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Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant Cuts Ribbon on Energy Storage Project

Ashburnham, MA -- May 30, 2019 – Local and state officials gathered in Ashburnham yesterday to cut the ribbon on the Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant's (AMLPL) new three-megawatt, five-megawatt-hour battery storage project. The lithium ion battery, located adjacent to the municipal utility's substation on Turnpike Road, went online in January 2019.

The project was made possible through an Advancing Commonwealth Energy Storage (ACES) grant, which covered 25 percent of the cost of the battery. The ACES program, a partnership between the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center (MassCEC) and the state Department of Energy Resources (DOER), is a competitive grant initiative aimed at piloting innovative, broadly-replicable energy storage projects to advance energy storage technologies in Massachusetts. The remaining 75 percent of the project was funded through the pooled loan program operated by the Massachusetts Municipal Wholesale Electric Company (MMWEC), AMLP's joint action agency.

The battery, from Massachusetts-based NEC Energy Solutions, is helping AMLP reduce its costs for transmission and capacity, which ultimately will benefit its customers. The battery is strategically dispatched to reduce the light department's heaviest electric loads each month. These peak periods determine AMLP's yearly capacity costs and monthly transmission costs.

AMLP is partnering with MMWEC, which has developed a peak load forecasting system and remote dispatch program, to optimize the benefits of the battery project. MMWEC staff predict the best time to dispatch the battery based on its forecasts, and the battery can be remotely dispatched from MMWEC's offices in Ludlow.

"The AMLP battery storage project is a collaborative effort and a real world solution for reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while still saving the customers money," said Rick Ahlin, Chairman of the AMLP light board.

"Energy storage technologies have the potential to be a game changer for Massachusetts, helping to lower the cost of energy for ratepayers while reducing emissions," said Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources Commissioner Judith Judson. "Investments in innovative energy storage projects like this one at the Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant are a testament to the Baker-Polito Administration's commitment to embracing innovative clean energy solutions across the Commonwealth."

"Energy storage has the potential to transform the way we utilize our energy assets in the Commonwealth," said Massachusetts Clean Energy Center CEO Stephen Pike. "The ACES program is focused on spurring the development of the energy storage industry in Massachusetts, and projects like the one installed at the Ashburnham Municipal Light Plant will play an important role in reducing costs for ratepayers and bringing the state closer to a clean, cost-effective and resilient energy portfolio."

"MMWEC is pleased to partner with AMLP to bring this project to completion," said MMWEC CEO Ronald C. DeCurzio. "The use of joint action is helping MMWEC and its Members bring more clean energy into the Commonwealth."

"The Ashburnham project is a great example of the State of Massachusetts leading the way and working with multiple agencies and entities coming together to advance the benefits of energy storage for the greater good of the community and the Commonwealth," said Steve Fludder, CEO of NEC Energy Solutions. "We couldn't be more pleased to be a part of this project here in Ashburnham and look forward to working with MMWEC and others to extend the multiple benefits of energy storage to additional communities in the Commonwealth."

MassCEC and DOER awarded \$20 million to 25 projects as part of the ACES program in 2017.

