

## **Waterway has role in green energy future; Peterborough group touts water power possibilities**

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The Trent-Severn Waterway could contribute to the green energy boost planned by the provincial government over the next 20 years, a local water power association says.

The province's electricity plan released Tuesday projects the province will double the amount of renewable energy generated by 2025.

It sends a positive message to the renewable energy industry, said Paul Norris, president of the Peterborough-based Ontario Waterpower Association.

"It's easily attainable," Norris said.

"We certainly feel that hydro electricity can contribute significantly more than it already does. It's about 25 per cent, it's not unrealistic to expect that to grow substantially over the next 10 or 20 years."

In a long-awaited response to recommendations released in December on how Ontario can avoid a future electricity crisis, Energy Minister Dwight Duncan's plans call for about \$70 billion in spending by 2025, including inflation, on a range of nuclear, wind and conservation projects.

Plans include two new nuclear reactors, at a cost of about \$3 billion, to be built over the next 10 years next to an "existing" nuclear station. That could mean the Darlington station in Bowmanville which has the space, but eliminates Wesleyville, just west of Port Hope, as a possible site.

The province has also ordered environmental assessments to refurbish four units at its Pickering B station, and assessments for Darlington as current reactors reach the end of their lifespan.

In addition to nuclear power, the government plans to increase the amount of energy drawn from renewable sources to 15,700 megawatts by 2025.

The Peterborough area is poised to contribute to the renewable energy growth.

An environmental assessment process has started for a proposed \$19-million water power project at locks 22 and 23 on the Trent-Severn Waterway. Trent Rapids Power Corp. - a joint venture by Peterborough Utilities Inc. and Shaman Power Corp., a Toronto-based renewable energy company - plans to complete the project in the next two to three years.

The announcement helps projects such as the one planned for Peterborough, Norris said.

"We see it as a real positive step moving forward," he said. "What the government's done is to identify that renewable energy, generally, and water power, specifically, is going to continue to be an important part of the overall energy mix."

Benefits of the new Peterborough station would include generating enough renewable electricity for between 2,000 and 4,000 houses and the elimination of 15,000 tonnes of CO2 emissions per year produced by coal-fired generation, Trent Rapids Power Corp. has estimated.

The station would produce more than 30-million kilowatts per year.

Peterborough Utilities is also eyeing Lock 19 as a possible generating site, while a private Calgary company, Canadian Hydro Developers, has rights to develop Locks 24 and 25.

The creation of more power generation stations on the canal is even receiving support at the federal level.

On Monday, Peterborough MP Dean Del Mastro stood in the House of Commons to support a request by Simcoe North MP Bruce Stanton for a review of the waterway.

The review would look at the Trent-Severn as a water control mechanism, a green energy producer and a travel and tourism benefit to all of the communities along the canal, Del Mastro told The Examiner yesterday.

"We're wasting hundreds of thousands of horsepower that's generated by the waterway, that could be generating green energy," he said. "The water's always moving and turbines could be turning.

"I would certainly support expansion into that area."

Del Mastro said the request for a review will probably be put to a vote in the fall.

"The study will go ahead and then once the study comes back it will provide us with the information we need to act on behalf of the waterway," he said.

The Trent-Severn is managed by Parks Canada, which falls Environment Canada.

There are more than two dozen water power facilities on federal lands on the Trent-Severn and Rideau systems. The stations produce on average 500,000 megawatts hours annually.

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