive species during construction and operation, ensuring healthy vegetation throughout the Facility Site. The ISCMP includes a baseline invasive species survey, detailed in Appendix H, and outlines best management practices (BMPs) to mitigate the spread of invasive species. Refer to the ISCMP for details regarding invasive species management.

5.0 Chemical Controls

General vegetation management will utilize mechanical methods like mowing and trimming. Chemical controls, such as targeted herbicide applications, may be necessary, such as within the collection substation, the O&M facility, along the transmission line right-of-way, or for the management of invasive plant species. Any use of herbicides will be conducted in strict compliance with NYSDEC regulations (6 NYCRR Part 325) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) standards.

Herbicide applications will avoid broadcast or widespread spraying and instead focus on directly treating invasive plants and incompatible woody vegetation to achieve vegetation management objectives. Specific herbicides, application methods, and schedules will be determined based on site-specific conditions and the invasive species requiring control. Sensitive areas, such as wetlands and streams, will be treated with additional care, and landowner agreements will be respected to limit chemical controls where necessary. In cases where repeated applications are necessary to achieve effective control, such treatments will align with best practices and regulatory guidelines.

6.0 Review and Response Procedures

The Permittee will coordinate with landowners within the Facility Site and the Towns to identify and address potential use encroachments or infrastructure development. Any observed encroachments, such as vegetation or unauthorized use within Facility easements, will be documented and addressed proactively. If necessary, the Vegetation Management Plan will be updated to accommodate future site uses, in consultation with ORES.