

WESTERN NEW YORK UPDATE

NIAGARA POWER PROJECT

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2002-2003

MEET THE FACILITATOR

Stakeholder groups participating in the relicensing of NYPA's Niagara Power Project announced in October the selection of CDR Associates of Boulder, Colo., to serve as the neutral third-party facilitator to assist in the scoping phase of the multiyear process (see related story, page 1).

Founded in 1978, CDR Associates (www.mediate.org) has international experience providing collaborative decision-making and conflict-management assistance. The non-profit organization has also assisted with the preparation of environmental reviews for the relicensing of hydroelectric projects in Montana, Colorado and Missouri, as required by the National Environmental Policy Act.

The Power Authority is using an Alternative Licensing Procedure that allows for enhanced public participation in the Niagara project relicensing.

Representatives of CDR Associates will help facilitate the scoping phase of an applicant-prepared environmental assessment with input from relicensing stakeholders, a process scheduled to begin in January 2003.

Scoping sessions will be held from 1- 5 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 15, and from 8 a.m. - noon Thursday, Jan. 16, at the Quality Inn Niagara Hotel and Conference Center, 7708 Niagara Falls Blvd., Niagara Falls, N.Y.

NIAGARA PROJECT RELICENSING MOVES INTO HIGH GEAR

The New York Power Authority's effort to relicense its Niagara Power Project took a significant step forward this fall with two developments: selection of an independent facilitator to coordinate public participation (see related story at left) and publication of a comprehensive information package that will serve as the basis for study of the hydroelectric project and its impact on Western New York.

Copies of the two-volume First-Stage Consultation Report were distributed in early December to more than 100 stakeholders that had signed up to participate in the multiyear relicensing process. An initial organizational meeting for stakeholders was scheduled to be held Dec. 18 and 19 at the Quality Inn Niagara Hotel and Conference Center.

However, the real work will begin in January, at the first of a series of meetings for stakeholders seeking to play an active role in identifying and ultimately resolving issues related to the Niagara project and its relicensing. Known as scoping sessions, the meetings will kick off on Jan. 15 and 16;

additional two-day meetings are expected to be scheduled every other week through April.

The January meetings will also be held at the Quality Inn Niagara Hotel and Conference Center, from 1 to 5 p.m. on Jan. 15 and from 8 a.m. to noon on Jan. 16. (All stakeholder meeting information is posted on NYPA's Niagara Power Project Relicensing web site at: <http://niagara.nypa.gov>.)

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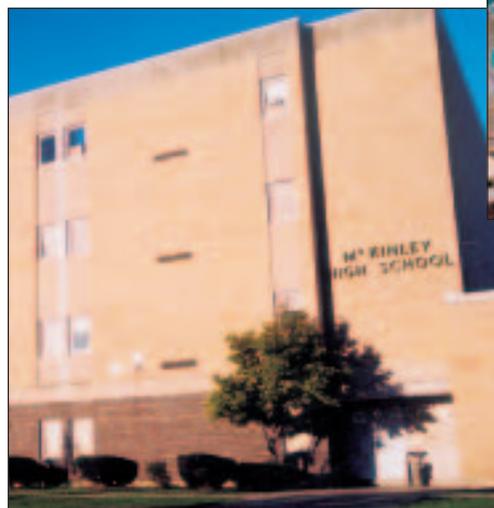
When Lake Erie temperatures approach freezing, NYPA vessels, including this modified tugboat, are put into service as part of an ice-management system that helps keep water—and power—flowing.

Energy Improvements Under Way at Buffalo Schools

Gov. George E. Pataki's statewide plan to promote energy efficiency and environmentally sound energy technologies is showing results at Buffalo Public Schools.

The New York Power Authority has begun the fourth in a series of NYPA energy services projects at Buffalo city schools, work that is expected to save taxpayers almost \$500,000 in annual energy costs while

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Buffalo's McKinley Vocational High School, left, was one of the sites targeted for NYPA energy upgrades. During the summer, contractors set up a temporary heating system and began installation of three new permanent boilers, one of which is shown above.

