

RIVER NEWS

ST. LAWRENCE-FDR POWER PROJECT RELICENSING UPDATE

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER • FALL 2004

NYPA, NORTH COUNTRY MARK NEW ST. LAWRENCE-FDR LICENSE

“The relicensing process is now in the past; the new license is all about the future.”

With those words, New York Power Authority Chairman Louis Ciminelli kicked off a July 27 celebration that officially acknowledged the new 50-year license issued by federal regulators for NYPA’s St. Lawrence-Franklin D. Roosevelt Power Project.

Local officials and residents from throughout the North Country joined state and federal representatives at a picnic lunch held on the grounds of the St. Lawrence-FDR project, NYPA’s first hydroelectric facility, which began operations in 1958. Many of the invited guests had played a role in the multiyear relicensing process, which culminated last October with approval by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission of a new license that guarantees continued supplies of low-cost electricity along with a range of other benefits for North Country communities.

“Officially, the license was issued to the Power Authority,” Ciminelli told the crowd of approximately 450. “But it’s a credit to all those—representing local communities, state and federal governments, environmental interests, business and



Power Authority Chairman Louis Ciminelli describes NYPA’s plans for North Country improvements as President and CEO Eugene Zeltmann listens.

labor—who worked with us to resolve a host of complex issues. This is your license, too. And we thank you for helping to make it a reality.”

The picnic lunch followed a meeting of the Power Authority’s trustees at the St. Lawrence-FDR project that morning. Among other actions, the trustees approved a \$3.7 million contract to J. E. Sheehan Contracting Corp. of Potsdam for new and improved recreational facilities near the power project. ♦

Recreational Improvements in the Works

By next summer, North Country residents and visitors alike will be able to enjoy the great outdoors with additional comforts and conveniences as local recreational facilities are upgraded and expanded as part of the Power Authority’s new 50-year license for its St. Lawrence-FDR project.

About eight months after granting NYPA its new license last October, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in June approved a recreation plan that details an array of improvements to be made at state and local parks at the Power Authority’s expense. Work began at town facilities in Massena and Waddington in August and will



Improvements are under way at Massena Town Beach, where work began in August.



Waddington’s Whittaker Park gets a facelift.

proceed through the year, with completion expected by the 2005 summer season. More recreational improvements in Massena, Waddington and Louisville are scheduled for next year as well.

The Power Authority is also making improvements at Lisbon Beach Campground. Since the Town of Lisbon has been removed from the St. Lawrence-FDR power project boundary at the town’s request, work in that municipality is being done under a separate agreement that is not part of the FERC license.

In all, almost a dozen recreational facilities will see either major renovations or new construction to improve the sites’ bathhouses, playgrounds, boat launches, beachfronts and other

RN NOTES

Habitat Improvement Projects

As part of NYPA’s plans for \$18 million in environmental enhancements tied to the new



license for St. Lawrence-FDR, design work has begun on a series of habitat improvement projects (HIPs) to benefit waterfowl, fish and other aquatic species. The first three HIPs planned will feature:

- Osprey nesting platforms at multiple sites along the St. Lawrence River;
- Areas for grassland bird nesting on Ogden Island and Whitehouse Point;
- Common tern nesting enhancements at multiple sites along the St. Lawrence River.

Extensive improvements are also planned for the Wilson Hill Wildlife Management Area, where dikes and other water-control infrastructure will be rehabilitated.



New York Power Authority

continued on back

Recreational Facilities

continued from front

features. These projects are scheduled for completion by 2008. The new license also requires NYPA to re-evaluate the status of local recreational facilities every 12 years in case there is a need for additional facilities.

This year, early autumn visitors to town beaches in Lisbon, Massena and Waddington, along with Whittaker Park, saw the arrival of earth-moving equipment and construction materials as work on a variety of projects began at those locations.

The campground at Lisbon's town beach, for example, will have 30 new electrified campsites, plus four sites meeting Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) specifications, added to the property. At Massena's town beach, workers will refurbish the bathhouse, making that facility ADA compliant. Other improvements include a new playground, a new septic system, a repaved parking lot and a new storage building.

In Waddington, the town beach will receive a new ADA-compliant bathhouse

and various beach improvements, while Whittaker Park will see new restrooms and a new boat launch, plus rehabilitated recreation fields and playground.

The Power Authority is also providing more than \$11 million in renovations to the region's two state parks, Robert Moses and Coles Creek, which were built during construction of the St. Lawrence-FDR project. All work scheduled for Phase One has been contracted with local firms. ♦

Visitors Center Grows at Hawkins Point

During the July celebration of NYPA's new 50-year license to operate its St. Lawrence-FDR project, Power Authority President Eugene Zeltmann pointed across the South Channel to Hawkins Point.



NYPA's new visitors center at Hawkins Point is scheduled to open in time for the 2005 tourism season.

He directed his audience's attention to the new home of the power project's visitors center, scheduled to open in time for the 2005 tourism season. Before closing for security reasons following the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, the project's original visitors center—located in the power dam—attracted about 50,000 people a year, with more than 5 million viewing the facility's enter-

taining and educational exhibits since its opening in 1959.

In May, NYPA trustees approved a contract for more than \$3.5 million to H. Schickel General Contracting Inc. of Malone to build the new 14,000-square-foot visitors center on Hawkins Point. The location allows unrestricted access to tourists and school groups while providing a panoramic view of the St. Lawrence-FDR project, just across the water.

Local boaters and anglers will also be able to use an improved boat ramp and a new handicapped-accessible fishing pier that is being built adjacent to NYPA's new visitors center.

The new visitors center will feature \$1.5 million in computerized, interactive exhibits that describe the Power Authority's mission to harness the St. Lawrence River to generate clean, low-cost electricity for New York State. Other displays will illustrate St. Lawrence-FDR project operations as well as

Overhaul Update



Work is proceeding on the \$281 million Life Extension and Modernization (LEM) effort at NYPA's St. Lawrence-FDR project. In July, workers began dismantling the fifth turbine-generator unit to be replaced as part of a comprehensive, projectwide overhaul that includes the installation of 16 new power-producing units, along with improvements to almost every other piece of equipment in the power dam. The fourth unit to be replaced returned to service in June, three weeks ahead of schedule. Workers are averaging three unit overhauls every two years in the LEM, expected to be completed by 2013. ♦

the region's local history. The site will include indoor and outdoor areas for community use as well. ♦

ABOUT RIVER NEWS This quarterly newsletter reports on Power Authority activities in Northern New York, particularly those associated with NYPA's St. Lawrence-FDR Power Project. We welcome your comments. **To contact us, call Carol Simpson, Community Relations, 315-764-0226, ext. 304.**

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