



## North American Megadam Resistance Alliance

*Protecting rivers and their communities by resisting megadams and their transmission corridors*

Visit our [website](#) to learn more about our alliance, supporters, and work

## January 2020 Newsletter

### Current News:

#### **Not Clean, Not Green: Proposed CMP Corridor/NECEC An Environmental Disaster From Beginning To End**

Indigenous and allied individuals from hydro-impacted communities in Canada came to the U.S. for a two week speaking tour organized by the North American Megadam Resistance Alliance to educate key decision-makers and the general public on the environmental and cultural damage being caused by the construction and operation of hydroelectric facilities.

#### **It's Fish vs. Dams, and Dams are Winning**

Thousands of dams across the Hudson River Estuary between Albany, NY and New York City have altered pristine habitat and disrupted migration routes relied upon by alewives and blueback herring. These dams, most of which were built during the industrial revolution, are oftentimes non-functioning and rarely produce electricity as many built throughout Canada or the American West do. Just as the Edwards Dam was removed in Augusta, Maine, there is now a growing movement to remove these dams in New York. The New York Department of Environmental Conservation has made nearly \$1 million available for dam removal so far.

#### **Inuits See Threat To A Way Of Life**

interconnected. The increasing pressure for "renewable" energy in New England has driven some states to look to Canadian hydropower for solutions. The increasing demand coming from the United States has led to a dam and transmission line building spree by Canada's state-owned hydropower industry. Part of this demand is reflected in the proposed New England Clean Energy Connect project (CMP Corridor). The effects of this demand from New England is most heavily felt in front-line communities that have relied on uninterrupted rivers for their sustenance and culture for centuries.

### **World's largest hydro companies persist in failing the environment, community rights**

A recent report by International Rivers shows that the world's largest hydropower companies are consistently failing to meet basic social and environmental standards in preparing, constructing, and operating new dams. Dams have already fragmented two-thirds of the world's rivers, displacing millions of people and wiping out large amounts of freshwater biodiversity. The corporations that are responsible for these environmental and social disasters refuse to take responsibility for their actions and continue to plan new dams that will adversely affect people, ecosystems, and the planet.

### **The hidden costs of New England's demand for Canadian hydropower**

On the surface, Canadian hydropower appears to be a cost-effective and reliable resource to help New England states meet their climate goals; however, as one digs deeper, Canadian hydropower is clearly not the clean and green energy that it is falsely advertised to be. The generation of this energy comes at a great cost to front-line, predominately Indigenous communities in Canada. New England's voracious appetite for hydropower has caused massive expansions in hydroelectric infrastructure across Canada with 14 of its 16 largest rivers now dammed and well over 900 large dams on Canadian waterways, this is an environmental and human rights catastrophe.

## **Take Action:**

### **•Sign the petition to put the CMP Corridor on a statewide ballot referendum**

The deadline for signing for Maine voters is January 23rd. Click here to find a signing event near you.

betterment of corporate profits. This transmission line will bring few benefits to Maine while threatening local renewable energy jobs. The power that the corridor will bring is produced by megadams in Canada. These facilities release large quantities of greenhouse gases such as methane and carbon dioxide, poison Indigenous food webs with methylmercury, and flood thousands of square miles of Indigenous land. The corridor is nothing more than a financial pipeline for the continued cultural genocide of Indigenous communities and a false solution to the climate crisis. Maine voters should have the right to vote on this issue in the 2020 election.

•**Donate to or volunteer with Say NO to NECEC**

This grassroots non-profit organization is an environmental education and advocacy group opposed to large-scale industrial development in western Maine. They specifically oppose Central Maine Power's proposed New England Clean Energy Connect.

