



ALLEGHENY COUNTY

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Contact: Amie M. Downs
412-350-3711 (office)
412-327-3700 (cell)
amie.downs@alleghenycounty.us

Fitzgerald Announces Commitment to Locally-Generated Renewable Energy *35-Year Agreement to Purchase Energy Generated at New Hydropower Facility*

PITTSBURGH – County Executive Rich Fitzgerald today announced an investment by Allegheny County in locally-generated clean energy. The county has entered into a 35-year power purchase agreement (PPA) with Rye Development to purchase renewable energy generated by a 17.8 MW low-impact hydropower facility Rye will construct on the Ohio River.

For each year that the agreement is in effect, the county will offset emissions equivalent to the entire electrical consumption of over 3,400 households. Over the life of the agreement, the county's purchases will offset over 1 million metric tons of carbon dioxide-equivalent emissions, roughly equal to 2.6 billion miles driven in a typical passenger vehicle.

"This is a landmark day for our county," said Fitzgerald. "This announcement renews our commitment to the environment, our commitment to addressing climate change and is an investment in our future generations."

The announcement marks a significant step forward in the county's continued commitment to sustainability and renewable energy. The collaboration with Rye addresses one of the largest challenges to expanding access to renewable energy, particularly locally-generated clean energy: capacity. The long-term commitment and partnership with Rye furthers the goal of a community powered by 100% renewable energy.

"This contract with the county not only demonstrates its leadership and commitment to a sustainable future, but also is integral to ensuring the successful construction and development of the Emsworth Main Channel Project," said Paul D. Jacob, Chief Executive Officer of Rye Development LLC. "With this action, County Executive Fitzgerald has signaled to other stakeholders in the community that new hydropower on existing dams will provide 24/7 renewable energy while also resulting in local infrastructure investment."

The hydropower facility will be located at the existing Emsworth Main Channel Dam on the Ohio River. Rye has collaborated with the Army Corps of Engineers (the operator of the existing dam) on the project's development which requires the Corps' approval before construction commences. The hydropower project is scheduled to begin construction in late 2021. It is expected to be operational as early as mid-2023. There will be no impact on the recreational use of the waterways as a result of the project.

"Allegheny County continues to demonstrate its leadership with forward thinking projects that benefit residents, the environment, and the local economy," said Joylette Portlock, Ph.D., Executive Director of Sustainable Pittsburgh. "Investing in large scale renewable energy is a major step towards responsibly addressing climate change in southwestern Pennsylvania and invests in the health and the future of our communities."

This announcement, coupled with the November 2018 announcement by the University of Pittsburgh, reflects significant commitment to expanding the use of local hydropower in the region. Rye is developing a total of 10 hydropower projects in the southwestern Pennsylvania region on all three

rivers. These efforts will further increase the renewable infrastructure in the region. It also builds on other efforts throughout the county that have invested in clean energy including the Airport Authority's gas/solar microgrid, Community College of Allegheny County's solar panels, and the Port Authority's ongoing move to electric buses.

Rye will also be pursuing certification of the project from the Low Impact Hydro Institute (LIHI) as part of its own commitment to ensure that the local river ecosystem is protected. Certified Low Impact hydropower projects (facilities) meet eight specific science-based environmental, cultural and recreational criteria. More information on that process and what practices meet certification can be found at <https://lowimpacthydro.org/>

"Participating in a zero-carbon power generation project utilizing the power of our rivers, without impacting other uses of them or their quality, demonstrates the county's leadership both in getting Pennsylvania to a decarbonized energy future and positioning southwest Pennsylvania as a center of energy innovation," said Davitt Woodwell, President, Pennsylvania Environmental Council. "Significant climate action is going to take a combination of many approaches and actions. The commitment shown with this project takes us another step forward."

The county's journey to today's announcement began with internal conversations about how to support the renewable energy industry while helping to bridge the gap between fossil fuels and fully renewable energies. A team reviewed a variety of renewable energy sources, including solar and wind, but ultimately decided to pursue hydropower, considering it to be the most reliable renewable energy for the county.

"On behalf of the Scott Institute for Energy Innovation at Carnegie Mellon University, we are thrilled about Allegheny County's ongoing commitment to renewable energy generation," said Anna J. Siefken, LEED AP BD+C, Executive Director, Cleantech Innovation & Strategic Partnerships Lead of the Institute. "This development will leverage Pittsburgh's historic infrastructure to bring forward both value and zero carbon hydropower. The county continues to demonstrate the importance of partnerships to propel our region's growth while helping to decarbonize our local economy."

The region's extensive waterways and rivers, and existing dam infrastructure, also made hydropower a smart choice. A run-of-river hydropower dam was selected in part for its utilization of the existing flow of the river, which minimizes the environmental impact compared to traditional reservoir dams. Hydropower dams have the additional benefit of being extremely long-lived assets, which can generate renewable electricity for over 80 years.

In April 2019, the county issued a Request for Proposal (RFP) for developers of hydro facilities. After vetting of the proposals and receiving the companies' best and final offer, an informal intent to award was issued to Rye Development in late 2019. The county was advised by CustomerFirst Renewables (CFR), an advisory services firm headquartered in Gaithersburg, Maryland, on the project and resulting PPA. CFR is a collaborator with Sustainable Pittsburgh through its Renewable Energy for the Power of 32 initiative.

Today's announcement also moves the county closer to the goals set forth by the Biden administration to reduce by 50% the carbon footprint of the U.S. building stock by 2035. To that end, Allegheny County is a proud member of the Pittsburgh 2030 District, a Green Building Alliance initiative started in 2012 that supports area building owners and managers in achieving 50% reductions in energy and water use as well as transportation emissions by the year 2030. The county has five buildings, comprising 1.6 million square feet, committed. In 2021, the county has also committed two county parks, White Oak and Deer Lakes, as affiliate members of the 2030 District as part of the Net Zero Energy Parks initiative.

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Office of County Executive Rich Fitzgerald
101 Courthouse | 436 Grant Street | Pittsburgh, PA 15219
Phone: 412-350-6500 | Fax: 412-350-6512
www.alleghenycounty.us

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