

Climate Smart Communities Close-Out Report



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Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board

An Independent Contractor to NYSERDA

May 24, 2013

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Introduction: Central New York Climate Smart Communities

The following pages provide summaries of work accomplished by the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB) during the year 1 of the Climate Smart Communities (CSC) grant. These distinctive accomplishments extend beyond the minimum program requirements to include widespread coverage of education, data collection, and technical assistance objectives. All reports, data files, and materials referenced in this report are available upon request from the [New York State Energy Research and Development Authority](#) or the [New York State Department of Environmental Conservation](#). During the past year we have worked with CSCs to complete nine greenhouse gas (GHG) inventories, begin work on nine climate action plans, and complete five demonstration projects. 60 families in six CSCs have participated in the Central New York Energy Challenge. Informative workshops were held, documentaries were presented, and extensive educational material was developed such as

brochures, fact sheets, and PowerPoint slides. Our CSC success has been strengthened by regional partnerships that were established with municipalities, agencies, non-profit organizations, colleges, and universities throughout Central New York. In addition, our target audience now includes school communities with the hope that a classroom-based Energy Challenge can be implemented in one or two demonstration schools during the 2013-2014 academic year. A summary table and descriptive program abstracts are presented on the following pages, with computer links that provide additional information about our accomplishments.

Central New York Climate Smart Community Project Summary Table						
Climate Smart Community	GHG Inventory	Climate Action Plan	Demonstration Project	CNY Energy Challenge	Attended CNYRPDB CSC Workshop	Additional CNYRPDB Support
Onondaga County	Completed #	Completed #				Chris Carrick serves on Onondaga County's Energy and Sustainability Committee and participated in the preparation of the county's Sustainable Development Plan
Syracuse (C)	Completed *	Completed *	In process	Yes		
Dewitt (T)	Completed	In progress	Completed	Yes	Yes	
Fayetteville (V)	Completed	In progress	N/A		Yes	
Skaneateles (V)	Completed	In progress	In process	Yes	Yes	
Skaneateles (T)						
Cortland (C)	Completed	In progress	Completed	Yes	Yes	
Preble (T)	Completed	In progress	Completed	Yes	Yes	
Oswego County	Completed #	Completed #				Chris Carrick serves as Chairman of the County Green Team and was involved in the review of Oswego County's GHG Inventory and CAP
Oswego (C)	Completed	In progress	In process	Yes	Yes	
Auburn (C)	Completed	In progress	N/A			
Madison County	Completed	In progress	Completed		Yes	

Cazenovia (T)	Completed	In progress	N/A		Yes	
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* Project completed prior to CNYRPDB Climate Smart Community grant

Project completed through other NYSEDA funding sources

Subtask 1.a. Regional Greenhouse Gas Inventory

The Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board (CNYRPDB) completed a regional greenhouse gas (GHG) inventory for the Central New York region. A competitive bidding process was conducted in order to identify and hire a subcontractor that provided technical assistance and support. The regional GHG inventory contains emissions from fuel use and electricity, transportation, industrial processes, agriculture, waste, land use, land use change, and forestry. The inventory allocates GHG emissions for each of the five counties in the CNY region.

Subtask 1.b Regional Outreach Plan

- **Regional Outreach Plan for Central New York**

The CNYRPDB developed a report titled, *Climate Smart Communities Regional Outreach Plan for Central New York*. The Plan provides a blueprint of ways to engage with local governments on climate action within Central New York and to recruit local governments to the Climate Smart Community (CSC) program. The Plan includes methods for regional collaboration, goals for education and training, services to local governments, marketing materials, event planning, and a system for measuring and tracking progress. The document enhances the CNYRPDB’s current role with the USEPA Climate Showcase Community which focuses on public education, outreach, and regional partnerships. The Regional Outreach Plan contains the following information:

- A comprehensive listing of key partners throughout Central New York;
- Proposed municipal outreach methodology;
- Marketing material, including brochures, fact sheets, and press releases;
- An event planning strategy for two workshops;
- Methods for tracking our progress.

Subtask 1.c.a CSC Recruitment

- **Data Collection**

The initial objective for the CSC recruitment task was to identify and compile information on municipalities in Central New York. The CNYRPDB worked with the CSC office in Albany and then developed Excel data files.

