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Andrew M. Cuomo - Governor

Governor Cuomo Releases Earth Day Statement and New Environmental Initiatives

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Proposes Expanded NY-Sun Program to Help Combat Climate Change and Create Green Jobs across the State

Announces Partnership to Create Web-Based Repository of New York Climate Change Data

Albany, NY (April 22, 2013)

"Today is Earth Day – a day we stop to appreciate the great natural wonders around us and consider the world we will leave behind for future generations. At this time of year, we are often reminded of nature's beauty in this great state, but this week we are also reminded of the fury and devastation Mother Nature can bring at a moment's notice. Six months ago Hurricane Sandy made landfall, killing 60 New Yorkers, destroying over ten thousand homes and causing tens of billions of dollars in damage. While rebuilding efforts are well underway, we must not lose sight that extreme weather is now the new normal with two 'once in a century' storms occurring in the last two years alone. Climate change is very real and has had destructive and deadly consequences in New York. My administration has worked to implement policies that protect our environment and preserve the natural beauty of our state. That work continues today, and I encourage all New Yorkers, at this moment in our history, to join us in pursuing new ways each of us can help reverse the impacts of climate change and add to the narrative of Earth Day. Celebrating Earth Day and working to combat climate change should go hand in hand – it is the only way we can ensure that New York's natural resources and beauty will be protected and enjoyed for generations to come."

KEY CUOMO ADMINISTRATION ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Increasing the Environmental Protection Fund:** The Governor's 2013-2014 enacted budget increases the Environmental Protection Fund by \$19 million to \$153 million. In 2011 and 2012, after years of dramatic cuts, the Governor maintained EPF funding at \$134 million. The EPF provides critical support for a many environmental and open space programs that generate revenue and create jobs in many sectors throughout the state.
- **Lowered the Regional Greenhouse Gas cap:** In 2013, New York and nine other northeast states have agreed to lower the emissions cap under RGGI, the nation's first market-based cap-and-invest program, which is reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the power sector while creating jobs and reducing electricity bills.
- **Charting a Course for a Sustainable and Resilient New York:** Following Superstorm Sandy, the Governor launched the 2100 Commission which boldly acknowledged the risks and realities of climate change and charted out a course for long term recovery which proposes, among many things, the restoration of the natural landscape, distributed and efficient energy, and a greener, resiliency-based building code. In addition, the Governor's enacted 2013-2014 budget includes \$4 million for flood resiliency projects across the state.
- **Green Bank:** In his 2013 State of the State, the Governor created a cabinet-level position in his administration, the Chairman of Energy Policy and Finance, to which he appointed Richard Kauffman, former advisor to U.S. DOE Secretary Steven Chu. Mr. Kauffman is charged with a priority assignment to create a \$1 billion Green Bank that will coordinate the State's existing clean energy finance programs and expand them to transform the clean energy marketplace.
- **Efficiency Financing for Public Buildings:** In 2012, NYPA invested more than \$247 million in energy efficiency and clean energy projects at public facilities throughout New York State, setting a new record.
- **Charge NY Electric Vehicle Initiative:** In 2013, the Governor announced the Charge NY Initiative to install 3,000 public charging stations for electric vehicles statewide over the next five years.

Cleaner Greener Communities: The Governor dedicated \$100 million in RGGI proceeds for the new Cleaner Greener Communities Program that supports smart growth and sustainability planning and projects.

