

UPDATE TO THE REDEVELOPMENT OF THREE OPG HYDROELECTRIC GENERATING STATIONS ON THE UPPER MATTAGAMI RIVER



I'd like to update you on the environmental assessment (EA) process that is part of Ontario Power Generation Inc.'s (OPG) project to bring more clean, renewable hydro power to Ontario. Since our April Open House held in Timmins, OPG has moved forward in the redevelopment of the three existing small run-of-the-river hydroelectric generating stations (GS's) located on the Upper Mattagami River. When completed, the combined capacity of the new GS's will increase power production from approximately 19 megawatts (MW) to 35 MW. OPG has a mandate from the Government of Ontario to "expand, develop and/or improve its hydroelectric generation capacity" and this project will do exactly that.

OPG has undertaken a number of studies to assess engineering, dam safety and environmental issues associated with the projects. These projects are in compliance with the Mattagami River System Water Management Plan, and the construction of these generating stations occurs on the existing sites. We believe that the proposed redevelopment of the Wawaitin, Sandy Falls and Lower Sturgeon GS's will only have minimal temporary effects on the environment that will be mitigated through good planning and proper construction. The proposed project has a number of benefits for the people of Ontario and Timmins. These include:

- Addition of more clean and renewable power in Ontario.
- Local and provincial economic benefit from the continued operation associated with these redeveloped generating stations.
- Local socio-economic benefit associated with employment and spending during the construction period of the three generating stations.
- Changing the GS's from 25 to 60 Hz

allowing connection directly to the local distribution system resulting in freeing up a transmission corridor from Timmins to Sudbury, which has the potential for other uses.

Eliminating energy losses due to the transmission of energy from Timmins to Sudbury.

Continuing good stewardship of the watershed.

Please take a few moments to read about this exciting project. You are encouraged to attend our open house on Wednesday October 18 at the Timmins McIntyre Arena. There are also phone numbers, and web sites listed below where you can learn more about the project. Please plan on attending.

ED DOBROWOLSKI, *Project Manager*

A LOOK INTO THE GENERATING STATIONS

Wawaitin Generating Station

The Wawaitin GS located within the City of Timmins municipal boundaries will be redeveloped to produce 15 MW of power. The old powerhouse will be demolished and a new one constructed immediately adjacent to it. The existing penstocks (water pipes) will be replaced and some refurbishments to the dam and intake canal will occur.

Sandy Falls Generating Station

The Sandy Falls GS is located approximately 10 km northwest of the City of Timmins' urban centre and will be redeveloped to produce 5.5 MW. The old powerhouse will be demolished and a new one constructed immediately adjacent. The existing penstocks will be replaced and some refurbishment to the weir and intake structures will occur.

Lower Sturgeon Generating Station

The Lower Sturgeon GS located approximately 48 km north of the City of Timmins will be redeveloped to produce 14 MW. The new powerhouse will be located on the same footprint of the existing one and therefore will not produce power during the construction period. Refurbishment of the dam will also occur.

OPG IS FOLLOWING THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS

The project is being carried out in accordance with the requirements of OPG's Class Environmental Assessment for Modifications to Hydroelectric Facilities under the Ontario Environmental Assessment Act (EA Act). In addition, a number of environmental permits and approvals will be required from both the provincial and federal governments. Over the spring and summer a number of environmental specialists were out in the field undertaking studies. Some of the preliminary findings include:

Fisheries work conducted in 2006 confirmed findings of the 2005 studies. No fish spawning or nursery habitat will be affected by the projects.

No archaeological resources were found at any of the sites.

Very few trees and vegetation will be impacted by the proposed construction activities as most of the area required has generally been previously cleared or disturbed.

A First Nation specialist from the Mattagami First Nation has determined that there are no Mattagami First Nation values at or near the three sites.

Recreational uses that occur near the sites will not be impacted by construction.

It is anticipated that overall environmental impact of the project will be temporary and minor and can be mitigated through proper planning and the implementation of appropriate mitigation and monitoring measures. OPG will work with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans and provincial Ministry of Natural Resources on locations of cofferdams that will be needed for construction of powerhouses. More detailed findings from the EA will be presented at the October Open House.

NEXT STEPS

Obtain public feedback from the October Open House
Prepare and finalize Technical Supporting Documents including Environmental Report
Obtain stakeholder and agency feedback
Revised Environmental Report package submit to MOE for approval
Obtain EA Approval (early 2007)

OPG IS SEEKING PUBLIC INPUT AS PART OF THE EA PROCESS

Through the environmental assessment process OPG is committed to consulting with First Nations, government agencies, the public and other interested stakeholders about the project. OPG wants to hear from people interested in the project. Your input and comments will be considered, documented and included in the preparation of the environmental assessment report.

OPG hosted a Public Open House in April. A newsletter was issued, and a website was setup where people could read about the project and also provide their comments on the project. Any concerns expressed at the open house and or via the web site have been considered in the studies.

To encourage public participation OPG will be holding a Public Open House in Timmins. Stakeholders will have the opportunity to speak directly with representatives of OPG and its environmental consulting team.

The fall open house will be held at the Timmins McIntyre Arena – MAC Auditorium on October 18 from 3:00 pm – 8:00 pm. A formal presentation will be given at 6:45 pm.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

OPG has retained SENES Consultants Limited of Richmond Hill, Ontario to undertake the EA. For more information on the Upper Mattagami Environment Assessment or to be put on our mailing list, please contact:

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