- **Surveys**

Two surveys, called *Sustainable Practices of Local Governments in Central New York* were distributed during the fall and winter months of 2012. The first one was sent to 25 municipalities that either had a population of over 10,000 people and/or had signed the Climate Smart Community pledge. The second survey was distributed to the 120 remaining municipalities in Central New York. This was a shorter survey that required less time to complete. Our goal was to evaluate the CSC communities and identify others that may be interested in participating. The survey also helped us to compile an inventory of energy projects, goals, and methods that lower energy costs, promote energy conservation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and create sustainable practices. The CNYRPDB distributed 145 surveys to municipalities throughout a five-county region and we received responses from 52, representing a 36% response rate. A comprehensive summary of the findings is found in a

report called, *Final Survey Summary*. A condensed summary is also presented in a report called *Energy Project Directory*.

- **Smart Ideas in Central New York**

A report called *Smart Ideas in Central New York: Local Actions that Promote Sustainable Communities* was written in November, 2012. The report highlights interesting projects that that have been implemented throughout the Central New York region.

- **Municipal Outreach**

Municipal outreach and CSC recruitment has remained a priority for CNYRPDB. Outreach efforts have included municipal surveys, telephone calls, email and hard copy correspondences to elected officials and key municipal staff, educational workshops, and on-site meetings. Webinar workshops (held on January 24 and April 11 2013) included CSC webinars, luncheons, presentations, and a tour. Municipal representatives, agencies, and organizations were invited to attend and both events were broadly publicized to maximize attendance. Presentations by four successful CSC municipalities were scheduled at the April 11 webinar and served as an incentive for other CNY representatives. CSC handouts were distributed at both events. CNY RPDB successfully recruited three communities which had already adopted the Climate Smart Communities pledge, including the City of Auburn, the Town of Cazenovia, and the Village of Fayetteville, to participate in the completion of community-wide GHG inventory reports and climate action plans.

- **Table Display**

A three-panel table-top display was developed that focuses on climate change in Central New York. The display was set up at the NASA-sponsored Climate Day at the Museum of Science and Technology, and at the Town of Dewitt Climate Day. CSC literature and other handouts were distributed at both events.



- **Weird Weather Exhibit**

Arrangements were made to borrow a large, free-standing educational exhibit from the Paleontological Research Institute (PRI) at the Museum of the Earth in Ithaca, New York. The “Weird Weather” exhibit, currently located in the Dewitt Town Hall, provides creative lessons in local weather patterns and indications of climate change. Development of the exhibit was funded by a grant from the National Science Foundation provided to the PRI.

Subtask 1.c.b Market CSC program

- **Newsletter Articles**

CNYRPDB contributed information for articles that were printed in the

- Cazenovia Garden Club newsletter; and the
- District VI NYS Federated Garden Clubs newsletter.

- **Meetings and Special Events**

CNYRPDB staff sponsored and/or participated in numerous municipal meetings and special events where the CSC program was promoted and educational literature distributed. Several of the major events are summarized on the following page:

Date	Meeting/Event	CNYRPDB Outreach to Market CSC Program
11/13/12	CNY Energy Challenge, Behavior, Energy, and Climate Change Conference, Sacramento CA	PowerPoint presentation given by M. Walton of NYSERDA; program updates were provided by CNYRPDB
2/16/13	CSC presentation at the Cazenovia League of Women Voters Board of Directors meeting	presentation and educational literature distributed
4/1/13	Museum of Science and Technology Climate Day education event for CNY families	PowerPoint slide presentation, tabletop display, educational literature distributed
4/3/13	A public meeting to announce the Neighborhood Energy Challenge	Presentation; educational literature distributed
4/13/13	Town of DeWitt Climate Day event	tabletop display, educational literature distributed
4/22/13	CNYRPDB/GreeningUSA "Chasing Ice" viewing, held at the Palace Theater	co-sponsorship; CSC literature distributed; PowerPoint presentation
4/16/13	Chamber of Commerce/League of Women Voters presentation on climate change in Central New York	PowerPoint slide presentation, literature distributed
4/18/13	GreeningUSA 9 th Annual Meeting	PowerPoint slide presentation; literature distributed
4/30/13	<i>Do the Math</i> viewing event held at Onondaga Community College	Tabletop display; educational literature distributed

- **Brochure**

A two-sided brochure, developed to promote the benefits of the CSC program, has been widely distributed throughout the region.

- **Showcase Projects**

In January 2013, the Regional Planning Board compiled a report of sustainability and emissions reduction projects in Central New York. The report, called Central New York's Showcase Projects, provides information in the following categories: Waste, Energy, Water / Environment, Natural Resources, Infrastructure, Land Use, Agriculture, and Climate. The projects are located in Madison, Onondaga, Cayuga, Cortland, and Oswego counties. The report provides photographs, diagrams, and brief summaries that offer a snapshot of innovative programs that have been implemented at the local level. It is designed to serve as an incentive to other communities that may be interested in pursuing similar projects.

