

Solar project set for landfill

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PSE&G, Meadowlands Commission pair up

PSE&G, under a deal being worked out with the state Meadowlands Commission, will build a massive solar project on a defunct landfill straddling North Arlington and Kearny that could power about 3,400 homes, officials said Wednesday.

The 20-megawatt display will cover as much as 70 acres of the 1-E Landfill, which closed in 2008 after reaching capacity. The utility will pay the commission \$1 million annually to lease the land and will sell the electricity generated from it into the power grid.

It is by far the largest solar

project proposed for the region's closed landfills, which includes plans for a 1.4-megawatt display at the Erie Landfill in North Arlington and a 3-megawatt system at the 1-A Landfill in Kearny.

The commission approved a resolution Wednesday to negotiate a memorandum of understanding with PSE&G. The utility still needs to get approval from the state Board of Public Utilities for the project.

The \$1 million will go into the newly created Meadowlands Renewable Energy Fund, which will award grants to the 14 district towns for green projects

from buying hybrid vehicles to making municipal buildings and schools more energy efficient.

"If a town comes to us and wants \$90,000 to change all their old light bulbs to energy-efficient ones, that's something that this fund will be used for," said Bob Ceberio, the commission's executive director.

The 1-E Landfill, which spans 400 acres, was closed in December 2008 after it reached a maximum allowed height of 155 feet above mean sea level. Methane gas from decomposing garbage at 1-E is already used to produce electricity.

Officials hope to start construction by next year.

A plan to dump hundreds of thousands of cubic yards of decontaminated mud from New York Harbor and Newark Bay will not affect the project, officials said. The mud would cover 40 to 100 acres located far from the solar display.

The commission is also in negotiations to lease a portion of the 35-acre 1-A Landfill in Kearny to SunDurance Energy of Plainfield to build a 3-megawatt system.

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