

PRESS RELEASE
NORTHAMERICAN MEGADAMS RESISTANCE ALLIANCE

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**Mayor de Blasio's call for Canadian hydropower undermines local
renewable energy economies and perpetuates cultural genocide of
Indigenous peoples**

The North American Megadams Resistance Alliance (NAMRA), an international alliance of environmental and social justice groups says Mayor de Blasio's call for Canadian hydropower in New York City's energy plan will undermine the local energy economy and jobs and perpetuate cultural genocide in Canada. The City's plan requires construction of the 330-mile Champlain Hudson Power Express (CHPE) transmission corridor under the scenic Hudson River to bring hydropower from Canada over 1,000 miles to New York. New Yorkers will be exporting their energy dollars to Canada rather than investing in the local energy economy. CHPE would provide only a few hundred temporary jobs during construction and a couple dozen permanent jobs if ever completed. Energy conservation, energy efficiency, solar and wind provide far more jobs per million dollars invested.

NAMRA says this is dirty energy and should be treated like fossil fuels. "Decades of study show Hydro-Quebec's megadams are a climate, environmental and social justice disaster," said Meg Sheehan, attorney for NAMRA. "They destroy rivers and boreal forests, eliminating their potential to sequester carbon and release greenhouse gases during construction and operation. Hydro-Quebec's dams may emit carbon dioxide at rates close to 32 to 63% of a natural gas plant. There is no valid data to show CHPE will reduce NYC's carbon emissions. CHPE will cost \$2.2 billion – money that should be spent locally on renewables instead this dirty energy transmission line."

Megadams are strewn across Canada. Decades of construction and operation has caused massive damage to free flowing rivers and communities. Dam construction continues. A 2016 Harvard study shows the dams cause toxic methylmercury to enter the environment poisoning local foods and people. Nearly one third of Hydro-Quebec's dams were built on the ancestral territory of the Pessamit Innu, a First Nation's people on the North Shore of the Saint Lawrence River. In Newfoundland-Labrador Province, Nalcor's dams on the Grand (Churchill) River have flooded lands of the Inuit and Innu Nations. Inuit grandmother Marjorie Flowers has toured the Northeast to bring attention to methylmercury poisoning and the harmful impacts of Nalcor's Muskrat Falls dam. Dam opponents have been arrested and jailed. An official inquiry on Muskrat Falls is investigating project mismanagement and the role of SNC Lavalin. www.muskratfallsinquiry.ca

"This is a greenwash. Hydro-Quebec should not be part of a "green new deal" in New York City or anywhere else," added Sheehan. "This is a climate disaster and wrongful violation of human rights," added Sheehan.

More information: www.internationalrivers.org/problems-with-big-dams
www.northeastmegadamsresistance.org