- **Municipal Summaries**

One-to-three-page summaries were compiled for municipalities involved in GHG inventories and Climate Action Plans. The summaries were then distributed to students in Professor Smarden's SUNY ESF graduate class to assist in their preparation of municipal greenhouse gas inventories. Each summary contains information about sustainable projects, notable programs, and accomplishments. Summaries for the following municipalities are provided [here](#): Skaneateles, Madison County,

Fayetteville, the City of Oswego, DeWitt, Auburn, and the Town of Cazenovia. Summaries were also prepared that describe CNY tree commissions (report title: *Central New York Tree Commissions: Protecting the beauty and environmental benefits of trees*) and notable schools (report title: *Learn by Experience and Teach by Example: school Green Teams are leading the way with a community approach to sustainability and environmental stewardship*).

Subtask 1.c.c., 1.c.d., and 1.c.e Local Climate Action

The CNYRPDB worked closely with DeWitt, Skaneateles, Preble, Oswego, Cortland, Madison County, Auburn, Cazenovia, and Fayetteville to complete GHG inventories and climate action planning and implementation strategies. We maintained and promoted the Central New York Climate Change Innovation Program (C₂IP) and provided guidance, assistance, and outreach to CSCs through meetings and site visits, as well as telephone, electronic, and hard copy correspondences.

The CNYRPDB recruited, trained, and supervised interns and graduate students enrolled in the class of Professor Smarden of the SUNY College of Environmental Science. The CNYRPDB worked with the students and interns on completing GHG inventories and climate action plans. ICLEI memberships were also provided to CSCs. The completed GHG inventories and progress-to-date with the climate action plans are available for the following communities:

- DeWitt
- Skaneateles
- Preble
- Oswego
- Cortland
- Madison County
- Auburn
- Cazenovia
- Fayetteville

Subtask 1.c.f. Anchor Projects and the CNY Energy Challenge

The CNYRPDB developed anchor projects that demonstrate how climate action can be used for economic development, community growth, and environmental stewardship. Examples of anchor projects and an Energy Challenge program update are provided below.

- **Anchor Project: Town of Preble**

In October 2012, the Town of Preble celebrated the completion of an energy retrofit for their Preble town hall building that had originally been constructed in 1906 as a two-room schoolhouse. The retrofit included a lighting retrofit, insulation and air sealing, window replacement, replacement of an aging fuel oil fired forced air heating system with electric heat pumps, and the installation of a 9kW solar photovoltaic array. The town is anticipated to save approximately \$7,400 in utility costs in the first year of operation and realize a payback of approximately nine years. As a result of the



project, the facility will completely eliminate its need for fossil fuel combustion on site. The total carbon emissions reduction for the project is projected to be 19.53 tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent (CO₂e) annually.

- **Anchor Project: Village of Skaneateles**

The CNYRPDB is working to make the Village of Skaneateles energy sustainable. 50-kilowatt solar panels are being installed on the Village Hall roof and a flat screen monitor will be placed in the lobby to display the amount of electricity that is being produced. Officials are also planning to install a solar car charging station, permeable pavement and walkways to reduce stormwater runoff, and insulation that exceeds code and minimizes heat loss. Consolidation of local government resources will be implemented to boost efficiency and generate cost savings for tax payers. The Village will further reduce their energy bills through the installation of a new geothermal heating and cooling system under the building's current public parking lot. The Village Hall will be the first municipal net-zero building in NYS. In addition, new LED streetlights are being installed and the Village is providing incentives and rebates to homeowners to implement energy efficient projects and equipment.



- **Anchor Project: City of Cortland**

The CNY RPDB assisted the City of Cortland Waste Water Treatment Facility to replace four (4) 150-HP centrifugal blowers used for secondary aeration to three (3) 100-HP turbo-blower units. The new turbo blowers feature a 2:1 turndown ratio, allowing for better load control at the plant. The existing blowers can only be cycled off (not modulated), but operation is needed for mixing purposes. The new turbofan blowers can vary their output by nearly 50%, allowing much greater flexibility in matching aeration required. Alongside the new blowers, controls and procedures are being



developed for a new nitrification/de-nitrification process where the blowers will be cycled off entirely for a period of time, resulting in further energy savings.

On average, the WWTP has had energy consumption of 270,000 kWh/month, with a peak demand of 582 kW. Blower energy accounts for 30% of the facility energy consumption. Annual energy consumption for the plant is 3.35-million kWh/year, and annual blower consumption is 996,829 kWh/year. Total project costs totaled \$565,000. Funding of \$30,000 is being provided by the CNY RPDB's Climate Change Innovation Program, and NYSERDA is providing an incentive through the Industrial Process Efficiency program of approximately \$50,000, determined at completion and verification of savings, estimated to be approximately 464,945 kWh/year. Operational savings are

estimated \$55,800. Using this estimated project cost, and an average utility rate, the blower upgrade has a simple payback of approximately 10 years. Estimated savings may be substantially higher after system and performance verification, resulting in savings that may drive the simple payback down to approximately 6 years.

