

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, November 19, 2021

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Elected Officials, Environmental Organizations, Finger Lakes Wine Makers, Business Owners, Convened in Both Albany and Geneva to Urge Governor Hochul and DEC to Deny Title V Air Permit for Cryptocurrency Mining Facility Greenidge Generation

On final day of DEC public comment period, groups presented over 5,000 comments made in opposition to Greenidge facility, urged Hochul to direct DEC to deny permits, preserve state climate law

ALBANY, NY - TODAY, dozens of concerned citizens, business owners, and elected officials convened in the Finger Lakes and Albany to urge the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to deny the Title V Air Permit for the proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining facility, Greenidge Generation, and call upon Governor Hochul to place a statewide moratorium on this form of cryptocurrency mining until an environmental review can be conducted.

The concurrent press conferences coincided on the same day as the DEC deadline for public comment on the Greenidge facility's draft Title V air permit. In Albany, leaders announced that over 5,000 public comments were submitted in opposition to the facility, showcasing the immense concern around the environmental threats of proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining at Greenidge. In Geneva, [a letter presented to the DEC and Governor Hochul](#) and signed by nearly 500 members of the Finger Lakes Wine Business Coalition and the Seneca Lake Guardian Business Coalition, expressed how this single facility could damage the wine-making industry, local businesses, and tourism in the Finger Lakes.

The Greenidge facility serves as a test case for the roughly 30 other dormant power plants across New York that could be converted for proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining. If left unregulated, the industry will wreak irrevocable harm on not only the Finger Lakes region, but the entire state of New York, severely hindering the ability to reach New York's ambitious climate goals as outlined in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA).

The Geneva event featured speakers like local environmental leader Joseph Campbell of Seneca Lake Guardian, Paul Kronenwetter of the Environmental Affairs Committee Seneca County Board of Supervisors, as well as Finger Lakes winemakers and industry leaders like Michael Warren Thomas of Savor Life, Phil Davis of Damiani Wine Cellars, Kees Stapel of Boundary Breaks Vineyard, in addition to elected officials such as Assemblymember Dr. Anna Kelles, Geneva City Councilman Ken Camera, and many more. The Albany event featured Liz Moran of Earthjustice, Russ Haven of NYPIRG, Eric Weltman of Food and Water Watch, and several State-elected officials.

Both events stressed the urgent need for Governor Hochul and her administration to deny Greenidge's Title V Air Permit and issue a moratorium to study the environmental impacts of proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining on air, water, and the climate.

Albany:

"There is great hope for cryptocurrency as a new economic engine, but one form of cryptocurrency authentication called "proof-of-work mining" threatens to violate our energy use, emissions and environmental standards. The question being asked in Europe, Asia, across the globe and throughout the United States is the same question presented today in New York. Will we properly review and regulate a new activity that will destroy our climate change targets before it expands to a scale we cannot control? The Greenidge plant was initially permitted for a different purpose. New York needs to fully understand the full ramifications of proof-of-work authentication before the activity is allowed to expand unchecked. The permit renewal should be denied," **said Assemblymember Steve Otis.**

"Scientists project that proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining activities will push global temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius within the next three decades alone," **said Assemblymember Patricia Fahy (D – Albany).** "As it stands, this type of cryptocurrency mining will only impede the progress New York State needs to make in meeting our ambitious climate goals laid out in the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act. I strongly support passage of my colleague Assemblymember Anna Kelles' bill to place a moratorium on the type of mining Greenidge – and so many others – are undertaking."

Assemblymember John T. McDonald III said, "The demand for cryptocurrency continues to grow and with that growth comes increased interest and investment. That being said, we need to be mindful of the environmental impacts of mining certain forms of cryptocurrency. As a member of the Assembly who supported the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), I have significant concerns about the issues and impacts surrounding the proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining activities that are a threat to our environment. That is why I am joining with my colleagues in the Assembly to urge the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) to deny the Title V Air Permits for the proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining facilities at Greenidge and ask

Governor Hochul to place a statewide moratorium on this form of cryptocurrency mining industry until an environmental review can be conducted."

"The decision over Greenidge's permit is an important test of Governor Hochul's leadership on climate, and the science is very clear: She must pass this test. As the devastation from Hurricane Ida tragically showed, our communities are at risk and our lives are at stake — and so we need Governor Hochul to stop this dangerous fracked gas project," **said Eric Weltman, Senior Organizer [Food & Water Watch](#)**.

"Given the immense climate and local air impacts from Greenidge's Bitcoin mining operation, DEC must deny the Title V air permit," **said Liz Moran, New York Policy Advocate for Earthjustice**. "Proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining is a rapidly growing industry that stands to jeopardize New York's ability to meet the goals of the CLCPA if action is not taken. New York has the opportunity to demonstrate, again, that it is a climate champion by both denying the permit for Greenidge and instituting a statewide moratorium on proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining until an environmental review is conducted. We call upon the Hochul Administration to address this issue with urgency."

"If allowed to operate, the Greenidge Power Station Bitcoin mining plant will drive a superhighway through the state's climate law," **said Russ Haven, NYPIRG General Counsel**. "Based on the DEC's recent permit denials for the Astoria fracked gas plant and the Danskammer project in Newburgh, the Greenidge Bitcoin plant must be rejected as a climate killer. We urge governor Hochul and the DEC to deny permits to Greenidge."

The proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining at Greenidge Power Station has led to wasteful energy consumption, negative impacts to local air quality, massive amounts of e-waste, and currently has an air permit that allows it to emit more greenhouse gas emissions than during its time as a coal plant. We hope Governor Hochul and DEC take these considerable environmental and climate issues seriously in regulating this facility," **said Julie Tighe, President of the New York League of Conservation Voters**.

[Geneva:](#)

"At a time when we as a state are striving to significantly reduce our GHG emissions, allowing Proof-of-Work (PoW) cryptocurrency mining to proliferate and add many hundreds of MW of energy consumption is profoundly socially, economically, and environmentally irresponsible and must be prevented" **said Assemblymember Anna Kelles**. "We should be prioritizing industries in the state that concurrently promote our economic prosperity and environmental sustainability like, for example, long term energy storage and renewable energy infrastructure manufacturing and development. We must not allocate our finite energy sources to PoW cryptocurrency mining that uses local natural resources, employs very few New Yorkers, and creates highly consolidated wealth, primarily for the 4 major companies that own over 50% of the market share."

"The whole world is watching to see how New York responds to the environmental threat of proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining," **said Joseph Campbell, President of Seneca Lake Guardian.** "Governor Hochul and the DEC have an opportunity to either uphold our climate goals, or fall victim to this energy-intensive cryptocurrency that will wreak havoc on New York communities. We call on them to immediately deny Greenidge's permit and look into measures to study the environmental impacts of this industry before it's too late."

"Greenidge Generation, LLC's Title V permit hearing is a distraction from the real matter at hand for the Finger Lakes and for that matter NY State. The anticipated production of over 520,000 metric tons of CO2 Equivalents in 2022 (which is only expected to grow) is a gratuitous discharge for a purely private interest of affluent investors and violates our Climate Leadership law and the NY State Constitution. This plant's operation exchanges the societal welfare of a healthy and clean Lakeside environment and its dependent agri-tourist economy for the welfare for the ultra wealthy in far away places. The State of NY's integrity is at stake as well as the climate goals that we must achieve as a society," **said R. Ken Camera, Ward 4 Geneva City Council.**

"The Finger Lakes is a world class wine region but our brilliant future is at risk if massive power plants like Greenidge are allowed to heat the water and pollute the air for decades. You can make a lot of money if you can avoid paying for the environmental damage," **said Michael Warren Thomas of Savorlife.com.**

"We've been doing our part to get off fossil fuels since 2015, when Finger Lakes Wine Country received the Solar Energy Champion Award from the Solar Energy Industries Association. It would be devastating to fall backwards simply because of one industry with no public benefit. We believe that Governor Hochul realizes how important the wine and tourism industry is, as she just announced her \$450 Million "Bring Back Tourism" Package for the state. But Greenidge does not fit into this vision. I urge the Governor to direct her DEC to deny the Title V Air Permit for Greenidge, and adopt a moratorium on this energy-intensive industry in order to support us here in the Finger Lakes, and to help New York to truly be a leader on climate change," **said Phil Davis, co-founder and vineyard manager of [Damiani Wine Cellars](#).**

"Heron Hill Winery was one of the first new wineries to open after the passage of the New York Farm Winery Act in 1976. At that time there were only 14 wineries in NYS and now there are over 130. We have invested the last 50 years of our lives to help build a world class wine region in the Finger Lakes. As exciting as these years have been, the region is just beginning to reach its potential. We are asking Governor Hochul and our state legislature to help ensure our bright future by protecting our precious air, water, and soil. These vital resources already face many pressures from climate change, invasive species, and many other factors. We can't afford to allow a power plant in the heart of the wine region to continue expanding to full capacity for cryptocurrency mining without a full study

of the environmental impact. Their Title V Air Permit should not be renewed by the DEC,” **said John Ingle of Heron Hill Winery.**

“Waterloo Container proudly serves the wine industry, distilleries, craft brewers, cider houses, and maple syrup producers for more than 40 years. Greenidge’s impact on our air, water, and our very environment threatens who we are and what we do. Agriculture and tourism are the staples of our existence,” **said Bill Lutz & Rich Swinehart of Waterloo Container.**

“The Greenidge Facility has nothing beneficial to offer the Finger Lakes but could have devastating effects on our environment and community. We urge Governor Hochul to deny Greenidge’s air permit and take a pause to study the impacts of this industry on our vital climate law,” **said Kees Stapel of Boundary Breaks Vineyard.**

[View the live stream for the Geneva Press Conference here.](#)

[View the live stream for the Albany Press Conference here.](#)

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Background: On [September 8th](#), Basil Seggos, NYSDEC Commissioner, released for public comment the Greenidge Generation air permit and stated that the facility has not shown compliance with NY’s climate law. In 2019, NY passed the Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act (CLCPA), the most aggressive clean energy and climate agenda in the country. The bill commits to an 85% reduction in greenhouse gases by 2050 and 100% zero-emission electricity by 2040. Goals like these will not be achieved if high intensive energy industries like proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining continue.

Greenidge Generation is one of the largest cryptocurrency mines in the United States, and poses a severe environmental threat to the Finger Lakes region. The abandoned power plant turned mining facility currently houses over 15,300 computers which run around the clock, requiring enormous amounts of energy. Greenidge predicts that its on site and upstream emissions will exceed 1 million tons annually. The plant is also permitted to discharge up to 134 million gallons of water a day at temperatures up to 108 degrees Fahrenheit into Seneca Lake, damaging aquatic life and putting the booming tourism industry in the Finger Lakes at risk.

