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Onondaga and Cortland Counties Announce Initial Public Comment Period for Regional Solid Waste Partnership SEQR Process

*Comments accepted until June 14 on draft scoping document that describes content for future
draft environmental impact statement*

SYRACUSE, N.Y., — (May 13, 2014) In March, Onondaga and Cortland Counties announced they would work together as co-lead agencies for the State Environmental Quality Review (SEQR) process on a regional solid waste partnership. Residents of both counties will now have their first opportunity since the announcement to formally voice their opinion on the scope of the proposed partnership.

Currently, Cortland County disposes of municipal solid waste, or trash, at its county-owned landfill, while Onondaga County trash is processed at the OCRRA Waste-to-Energy (WTE) Facility, where additional metals are removed for recycling and the remaining trash is turned into electricity.

The proposed partnership would send Cortland County's trash to be processed at the WTE Facility, thus increasing energy production and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. In exchange, the non-hazardous ash byproduct will be sent to the Cortland County Landfill, further reducing greenhouse gas emissions, transportation costs and fuel usage.

In order to fully explore potential impacts this partnership could have on the environment, a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be prepared.

A Draft Scoping Document (DSD), prepared by consultants for both counties, identifies potential environmental impacts that will be more thoroughly reviewed in the DEIS.

The DSD is now available for public review and may be accessed digitally at www.bartonandloguidice.com/CortlandOnondagaPartnership.htm and in hard copy at the Onondaga County Central Library (447 South Salina Street, Syracuse) or the Cortland Free Library (32 Church Street, Cortland, NY).

Written comments on the DSD will be accepted until 4:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 14. Comments may be delivered to the offices of Barton & Loguidice, (290 Elwood Davis Road, Syracuse); mailed to the attention of Jillian Blake, Barton & Loguidice, Box 3107, Syracuse, NY 13220; or submitted electronically to CortlandOnondagaPartnership@bartonandloguidice.com.

These comments, as well as those received during the initial Cortland County scoping period, will be taken into consideration in preparing the Final Scoping Document for the DEIS.

This is not the only opportunity for public participation. Upon completion of the DEIS, there will be another public comment period, as well as public hearings on the DEIS.

“This comment period is just one of several opportunities the public will have to engage in the development of this project’s draft environmental impact statement,” said Onondaga County Legislature Chair Ryan McMahon. “Acquiring numerous perspectives on what should be evaluated is the key to developing a comprehensive study.”

“Public participation is vital not just to this project, but for our entire Democratic process,” said Susan Briggs, Chair of the Cortland County Legislature. “We look forward to hearing from our residents regarding this scoping document, and eventually the DEIS.”