- Energy Highway: Energy Highway was created to facilitate the upgrading and modernizing of energy infrastructure, to reduce transmission bottlenecks in New York, and help bring upstate wind resources to downstate markets.
- Land Acquisition: Largest acquisition of land in the Adirondacks in more than a century —the 69,000 Finch property; plus nearly 10,000 acres in The Great Swamp in Putnam County, Big Indian, Belleayre Mountain in Ulster County and Gene's Four Seasons in Suffolk County.
- Brownfield Opportunity Areas Program: The Governor's enacted 2013-14 budget supports all announced and approved BOA applications and provides an additional \$10 million for existing applications for the highest quality projects that provide the most benefit. The Governor announced in April 2011 and March 2012, a total of 36 Brownfield Opportunity Areas grants for \$10 million.
- "New York Works" for the Environment Water Resources: More than \$100 million to restore the state's environmental infrastructure such as state-owned dams, flood control facilities, and coastal hazard and inlet navigation maintenance projects. The 2013-2014 enacted budget includes \$40 million for DEC to invest in recreational infrastructure, e-Business and plugging of orphaned and abandoned oil and gas wells, to provide grants for municipal brownfield cleanups, including allowing DEC to undertake such projects on behalf of a municipality, and to provide grants to municipalities for water quality improvement projects.
- Green Infrastructure Consent Order with NYC: DEC reached an innovative \$3.8 billion enforcement settlement with New York City to comprehensively address large-scale discharges of sewage mixed with storm water during storms, known as "combined sewer overflows." The settlement requires NYC to invest in trees, green roofs, and other natural controls to prevent stormwater runoff.
- Sewage Right to Know Law: In 2012, Governor Cuomo signed into law legislation that requires public notification of sewage discharges to waterways.
- Increasing Bottle Bill Enforcement: The Governor's 2013-2014 enacted budget strengthens bottle bill enforcement provisions. This will result in increased compliance and directly support the EPF.
- "New York Works" for our Parks: From the outset of his administration, Governor Cuomo has been reversing this trend, most recently dedicating \$90 million of capital in 2013-2014. This follows on last year's New York Works initiative, which provided \$89 million in new capital funds, and leveraged \$54 million of additional funds, providing a total of \$143 million for improvements in 48 state parks and historic sites across the state.
- Creating "I Love My Park Day": Volunteers play a key role in maintaining and welcoming the public to the State's facilities, and the State is always looking for ways to enhance volunteer opportunities. This year, State Parks and the non-profit organization, Parks & Trails New York will organize the second annual "I Love My Park" Day on May 4th. On that day, thousands of volunteers will participate on clean-up teams and other special projects to spruce up 70+ state parks and historic sites across the state. This year's event will feature a Bioblitz component and will count and identify plants and animals in two parks.
- Simplifying Hunting and Fishing Licensing: The Governor's enacted 2013-2014 budget significantly simplifies the hunting and fishing license structure and dramatically reduces fees. This initiative will improve the sporting experience and encourage a new generation of New Yorkers and visitors to take advantage of the state's rich outdoor heritage.

EXPANDING NY-SUN PROGRAM TO MAKE NEW YORK A LEADER IN SOLAR JOBS AND DEVELOPMENT

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today proposed expanding his successful NY-Sun initiative to provide a long-term stable funding stream to increase solar projects throughout the state in support of the growing clean energy industry. This announcement is in support of a commitment the Governor made in his State of the State address earlier this year and in celebration of Earth Day with initiatives tied to efforts to combat climate change.

"New York State is a leader in efforts to combat climate change, and the NY-Sun program is an important part of those efforts by supporting the expansion of clean energy projects to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and reduce greenhouse gas emissions," said Governor Cuomo. "A robust and wide-ranging strategy to protect against climate change will grow our economy, protect our communities and environment, and advance the goals of Earth Day."

Just one year ago, Governor Cuomo launched the NY-Sun program to quadruple the amount of customer-sited solar power installed annually in New York by 2013.

Program certainty is critical to developers in attracting significant private sector investment in solar photovoltaic systems. Therefore, expanding the NY-Sun program will support the growth of the solar industry across the state by providing stable and dependable funding of \$150 million per year for the next ten years. By funding NY-Sun for the next decade, the state is enabling the sustainable development of a robust solar power industry in New York, creating well-paying skilled jobs, improving the reliability of the electric grid and reducing air pollution.

