

Mohawk Valley News

Clark Energy Center

NEW YORK POWER AUTHORITY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER • SUMMER 2006

PROTECTING PLANTS & POWER

The Power Authority has for seven years supported the State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry (SUNY ESF) in its research on vegetation management under power line rights-of-way (ROW) corridors across New York State.

The goal has been to jointly develop a program that most efficiently and effectively monitors and controls vegetation that could interfere with the safe and reliable transmission of electricity. NYPA operates transmission corridors running more than 1,400 circuit miles through Western, Northern and Central New York State.

"It's called 'Integrated Vegetation Management,'" said Lew Payne, ROW/environmental supervisor for NYPA. "The aim is to minimize or eliminate the growth of tall-growing trees—maple, ash, oak, birch, pine, spruce—and promote in their place stable, lower-stature plant communities in an environmentally sensitive manner."

NYPA's support has ranged from use of selected transmission line properties as laboratories to study plant and wildlife patterns, to sponsoring of ESF analyses of shrub ecology, desirable plant mix and long-term impact of herbicide use on state power line corridors.



Carefully preserving or eliminating plants is the job of, from left, Lew Payne, ROW/environmental supervisor; Bill Baldwin, ROW inspector; and Robbie Leonard, contractor.

Left, contractor Bill Davoy starts selective herbicide treatment near NYPA lines near Holland Patent.

Earlier this year NYPA and SUNY ESF expanded the long-term program by initiating an educational dimension, specifically by establishing a series of meetings with NYPA's transmission line crews and contractors at the Clark Energy Center, the so-called "nerve center" of the Power Authority's statewide generating and transmission operations.

NYPA's line crews at the Clark Energy Center and at the St. Lawrence-FDR Power Project, in

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NYPA Economist Boosts Prospects for Prospect, N.Y.

When David Hoke, his wife and family of three young girls moved to the village of Prospect, part of the Town of Trenton, about 14 miles northwest of Utica, "the center of the village had fallen into disrepair," noted the *Utica Observer-Dispatch* in a recent story.

But Hoke, an economist at the Clark Energy Center (CEC), brought with him a commitment to volunteering and a "questioning attitude and willingness to look at problems in new ways," said Kevin Kipers, his boss at the Power Authority's CEC-based statewide transmission operations center.



Dave Hoke, deputy mayor



Prospect's Union Park. Hoke helped secure its funding.

the creation of a local park, an outdoor skating rink, and ongoing street repairs and repaving, scheduled for completion next year.

As a result, Hoke, now serving as deputy mayor of the village, was singled out last fall as one of 10 Accent on Excellence award winners. The *Observer-Dispatch* runs

the annual awards program to recognize young (under 40) leaders of Oneida and Herkimer counties for their volunteer community efforts. The Accent on Excellence web site stipulates that nominees will "excel in making the area's business, culture and special services climate a growing force in helping the area prosper."

Hoke "has been a real spark plug," Prospect Mayor Madelyn Schnell told the newspaper. "He's a very creative thinker. He can look ahead and see what needs to be done. He's really a visionary."

To which Hoke, who also reserves free time as a local school soccer coach, added that, "Beautifying

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MVN NOTES

Travel Time?

Summer's here, and as you'll note on our page 2 calendar, there's plenty going on right around the corner. But how about taking another look just beyond Central New York?

Heading north: NYPA's St. Lawrence-FDR Power Project near Massena is part of a new St. Lawrence International Partnership (SLIP) which has printed a handbook of maps, attractions and monthly events.

Explore lost societies, expressive art, stunning sculptures; visit historic sites or a Gilded-Age castle; learn about antique boating; climb a windmill's stairs or visit a blockhouse or ancient battlefield; learn about electricity, and savor the outdoors along U.S. and Canadian walking trails. Just log on to slip-passport.org. Or call (315) 393-2425 to obtain your own passbook.