•**Write a letter to local politicians and news outlets to express your opposition to NECEC.**

•**Contact New York City Mayor Bill de Blasio** to express your opposition regarding the city's plans to procure electricity produced by megadams in Canada via a transmission corridor known as the Champlain Hudson Power Express. This corridor would be built by Blackstone subsidiary TDI from Quebec to Queens. Contact the Mayor and let him know that Canadian hydropower is **NOT** clean energy. Send an online message or call 212-NEW-YORK if outside the city, or 311 if in the city. You can also send a written letter to:

Mayor Bill de Blasio  
New York, NY 10007  
City Hall

•**Donate to and/or volunteer with the North American Megadam Resistance Alliance to help us continue this important work.**

•**Sign and share NAMRA's petition** calling on leaders throughout the Northeast U.S. to reject dirty Canadian hydropower.

## Recent Efforts:

•**2019 Northeast U.S. Speakers Tour**

met with key policymakers, regulators, media, and the general public throughout the Northeast to dispell the myth that hydropower is clean and renewable energy. For more on the tour check out our [website](#) or [YouTube channel](#) where you can find footage of the events.



Speakers Rita Monias, Tommy Monias, and Amy Norman at a speaking engagement during the 2019 Northeast U.S. Tour.

•**NAMRA representatives assist with Say No to NECEC Signature Drives**

•**Press Conference on Canadian megadams and New England Clean Energy Connect (NECEC) held at the Maine State House**

On November 25th, 2019, NAMRA, allies, and speakers from hydro-impacted communities across Canada held a press conference at the Maine State House regarding megadams and NECEC. A letter was delivered to Governor Janet Mills's office requesting that she reconsider her support of the controversial transmission line. NAMRA has requested a meeting with Governor Mills; however, we have yet to receive a response.

•**NAMRA representative reads a statement in opposition to New England Clean Energy Connect at the December 5th U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Hearing in Lewiston**

On December 5th, 2019, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers held a hearing open to public comment on New England Clean Energy Connect. NAMRA's statement at this hearing can be found [here](#).

## Quick Facts on Hydro:

- The world's large dams emit 104 million metric tonnes of methane annually from reservoir fluctuations, spillways, turbines, and rivers downstream making them responsible for at least 4% of the total warming impact of human activities and 23%

- 66% of the longest rivers in the world no longer flow freely due to dam construction and operation. The fragmentation of rivers is extremely harmful to the environment, climate, and traditional ways of life for many front-line communities.

- At least 1,680 dams across the U.S. pose a potential risk of failure.

## Comments from the Editor:

As we rang in the new decade, I was reminded of the stark warning from IPCC scientists stating that we must significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 in order to reduce and mitigate the worst effects of climate change. I was also reminded that to achieve this, we must ensure that communities that bear no responsibility for the climate crisis do not bear the brunt of the solutions' negative impacts. This is the very definition of climate justice and in order to avoid repeating our past mistakes, we must heed this definition in every decision that we make.

The power produced by megadams is the very antithesis of climate justice. Large hydroelectric facilities throughout the world destroy ecosystems, release harmful amounts of greenhouse gases, and disrupt Indigenous ways of life, oftentimes, without consent. These dams have flooded thousands of square miles throughout the world, they have displaced millions, and they have directly led to cultural genocide. As Mayor Bill de Blasio touts a "Green New Deal" for New York City, Indigenous communities throughout Canada are uprooted to make way for larger reservoirs to provide this power. This is not climate justice.

In Maine, Governor Janet Mills has signed off on the New England Clean Energy Connect. This proposed transmission corridor will link megadams in Quebec with ratepayers in Massachusetts. This line will cut through hundreds of miles of pristine wilderness bringing dirty energy that is marketed as "clean" and "renewable" to the U.S. This transmission line will be constructed and operated by none other than Central Maine Power, a monopoly that ranks extremely poorly for reliability and customer service. If CMP cannot effectively manage its current operations in Maine, how can we expect them to manage this transmission corridor? How can we trust them to protect forests, wetlands, streams, ponds, and other fragile ecosystems when their only true interest is profit.

We urge you to take action against these harmful new developments falsely marketed as "climate solutions." Call or write your local legislators, write opinion pieces for local papers, help collect signatures to get New England Clean Energy Connect on the ballot if you live in Maine. We must fight for fair and equitable

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