The NY Sun Act will require the New York State Energy Development Authority (NYSERDA) and the Public Service Commission (PSC) to design the most cost-effective programs and to respond to changing market conditions, but also will require that programs take into consideration a number of key features to maximize benefits to New York, including: attracting a diversity of project sizes; taking into account

economic benefits to New York State (i.e. encouraging solar installers to support in-State suppliers); and focusing on areas of the electric grid that could benefit the most from distributed solar generation (e.g., areas where improvements to local transmission and distribution systems could be avoided or delayed by solar installations).

Since the Governor launched NY Sun in 2012, a total of 242 MW of solar PV has been installed or is under development, more than was installed in the entire prior decade. Approximately 120,000 tons of greenhouse gas emissions will be avoided with the installation of the NY-Sun projects, which is the equivalent of removing 23,000 cars from the road. The NY Sun Act will ensure these gains continue for the next decade.

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) recently issued a report that ranked New York 5th in the nation for the amount of installed renewable energy capacity providing electricity to the state. New York was the only state east of the Mississippi named in the top five, and the only Northeast state placing in the top 10. According to the Solar Foundation, New York State currently has approximately 3,300 solar jobs, placing it seventh in the nation. This same foundation concluded that, nationally, the solar industry has expanded by over 13 percent in just the last year alone.

Dave Gahl, Executive Director of Environmental Advocates of New York, said, "As a clean, renewable source of power, solar must be a major part of New York's energy future. It is critical we modernize our infrastructure and move away from coal and other fossil fuels which contribute to the most devastating effects of climate change. Governor Cuomo's legislation sends the message to developers that New York is ready to be a national leader in renewable energy. We applaud Governor Cuomo for his leadership on this issue and look forward to working with his administration and the Legislature to get this plan passed before the end of this legislative session."

Jackson Morris, Director of Strategic Engagement with the Pace Energy and Climate Center, said, "With today's introduction of the ten-year, \$1.5 billion NY-Sun bill, Governor Cuomo has once again demonstrated his commitment to make New York a national leader on solar energy. We look forward to working closely with the Governor and legislative leaders to enact legislation this session that will cement the Empire State's position as a renewable energy trailblazer."

Carrie Hitt, Senior Vice President of State Affairs at the Solar Energy Industries Association, said, "The NY SUN initiative was part of Governor Cuomo's campaign and remained a top priority for his Administration; through his leadership, it has been an enormous success. The bill introduced today by the Governor is another significant step which builds on the strong foundation he has established by providing the long term certainty the industry needs. The bill will allow the solar industry to dramatically scale up solar installations throughout the state, making New York one of the leading solar states in the country."

Peter Olmsted, East Coast Policy Director for Vote Solar, a national solar advocacy organization, said, "The Governor's ambitious NY-Sun Initiative is already delivering on its promise: leveraging millions in private capital to help New Yorkers harness the sun - a reliable, free, local fuel source that delivers power when and where it's needed most. A 10-year extension of NY-Sun will build on that early success and keep delivering affordable solar energy and good jobs up and down the state. We thank Governor Cuomo for his continued leadership on solar."

New York State Solar Energy Industry Association President Sail Van Nostrand said, "New York Solar Energy Industries Association congratulates Governor Cuomo on his commitment to deploying more solar in New York State. The Governor's State of the State address reinforced his commitment to a long term NY Sun program made last year, and this bill, when passed, will put New York on the fast track to clean solar energy. Solar energy is both clean and renewable and will aid in lowering carbon emissions in the State as well as lowering the long term cost of energy and the residual health care costs associated with carbon pollution. Stable energy costs, a cleaner environment and more jobs will foster the growth of commerce in New York, much the way hydroelectric power plants did at the beginning of the twentieth century. We applaud today's action and look forward to working with the Governor's office and both houses to make this extension of NY Sun a reality."

