

Offshore wind will soak Upstate New York

By KEN GIRARDIN Empire Center

Upstate electricity customers could shell out more than \$1 billion to cover the state's initial round of subsidies for offshore wind turbines, the Cuomo administration's energy agency has now revealed.

Documents filed Wednesday by the **New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA)** with the state Public Service Commission place the total pricetag on the subsidies as high as \$2.2 billion (in 2018 dollars), essentially by promising to pay the operators about double the current wholesale price of electricity on Long Island and New York City for a 25-year period.

Those subsidies will be collected using the PSC's rate-setting powers, as electric utilities and large electric customers are forced to buy offshore wind renewable energy credits (ORECs) commensurate with the amount of energy they handle on the state's grid. That funding mechanism means utility customers as far away as Buffalo and Plattsburgh have to chip in — and more than half the funds will come from electricity customers north of New York City.

(Electricity companies, by the way, are prohibited from showing the cost of these subsidies on customer bills).

The awards cover less than 20% of the 9,000 megawatts of wind turbines the state is slated to subsidize under the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act signed in July — meaning Upstaters can expect to be tapped again in the next few years.

The costs of these turbines, which Gov. Andrew Cuomo says are necessary to reduce the state's carbon emissions, were needlessly inflated by the Cuomo administration's insistence that contractors use union labor, abide by the state's Section 220 "prevailing wage" and by the state's decision to restrict bidding to just a handful of companies that already hold leases in the Atlantic Ocean.

The Cuomo administration, meanwhile, has blocked less expensive forms of renewable energy (namely most Canadian hydro) from competing for state subsidies.

(Ken Girardin is is the policy analyst for the Empire Center of Albany.)

Legals

STATE OF NEW YORK NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION Division of Materials Management 625 Broadway, Albany, New York 12233-7256 Phone: (518) 402-8651 Fax: (518) 402-9024 EPA ID No. NYD980779540 PUBLIC NOTICE OF CLOSURE PLAN

The United States Department of Energy (DOE) as operator of the **West Valley Demonstration Project (WVDP)** has notified the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) of its intention to commence final closure of the LAG Storage Addition #2 (LSA #2) Hardstand at the WVDP facility in West Valley, NY 14171-9799. The LSA #2 Hardstand is one of several hazardous waste management (HMW) units at the WVDP facility that requires closure

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under Title 6 of the New York Code of Rules and Regulations (6 NYCRR) Part 373. The DOE maintains a closure plan for each HWM unit as stipulated in §373-1.2(b) and §373-3.7. The LSA #2 Hardstand closure plan was revised in response to Department comments and resubmitted on June 11, 2019 for Department review and approval. Closure activities for the LSA #2 Hardstand have already been implemented by DOE in the form of removing waste containers from the unit. The Department has tentatively determined that the revised LSA #2 Hardstand closure plan is consistent with the regulatory requirements for the decontamination and closure of a hazardous waste container storage area and, as such, can be approved. The intention of this public notice is to solicit comment from the public on the LSA #2 Hardstand closure plan. The revised closure plan (Doc. ID Number WVDP449, Rev. 10, dated 6/6/19) includes removal of all containers of hazardous waste, establishing a 20-foot by 20-foot sampling grid across the 80-foot by 283-foot waste storage area resulting in fifty-four (54) grid areas, inspection of the gravel pad and collecting soil samples at a depth of 0-6 inches below the bottom of the compacted gravel pad in each grid area. The plan states that a biased sampling approach would be implemented to collect fifty-four (54) soil samples each for metals and volatile organic compounds (totaling one hundred and eight (108) samples) from areas where staining is visible, otherwise the sample shall be collected from the center of the grid. The sampling equipment decontamination residues and wash water would be collected, characterized and dispositioned as either a hazardous or nonhazardous waste, as necessary.

State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) status: Closure of the LSA #2 Hardstand hazardous waste container storage area will not result in significant changes to the surrounding areas of the WVDP facility. The closure activities will use only portable equipment. This action is intended to leave the LSA #2 Hardstand clean and uncontaminated. The Department has determined that the closure of the LSA #2 Hardstand is a Type II action which is not subject to SEQR.

State regulation requires that the public be given thirty (30) days to provide written comments on this draft closure plan. The public comment period begins on 10/24/19 and will extend through 11/25/19. A copy of the closure plan is available for public review at NYSDEC Central and Region 9 Offices. Copies of the closure plan may be obtained by contacting either Mr. Patrick Concannon, Engineering Geologist, at NYSDEC Region 9, Division of Materials Management, 270 Michigan Ave., Buffalo, NY 14203 [Telephone Number: (716) 851- 7220] or Mrs. Lynn Winterberger, Chief, RCRA Permitting Section at NYSDEC, Central Office, Division of Materials Management, 625 Broadway, Albany, NY 12233-7256 [Telephone Number: (518) 402- 8651]. Comments on the closure plan must be sent no later than November 25, 2019 to:

Mrs. Lynn Winterberger, P.E. New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Division of Materials Management Bureau of Hazardous Waste & Radiation Management
625 Broadway
Albany, New York 12233-7256

All comments will be considered and evaluated in making the final determination for approving the closure plan. Prior to the approval of the closure plan the Department will respond to any comments submitted by the public. The Department will approve, modify or disapprove the draft closure plan based on the information received during the comment period and public hearing, if required. A notice of the final decision will be sent to each interested citizen or organization who submitted written comments or have requested such notice.