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## **In wake of denial by State, St. Lawrence Cement officially withdraws applications to build coal-fired plant in Hudson Valley**

HUDSON, NEW YORK AND MONT ROYAL, QUEBEC — In a press release issued late Sunday afternoon, the Canadian-based and Swiss-owned St. Lawrence Cement officially announced that it is abandoning its six-and-a-half-year quest to build a massive new coal-fired cement plant in Hudson and Greenport, New York, along the majestic Hudson River.

The SLC release states that “Following careful review of the impacts of the DOS decision, the Board of Directors of St. Lawrence Cement has decided not to appeal the DOS decision and to withdraw the proposed replacement cement plant in Greenport, New York, from the permitting process.” A copy of the full release can be found at the company’s website, <http://www.stlawrencecement.com>.

“St. Lawrence Cement has finally made a smart move by recognizing that this out-of-scale and out-of-place project would never meet regulatory approval,” said Sam Pratt, executive director of the 4,100-member citizens group Friends of Hudson, which began challenging the sprawling project in early 1999.

“This outcome comes as a tremendous relief to not only the Hudson community, but to the tens of thousands of downwind residents in New York and New England who have opposed the plant,” Pratt added. “Thanks to a courageous stance taken last week by the Pataki administration, our communities can now put this controversy behind us. We will redouble our efforts to build a greener, more sustainable regional economy that all can participate in, without risking anyone’s health or quality of life. Now is a time to bring residents back together, healing the divisions that SLC tried to sow among us, and looking forward to making the Hudson Valley a model for regional revitalization.”

Last Tuesday night, New York Secretary of State Randy Daniels issued a strongly-worded decision which declared the SLC project inconsistent with eight key State policies designed to protect the Hudson River from inappropriate development. Without New York’s approval, which came after extensive review of the project by the state’s Division of Coastal Resources, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers could not issue permits for the project, and the chances of winning an appeal were slim.

In its 2004 Annual Report, St. Lawrence disclosed \$57.9 million in capital expenditures on the Greenport project. Sunday’s news release also states an intention to invest \$10 million in upgrading its existing, and much smaller plant in Catskill (Greene County). “While it is premature to comment on any such plans, residents downwind of the Catskill plant can count on opponents to take as much interest in Catskill as we have in Greenport. Any substantial changes to SLC’s Greene County facility would be likely to trigger the same type of review it underwent in Hudson and Greenport, and our group has recently asked the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation for records of the existing plant’s performance with an eye to keeping them honest there, too.”

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