PARTNERSHIP TO HELP MAKE CLIMATE CHANGE DATA AVAILABLE TO POLICY MAKERS AND THE PUBLIC

Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management Teams Up with Cornell, SUNY-ESF and NOAA to Develop Online-Based New York Climate Change Science Clearinghouse

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo today announced a partnership of federal, state and air quality experts that will create an online-based New York Climate Change Science Clearinghouse to make the state's climate science data and literature accessible and useful to the public, decision-makers in state and local government, scientists, universities, private business and non-governmental organizations.

"Over the past two years, New York State has experienced the first-hand effects of extreme weather. As we adjust to the reality of a changing climate, it is imperative that we understand the associated risks and challenges that greatly affect New York's natural resources, communities, public health and economy," said Governor Cuomo. "This database of resources on climate change will allow policy makers, academics, and members of the public to access troves of scientific information that will help guide decisions and future planning."

The searchable, web-based repository of scientific data and literature about climate change in New York State will be accessible to the public and used as a tool to inform research and policy decisions. At the completion of this project, New York State will have the tools and information necessary to strengthen its role as a national leader in effectively planning for the impacts of climate change across all sectors of

the economy. Areas of focus will include data on sea level rise, precipitation, temperature and extreme events, as well as impacts of climate change on infrastructure, transportation, energy, water resources, emergency response, agriculture and public health. The database is part of a multi-pronged strategy by the Governor to protect and prepare our communities from extreme weather events such as Superstorm Sandy.

The Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management (NESCAUM), a nonprofit association of air quality agencies in the Northeast, will develop the clearinghouse in partnership with Cornell University, the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY-ESF) and the federal National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Funding for the clearinghouse is provided by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) through the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) fund.

“Governor Cuomo has made it a priority to prepare the state to adapt to the challenges of climate change, and the New York State Climate Change Science Clearinghouse will allow us to continue to build upon our current data as we take steps to add resiliency to our systems and infrastructure statewide,” said Francis J. Murray Jr., President and CEO, NYSERDA. “As Hurricane Sandy demonstrated so powerfully, climate change is an issue that cannot be ignored. By studying the effects brought upon by climate change, the state can explore mitigation efforts that will protect New Yorkers from extreme weather events.”

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) is supporting the development of the Climate Change Science Clearinghouse.

“New York communities, businesses and individuals already are seeing economic and public health impacts from climate change. Access to the best available information, research and tools is vital to help anticipate changes, develop effective responses and reduce greenhouse gas emissions that trap excess heat,” said Joe Martens, Commissioner of the Department of Environmental Conservation. “By facilitating coordination and data sharing across all sectors, the New York State Climate Change Science Clearinghouse will significantly improve the interface between climate change research and policy.”

NESCAUM and its partners were chosen through a competitive solicitation and Cornell will host the clearinghouse.

“NYSERDA’s investment in the New York Climate Change Science Clearinghouse has the potential to substantially improve the quality and effectiveness of climate change planning not only in New York, but throughout the Northeast,” said Michelle Manion, Climate and Energy Program Manager, NESCAUM. “NESCAUM is very excited to bring to bear our expertise in state and regional policy and planning into a partnership with NYSERDA, Cornell, SUNY and NOAA on this landmark project.”

“I am looking forward to working with NYSERDA and our other partners at NESCAUM, SUNY ESF and NOAA on the Climate Change Science Clearinghouse,” said Art DeGaetano, Professor, Cornell University. “This project will provide the information necessary for policy-makers and decision-makers to reach scientifically sound decisions regarding climate change.”

“The clearinghouse website will provide the most authoritative, consistent and wide-ranging information available on climate change and its impacts on the economy, environment and communities of New York State,” said Dr. Colin Beier, Research Associate at SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry. “Thanks to NYSERDA’s funding, this site will contribute to climate change science and adaptation planning across New York State and the broader region.”

“NOAA’s Regional Climate Services program focuses on the delivery of climate products and services to decision-makers,” said Ellen Mecray, Eastern Region Climate Services Director, NOAA. “The NYSERDA funds will help us package and provide the climate information needed by the state of New York and other states in the region, as they plan for and adapt to a changing climate.”

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