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New York State Department of Environmental Conservation

Northeast States Clean Air Foundation/

Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management

Queens Borough President's Office



For Immediate Release

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New Queens Clean Air Project Will Award \$2 Million To Community Groups

For Local Clean Air And Energy Efficiency Initiatives

New York, NY (July 15, 2003) – Addressing the need to advance community-oriented air pollution reduction and energy efficiency goals in northwest Queens neighborhoods, a new partnership of New York Power Authority (NYPA), Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), New York Public Interest Research Group (NYPIRG), New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Queens Borough President's Office (Queens BP) and Northeast States Clean Air Foundation (NESCAF) today announced a Request For Proposals (RFP) that will provide \$2 million in funding to establish clean air projects benefiting the local community.

Called the *Queens Clean Air Project (QCAP)*, the new venture will work in tandem with local community groups to achieve quantifiable emissions reductions and energy efficiency savings to improve air quality and public health in northwest Queens. NYPA will provide the \$2 million in initial funding that is expected to be significantly leveraged through public-private partnerships.

Ken Colburn, executive director of NESCAF and Clean Air Communities stated, "Through creative partnerships, leveraged funding and technical assistance, Clean Air Communities has a track record of achieving measurable emissions reductions and energy savings in neighborhoods that need it most. We are thrilled to work with our partners to bring this proven formula to benefit the residents of Queens and hope that other entities will follow NYPA's lead in recognizing the true value of CAC's programs."

The RFP will be issued on July 15, 2003 with an initial "Letter of Intent" to apply due by September 15, 2003. NESCAF, Queens BP, NYPIRG, NRDC, NYPA, and NYSDEC will form the Steering Committee for QCAP and will be responsible for identifying, evaluating and selecting projects based on several key criteria, including: environmental and public health benefits, technical feasibility, cost-effectiveness, community benefit, replicability, and geographic area. Clean Air Communities -- a program initiated in 2000 and managed by NESCAF -- will serve as coordinator for the project and provide technical, implementation and management assistance on behalf of QCAP.

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Eugene W. Zeltmann, NYPA president and chief executive office said, “This program fulfills a historic commitment that Governor Pataki made to the people of northwest Queens. It is a key part of a landmark agreement that the Governor announced last fall for the Power Authority to build a clean new power plant on the site of its existing Poletti Project in Astoria and to close the current plant as soon as 2008. We are delighted to provide the funding for the Queens Clean Air Project, and we look forward to working with our partners and local residents and groups to assure that the program brings the greatest possible benefit to the community.”

QCAP seeks to help build coalitions and improve communications among diverse stakeholders concerned with renewable and alternative energy and air quality issues. With this in mind, QCAP is forming an Advisory Group, initially including tenant and civic associations, community board members, and local officials in Queens, to provide ongoing guidance and input regarding the program’s advancement of clean air and energy goals.

Queens Borough president, Helen Marshall stated, “I want to thank the New York Power Authority for recognizing the need to improve air quality in this community. It is in this area that we see a high incidence of asthma, as well as other respiratory ailments. Working together with the residents of northwest Queens, we can find practical ways to reduce pollution and improve air quality. I look forward to the clean air projects that are so long overdue in this community.”

Clean Air Communities has previously provided \$5 million in direct funding to communities in New York City that has been leveraged to \$10 million through public-private partnerships. Examples of projects already implemented by CAC include: an advanced truck stop electrification and anti-idling system at Hunts Point Cooperative Market; a commercial rooftop solar array in Greenpoint; a steam conversion system in Seward Park; and an emissions reduction project at 7 World Trade Center and Battery Park City. Currently funded CAC projects are expected to reduce in excess of 300,000 tons of such harmful pollutants as particulate matter (PM), carbon monoxide (CO), oxides of nitrogen (NO_x), sulfur dioxide (SO₂), hydrocarbon (HC), and carbon dioxide (CO₂), a major greenhouse gas.

Ashok Gupta, director of air and energy programs for NRDC and a founding member of CAC stated, “Under this project, we move feasible ideas into actionable pollution reductions. In doing so, we’re demonstrating that innovative, cost-effective technologies are available now – not just on the drawing boards but actually on our streets and apartment buildings.”

Emissions reductions achieved by QCAP projects are expected to be secured from traditionally intractable sources such as residential, commercial and motor vehicle sectors. Lisa Garcia, lead attorney of NYPIRG added, “This project is a perfect example of how the State and the community can work together, proactively, to avoid a future energy crisis and reduce pollution at the same time. This is an opportunity for the residents of Queens to focus their energies on reducing energy demand and air pollution today and to hopefully avoid the need for another power plant in this already overburdened community in the future.”

The full RFP and additional information regarding QCAP can be found at www.cleanaircommunities.org.

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Additional Information:

NESCAF: www.nescaf.org; NESCAUM: www.nescaum.org; NRDC: www.nrdc.org; NYPA: www.nypa.gov; NYPIRG: www.nypirg.org; Queens Borough President’s Office: www.queensbp.org