Heading west: There's much to see throughout Western New York, from Old Fort Niagara in Youngstown to Six Flags Darien Lake, Darien Center...the Aquarium of Niagara and Niagara Falls State Park. The Power Authority is a major sponsor of the Lewiston Jazz Festival, Aug. 25-27... and birds of prey, reptiles, monkeys and more will set their own vibration levels at the Niagara Power Project's annual Wildlife Festival, Sept. 23 and 24.



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Protecting Plants

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northernmost New York on the St. Lawrence River, have attended two SUNY-ESF-directed sessions to date, and more are planned.

“For decades,” said Dr. Christopher Nowak, associate professor of forest and natural resources management, “vegetation on power line corridors was managed by cutting or spraying herbicides from one edge of a right-of-way to the other. This produced a clean, engineered look. Today,” said Nowak, “such broadcast treatments are obsolete—and to a certain extent, illegal. Because of environmental concerns, helicopter spraying has not occurred in 30 years. The more efficient, less-damaging control method is selective handcutting and limited herbicide use, to allow for careful conservation of desirable low growing plants—grasses, forbs and shrubs.”

“Broadcast treatment kills desirable low stature plants,” said Payne. “In good health and numbers, low-growth shrubs and trees can control growth of undesirable trees, at significantly lower costs than clearing the rights of way. They provide food and shelter for deer and turkey, songbirds and butterflies. And, not least, they are visually appealing to the neighbors, whose properties lie alongside the corridors.” Payne said the ongoing program will contribute to NYPA’s transmission system reliability and reduction of vegetation management costs.

Additional class sessions are scheduled for later this year, on tall- and low-growth wil- low identification, recognizing other tall- growth plants, and selective herbicide use for stump treatment. With NYPA’s continuing support, SUNY ESF plans to share its grow- ing data base with the state’s other utilities. ♦

CALENDAR OF AREA EVENTS

Saturday, July 9

Boilermaker Road Race, Utica

Saturday, July 29

Honor America Days, parade and concert, Fort Stanwix, Rome

Monday, June 5 – Monday, August 28

Utica Monday Nite summer series —Visual Arts, Performing Arts, NYPA-sponsored Ballet, History, Heritage, Utica

Saturday, Sunday, September 16-17

Oneida County 2006 Regional Air Show
Oneida County Airport, Oriskany

Saturday, Sunday, September 23-24

Remsen Barn Fest, Remsen

Saturday, September 23

NYPA Wildlife Festival
Deerfield Wilderness Park, Deerfield

Moving a Classroom to Shore of Lake Oneida

On May 10, at Verona Beach State Park, Oneida County Envirothon students prepared for tough questions on forestry, aquatics, soils, wildlife and water conserva- tion. Right, winning smiles from the winning Camden High School team of, from left: advisor Jennifer DePerno, Martha Brickey, Kelly McVicar, Larry Grant, Beth Amuso and Hannah Liddy. NYPA and the Oneida County Soil and Water Conservation District spon- sored the day at Lake Oneida. ♦



Dave Hoke, Volunteer

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the village center has made people feel proud about their community. It’s simple: if you’re proud of where you live, you’ll take better care of it.”

In tiny Prospect (population 330), that atti- tude is catching. Hoke and other volunteers are well into a three-year plan to relocate the local library to a recently acquired vacant building in the village center. And he’s helped to form a new committee to develop a master plan for renovations to the village’s Memorial Playground/Baseball Field. ♦



Gotta Have Heart

This spring these Clark Energy Center employees walked about five miles around Utica Col- lege, raising \$1,065 for the Heart Association of Greater Utica. That turned out to be the highest pledge from any government sector partic- ipant in the annual drive. In mid- May the association’s Jeff Owen, right, said *Thank You* with an engraved plaque. ♦

Mohawk Valley News

Mohawk Valley News is produced by the New York Power Authority to update our neighbors on activities at our Clark Energy Center in Marcy.

If you have comments or suggestions, please contact Carol Rodino, community relations manager, at 315-792-8511, or by email at carol.rodino@nypa.gov.

To our readers: We occasionally receive requests for tours of the Clark Energy Center. While we would like to comply, security concerns prevent us from allowing members of the public to tour our facilities. Thank you for your understanding. ♦