- **Anchor Project: Madison County**

The CNYRPDB worked with the Madison County Planning Department in 2012 and 2013 to implement the *Solarize Madison*, a community-focused renewable energy program promoting sustainable energy production. Additional support was provided by the Renewable Energy Training Center at Morrisville State College.



Solarize Madison public workshop.

Solarize Madison is a grassroots community initiative that helps residents, business owners and municipalities overcome the financial and logistical challenges of installing solar power through high volume group purchasing. The goal

of *Solarize Madison* is to transform interest in clean energy into action by tackling the three major market barriers: cost, a complex process and customer commitment. In total, 29 new solar PV systems were installed through the program with a cumulative installed capacity of 184.2 kW. This is equal to the number of PV systems that had been installed in Madison County in the prior 8 years from 2003 to 2011. The program also helped Madison County to improve from 24th to 1st out of 62 NYS counties in terms of lowest system price for completed systems (dollars per Watt-DC).

- **Anchor Project: City of Oswego**

In 2011 the CNY RPDB assisted the City of Oswego to secure funds to install a 55 kW solar PV system at the Crisafulli Municipal Ice Rink facility, which was completed in 2012. The CNY RPDB and the City have been exploring the opportunity to provide assistance with purchase of an ice cleaner at the Crisafulli facility, replacing a diesel powered ice cleaner with an all electric ice cleaner. This will assist in replacement of a piece of equipment near the end of its useful life, dramatically impact the emissions inside the facility by providing an emission-free piece of equipment to clean the ice, and help the City take full advantage of their solar PV installation utilizing energy produced on site to power the ice cleaner. Poor air quality at skating rinks is directly attributable to internal combustion ice resurfacing vehicles (ICRV) emissions settling in the rink and contained within the surrounding boards. Of primary concern are the carbon monoxide (CO) and nitrous dioxide (NO₂) emissions. Typical skating rink health complaints can range from headaches and dizziness, to symptoms requiring hospitalization.

Electric Ice Resurfer's (ERV's) consume around 20,000 kilowatt hours per year with a demand of about 8 kilowatts and generate no emissions. Battery charging is as easy as plugging in a cord. The CNYRPDB is providing \$30,000 toward the City's demonstration project. Considering the potential GHG reductions and utilization of the solar PV array recently installed, CNY RPDB staff considers this a worth reduction strategy and demonstration project.

City of Oswego DPW staff estimated average weekly diesel use for the current machine to be approximately 12 gallons per week. With 20 weeks of operation that totals 240 gallons of fuel. At a

conservative estimate of \$3.20 a gallon (the City purchases fuel under the NYS OGS fuel purchase contract) the City is estimated to be spending at least \$768 a year on fuel for ice cleaning purposes. Utilization of an electric ice cleaner will eliminate the need to purchase the fuel providing an immediate return on this investment. Utilization of electricity vs. diesel fuel will result in emission reductions of 5,371 pounds of CO₂ annually. Additional savings are anticipated by reducing the need to provide air exchanges to keep emissions down. Incoming air greatly increases the heating and cooling loads of the building and the ice making equipment. A 10%- 15% reduction in heating and cooling loads has been realized in other replacement projects taking into account adjustments for the need for fresh air. Based on a previous engineers analysis of existing equipment, a 10% reduction in the Chiller load, and a 10% reduction in the boiler load would provide an annual savings of an estimated \$2,300.

- **The Central New York Energy Challenge**

In 2011 the CNYRPDB implemented the *Central New York Energy Challenge*, a program that encourages area residents, businesses, municipalities, institutions, and industries to improve the energy efficiency of their properties and reduce their emissions. The Energy Challenge, developed as a partnership between the CNYRPDB and NYSERDA, provides participants with detailed information on conservation actions, energy efficiency improvements, renewable energy programs and incentives, and information about cost savings. Approximately 60 families in Syracuse, Skaneateles, Preble, have participated in this program through the formation of Energy Challenge teams.



Energy Challenge Team.

The Syracuse Neighborhood Energy Challenge was also launched in April 2013 and received a strong endorsement from Syracuse Mayor Stephanie Minor. Teams of neighborhood associations and community organizations formed teams and are competing to receive a \$5000 Gifford Foundation grant. NYSERDA presented an Energy Challenge PowerPoint slide show in November 2012 that included information that was provided by CNYRPDB.

