



NEWS FROM
ASSEMBLYMAN
Pete Lopez
127th Assembly District

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**ASSEMBLYMAN PETE LOPEZ CALLS ON
NY POWER AUTHORITY TO GIVE FULL PUBLIC DISCLOSURE
OF ACTIONS DURING IRENE & LEE**

*Seeks Detailing of Blenheim-Gilboa Pump Storage facility's activities
during floods that devastated the Schoharie Valley*

In a meeting in Assemblyman Pete Lopez's (R,C,I-Schoharie) Albany office earlier this month with New York Power Authority (NYPA) Chairman and CEO Gil Quiniones, the Assemblyman advised NYPA of the importance of full disclosure to a community that continues to struggle with the effects of massive flooding from Tropical Storms Irene and Lee.

During the meeting requested by the Power Authority, the Assemblyman emphasized the fears and frustrations of the Schoharie community and the importance of NYPA in taking a proactive stance as he called for full disclosure of the reservoir release records, along with a detailed accounting of the actions and activities taken by the Blenheim-Gilboa Pump Storage Facility during Tropical Storm Irene.

In the conversation, Assemblyman Lopez relayed his firsthand knowledge of the event and reports given him from different sources of what transpired at Blenheim-Gilboa during the height of Tropical Storm Irene.

"Many in the community have come to me to share their sense of what happened" said Assemblyman Lopez. "It's really in everyone's best interest for NYPA to work with the people of Schoharie County in good faith."

The Assemblyman made it clear that the public needs to know what was done to protect life and property. He further advised, that, while his office was not looking to lay blame, he made it very clear that if these records showed that NYPA's activities did contribute to the damage, the Authority must be a partner in making those affected whole.

"This is like reviewing the cause and effect of a car accident," said Assemblyman Lopez. "If someone is driving a vehicle on a road and causes harm to someone else, even if unintended, there's still a responsibility to pay for the damages."

As part of the conversation, Assemblyman Lopez also asked NYPA to come forward with recommendations and improvements for protecting the Schoharie Valley from future events, including the construction of cell towers, that could strengthen public safety and communications in the future.

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“For many years, our emergency responders have struggled with emergency communications in this part of Schoharie County, as well as in northern Greene and Delaware counties,” said Assemblyman Lopez. “If we can leverage money and support from NYPA, the City of New York and others, we might even be able to explore other partnerships that could bring in wireless broadband services for our local homes, farms and businesses.”

A public open house has been scheduled by the Power Authority for Thursday, January 19, 2012, at the Holiday Inn Express in the Town of Schoharie from 5 to 7 p.m. to discuss NYPA’s Blenheim-Gilboa Power Project and storm response.

“I look forward to attending the meeting,” concluded Assemblyman Lopez. “For the people of Schoharie County, we need to have full disclosure on this issue.”

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