Niagara Relicensing

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During the scoping sessions, Power Authority staff, local stakeholders and representatives of state and federal regulatory agencies will work with the facilitator to develop the scope of an applicant-prepared environmental assessment, which will be submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) as part of NYPA's application for a new license for the Niagara project. The result of these sessions will be a report known as Scoping Document 1 (SD1), which will identify all relevant relicensing issues as well as the type of information needed to address these concerns.

Upon completion of SD1, expected by April, public meetings will be scheduled to solicit additional comments from members of the community who are unable to attend the biweekly scoping sessions during the winter. Input from participating stakeholders and the general public will be incorporated in various studies conducted during 2003 and 2004 as part of NYPA's license application. The Power Authority expects to file its

application with FERC by 2005; the Niagara project's original 50-year license expires in 2007.

In March 2002, NYPA filed a formal request with FERC seeking permission to use an alternative approach to its relicensing that would allow for enhanced public participation in the process. FERC approved the Alternative Licensing Procedure last July. ❖

Information on the Niagara Power Project Relicensing is available at NYPA's Niagara visitors center, 5777 Lewiston Rd., and public libraries located at:

1 Lafayette Square, Buffalo;
305 South Eighth St., Lewiston;
23 East Ave., Lockport;
1425 Main St., Niagara Falls;
505 Meadow Dr., North Tonawanda.

Energy Improvements

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further enhancing the learning environment for students.

Since 1994, NYPA has implemented energy-efficiency measures at Buffalo school buildings, including new lighting, heating and cooling systems. Annual savings from these previous initiatives are close to \$600,000. Equally important is the cleaner air realized with the replacement of old, polluting coal furnaces at six public schools with modern gas- or oil-fueled heating units.

The latest project, begun over the summer, will provide 23 Buffalo schools with \$8.7 million in renovations, such as new energy management systems that better control building temperatures and improved illumination in classrooms, parking lots and outdoor areas.

Power Authority staff members, working with district officials, determined that two sites required immediate attention prior to this year's heating season. NYPA-hired contractors replaced an 80-year-old boiler at School 46, the Adult Learning Center, with two new units. At McKinley Vocational High School, a temporary heating

system was set up before installation began on three permanent boilers. Work will continue through the summer of 2003.

As it has done at other energy services projects at public facilities across the state, NYPA conducted energy audits at the schools and arranged for engineering, contractors and equipment. The Power Authority recovers its investment by sharing in the energy savings realized from each project.

Almost \$1 million from New York State's share of the federal Petroleum Overcharge Restitution fund and a quarter-million-dollar rebate from the state's Energy Research and Development Authority are also being used for the Buffalo work.

Under Governor Pataki's leadership, NYPA provides more than \$100 million annually to help schools, local governments and state agencies save energy, reducing power costs at public buildings and producing nearly \$80 million in taxpayer savings each year. In total, NYPA projects cut peak electric demand by nearly 171 megawatts and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by more than 500,000 tons annually. ❖

STAKEHOLDER PROFILE

WESTERN NEW YORK RELICENSING CONSENSUS COMMITTEE

Individuals and organizations affected, either directly or indirectly, by the Niagara Power Project relicensing are invited to participate in this important endeavor. Meet one of the stakeholders.

Name: Western New York Relicensing Consensus Committee

Founded: July 2000

Co-chairs: Kevin J. Donovan, United Auto Workers, Region 9; Samuel M. Ferraro, Niagara County Department of Planning, Development and Tourism

Representing: A collection of labor, business, industrial, environmental, educational and municipal interests throughout Western New York

Contact Info:
www.wnyrelicensing.com

Quote to Note: "The Relicensing Consensus Committee was formed in a concerted community effort to bring all the stakeholders to the table so that they would be part of what we feel will be the most important economic-development initiative this region will see in the next ten years."

—Kevin J. Donovan, co-chair

ABOUT WNY UPDATE

This quarterly newsletter reports on Power Authority activities in Western New York, particularly those associated with NYPA's Niagara Power Project.

We welcome your comments.
To contact us, call Joanne Willmott, community relations manager, 716-286-6651, or visit us on the web at: <http://www.ny-pa.gov>.