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SEP Comments
NYSERDA
17 Columbia Circle
Albany, NY 12203-6399

Re: Draft 2009 NYS Energy Plan

To the Members and Staff of the Energy Planning Board:

The undersigned is please to submit the following comments on behalf of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe ("SRMT").

We wish to congratulate the Members and Staff of the Energy Planning Board on an extraordinary and comprehensive Energy Plan. SRMT supports the basic planning objectives: maintain reliability, reduce green house gas emissions, stabilize energy costs and improve economic competitiveness, reduce public health and environmental risks and improve energy independence. SRMT also supports the clean energy strategies developed to achieve the planning objectives: produce, deliver and use energy more efficiently; support the development of of in-state energy supplies; invest in energy and transportation infrastructure; stimulate innovation in the clean energy economy; and engage others in achieving the state's policy objectives.

SRMT comments are focused on supporting the development of local energy supplies and stimulating innovation in the clean energy economy.

The New York side of the Akwesasne Reservation, which extends into Ontario and Quebec, is governed by the federally recognized St. Regis Tribal Council. There are three main rivers that run through the Reservation in New York – the St. Lawrence, St. Regis and Raquette Rivers. While these rivers already support hydro electric generation, it is believed that there exists additional hydrokinetic capability that can be developed in an environmentally respectful manner. SRMT has demonstrated its leadership on environmental issues and has been delegated Clean Water Act authority by the Environmental Protection Agency similar to the authority New York State enjoys under that Act. So this comment is an offer to the various stakeholders interested in developing local hydrokinetic generation,

that SRMT is open to considering partnership opportunities in the development of sustainable, renewable power, not just on the Akwesasne Reservation but in any location in the northeast.

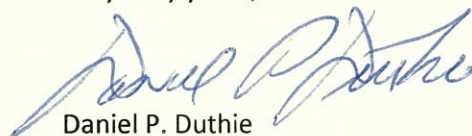
SRMT is now the third largest employer in the North Country with 1300 employees, two-thirds of which are not enrolled members of the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe. The Energy Plan acknowledges the unfortunate decline in the manufacturing sector¹ and also recommends that the New York Power Authority should review its programs "to reduce energy prices and bills for businesses, industry, and not-for-profit organizations." LIPA's economic development programs "should be tapped to attract clean energy industries and facilitate energy efficiency in support of the State's '45 by 15' initiative." It is also recommended that NYPA's Power for Jobs program be extended and increased. Finally, the Energy Plan recommends that "[a]ll of NYPA's economic development customers should be incentivized to invest in cost-effective energy efficiency measures."

SRMT supports these recommendations but would like to see greater focus on expanding NYPA economic development programs to commercial and not-for-profit enterprises that have historically not benefitted. That is not to take away from supporting the existing industrial base. Those efforts should continue. But with the acknowledged reality that manufacturing activity continues to decline, NYPA should be encouraged to redeploy its economic development power allocations to assist all customers in the North Country (Counties of Essex, Franklin and St. Lawrence). While the announced North Country Stimulus Plan is welcome, its details have yet to be made public. That Plan is a short term benefit while Alcoa is modernizing its facilities in Massena.

SRMT believes a solid long-term power allocation plan should be developed to provide support for existing, expanding and new employers in the North Country. The emphasis, particularly in these challenging economic times, is job creation. So SRMT recommends that the allocation not be limited to manufacturing jobs but enable all employers to become eligible for hydroelectric power allocations in proportion to the jobs created. In other words, allow power allocations that are returned, for example, the 12 MWs that was allocated to General Motors, to be made available for all employers in the North Country with one of the criteria for eligibility to be the number of jobs created and maintained.

Thank you for providing this opportunity to comment.

Very truly yours,



Daniel P. Duthie

Counsel to St. Regis Mohawk Tribe

cc: James Ransom, Chief

Dale White, General Counsel

¹ See Section 5.3.1, Retaining New York's Existing Base in a Carbon Constrained Economy.