An informative, interactive website was developed and maintained to provide information to the public about the Energy Challenge (<http://cnyenergychallenge.org/>).

Subtask 1.c.g Education and Training

- **Workshops**

CSC workshops were held on January 24 and April 11 and included CSC webinars and promotions, luncheons, presentations, and a tour. These events provided an excellent opportunity to reach out to municipalities currently involved in the CSC and to others that CNYRPDB had targeted for potential recruitment. In addition to



CNYRPDB Presentation at April 11 Webinar

municipal officials, our outreach efforts included school and college representatives, agencies, and non-profit organizations throughout Central New York. Both events involved collaboration with the CSC central office. We also collaborated with the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry for the April 11 event which was held on campus at a new LEED certified building. In addition to the CSC webinar, the event included four presentations (Preble, Madison County, Skaneateles, and DeWitt), a catered luncheon, and a tour of the facility. Additional photographs from the January 24 event are available upon request.

- **PowerPoint Slide Show**

A PowerPoint slide show was developed with information on climate change, state and local initiatives to reduce carbon emissions, and the CSC program. The slide show was presented at the Chamber of Commerce/LWV meeting on April 16, 2013.

- **Handouts**

Educational handouts were developed called *Green Tips for Your Home* and *Green Tips for Your Business*. The CSC logo was printed on both publications and copies were distributed at CNYRPDB outreach events.

- **Climate Documentary**

On April 22, 2013, the CNYRPDB and GreeningUSA (a local nonprofit advocating for sustainable communities) co-sponsored a viewing of a documentary on climate change. *Chasing Ice* is an award winning documentary which tracks National Geographic photographer James Balog's expedition to document the Earth's changing climate. The event was held at the Palace Theater in Syracuse and over 700 people attended. Staff assisted with publicity, distributed educational literature, and handled registration responsibilities. After the documentary, CNYRPDB's Chris Carrick participated on a four-person panel discussion. He provided a PowerPoint slide show and responded to questions presented during the Q/A session that followed. The event received wide coverage in local media including newspapers, radio and television.



Chasing Ice Documentary at Palace Theater

- **Bright Future Climate Awareness Program**

- Prepared a report called, *Climate Awareness Programs in Central New York Schools, Museums, and Beyond* which includes information on school GHG reduction goals, regional partnerships, relevant classes, and projects that promote energy conservation.
- Compiled summary of 23 Energy Star Rated Schools in CNY.
- Developed/maintained working relationships with the Museum of Science and Technology, Energy Training Solutions, and several priority schools.
- Distributed resources and opportunities for CNY educators.
- Scheduled a meeting with school teachers and administrators on February 21, 2013 in order to discuss climate education programs, priorities, and opportunities for regional collaboration; promoted CSC program; have maintained contact with this group and continue to distribute climate education grant RFPs and opportunities.
- Researched opportunities for a CNY Classroom Energy Challenge (in development.)

Challenges

- Limited time was available for school program development (CNY Classroom Energy Challenge).
- Limited time was available for recruitment of new municipalities into the CSC Program.

Recommendations

- **CNY Classroom Energy Challenge**

The CNYRPDB recommends the implementation of a pilot climate education program in one or two schools in Central New York. Staff will work with school communities to implement energy efficiency programs such as waste reduction and recovery, water conservation, transportation efficiencies, gardening and natural habitat rehabilitation, and other “green” efforts that will contribute to LEED for Existing Buildings certification at each school. The program will provide direct GHG reductions and will introduce sustainability and conservation issues to students, families, faculty, and staff. Objectives of an education program include the following:

- Adapt the CNY Energy Challenge model and curriculum to a classroom environment. School officials at Woodland Elementary School (located in the East Syracuse Minoa Central School District) have expressed an interest in adopting the CNY Energy Challenge team model into the classroom environment during a year-long pilot during the 2013 – 2014 academic year. Some modifications to the curriculum and units will be needed in order for the program to be successfully adapted for the classroom.
- Educational literature and home-based, energy efficiency projects will help to recruit families into the CSC program.
- The CNYRPDB will help coordinate school Green Teams comprised of students, teachers, parents, alumnae, and school staff. Green Teams will identify goals and priorities and will help implement programs to reduce energy use (e.g. recycling, lighting upgrades, etc) in the school.
- The Energy Challenge will encourage students to track their climate impacts and evaluate the correlation between daily activities, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change.
- Students will be encouraged to participate in “Green and Sustainable School Audits” and to develop climate actions plans with specific ways to mitigate their climate impact.