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Environmental Groups, Illinois Power Resources Generating, LLC Propose Settlement Agreement to Retire Edwards Coal Plant and Fund Community Projects

Illinois Power Resources Generating, LLC (IPRG), an affiliate of Luminant, the Sierra Club, Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC), and Respiratory Health Association (RHA) are seeking approval of a proposed settlement of a Clean Air Act lawsuit brought by environmental organizations in 2013. The proposed settlement is subject to review and comment by the Department of Justice and USEPA, and review, approval and entry by the U.S. District Court for the Central District of Illinois. If approved and entered by the Court, the proposed settlement would provide for retirement of the Edwards plant by the end of 2022 (subject to regulatory approval) and millions of dollars in funding for projects that benefit Peoria-area communities.

In response, Sierra Club, NRDC, and RHA released the following joint statement:

"The proposed settlement announced is an important milestone in improving air quality for families in Peoria and Central Illinois and allows an important period of time to support transition needs of the community and workers. We hope the Court will approve the settlement, and we look forward to working with the people of Peoria and surrounding communities to develop and implement the

ICC Hosts 2019 Supplier Diversity Policy Session

The Illinois Commerce Commission (ICC) recently held its annual Supplier Diversity Policy Session for the state's large regulated utilities, wind, solar and other energy suppliers to report on their supplier diversity efforts in 2018 and procurement goals for 2019.

The policy sessions are in response to provisions created by the Illinois General Assembly in the Public Utilities Act. Under Section 5-117 of the Public Utility Act, large regulated utilities, wind, solar and other energy suppliers in the state are required to report on procurement goals and actual spending for the previous calendar year with diverse suppliers.

"Illinois utilities have succeeded in growing their procurement with diverse suppliers by \$2.1 billion, an increase of over 300% from 2012 to 2018," said ICC Chairman Carrie Zalewski. "While we have made incredible strides in the right direction much more remains to be done to increase the dollars spent with diverse suppliers and looking for potential new ways to measure the impact of diverse suppliers. The ICC is committed to increasing both the amount of dollars spent with diverse suppliers and the types of

diverse suppliers."

The first panel, *Reporting Entity Highlights*, was moderated by Tetyana Rebczak, Legal and Policy Advisor to Chairman Carrie Zalewski. Illinois' five largest regulated public utilities each gave an overview of their company's actual spend with diverse suppliers in 2018, with information about best practices of their supplier diversity teams, procurement goals and any changes to procurement practices for 2019. Representing the utilities were: • Melvin D. Williams, *President*, Nicor Gas and Senior Vice President, Southern Gas Company • Richard J. Mark, *President*, Ameren Illinois • Joseph Dominguez, *CEO*, ComEd • Bruce A. Hauk, *President*, Illinois American Water, and IUBDC Chairman • Charles Matthews, *President and CEO*, Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas

"There isn't a 'one size fits all' approach when it comes to building a more diverse supply chain. Progressive companies proactively open doors for qualified diverse vendors because it's good business," said Richard J. Mark, chairman and president of Ameren Illinois. "I am pleased to report that Ameren Illinois has increased our

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FROM THE STAFF

You may not know it, but Illinois is leading the way in efforts to promote supplier diversity among regulated public utilities. Our lead article on the recent Supplier Diversity Policy Session held by the Commerce Commission provides some eye-popping numbers in terms of recent growth of utility spending on diverse suppliers. In addition to the individual utilities, lots of credit goes to the organization they established a few years ago to promote this cause: the Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council (IUBDC). Working closely with the ICC and various advocates, the IUBDC has become nationally known for its successful efforts. And, there's even more progress to come. Check out www.iubdc.org. **IEF**

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Settlement

Beneficial projects the settlement provides for.”

In response, IPRG released the following statement:

“The proposed settlement resolves a long-running lawsuit while providing three years of certainty for the more than 70 employees working at the Edwards plant and, importantly, a transition period for the community to plan for the plant closure. IPRG and Edwards look forward to continuing to provide reliable power for Illinois for the next three years while supporting the communities where our employees live and work.” **IEF**

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ICC

Spending with diverse companies by 65% in the last two years.

Through our strategic initiatives we look to build on those successes in the years to come.”

“We have set and achieved higher diverse supplier goals for each of the past seven years,” said Joe Dominguez, CEO, ComEd. “Creating opportunities for diverse suppliers is one of the most important roles we play as we continue building a supply chain that reflects all the communities we serve.”

“Since 2015, we have more than doubled our annual spending with diverse suppliers by making supplier diversity a key focus of our corporate strategy,” said Charles Matthews, president and CEO of Peoples Gas and North Shore Gas. “While we are proud of what we have accomplished in this time, we are committed to continue advancing our program to make an enhanced impact in the communities we serve.”

A second panel, *How to Foster Partnerships*, was led by Commissioner Sadzi Martha Oliva. The panelists included:

- Martin Cabrera, Jr. *CEO*, Cabrera Capital Markets, LLC.

- Partnership with Illinois American Water • Homero Tristian, *Founding Partner*, Tristian and Cervantes, Partnership with ComEd • Tim Richards, *President*, Richards Graphic Communications, Inc., Partnership with ComEd • James F. Clayborne Jr., *Partner*, Clayborne, Sabo & Wagner LLP, Partnership with Ameren Illinois • Sidney Dillard, *Partner*, Loop Capital, Partnership with Peoples Gas

The panelists agreed that partnerships are an important component of supplier diversity and spoke about their partnerships with the utilities, sharing success stories and best practices for ‘helping public utilities diversifying and expanding their investors’ outreach,” said Martin Cabrera Jr, CEO, Cabrera Capital Markets.

A third panel, *Energy Suppliers Discuss Supplier Diversity Highlights of 2018*, was moderated by Alejandro Aixala, Legal and Policy Advisor to Commissioner Maria

Bocanegra. A change in the state law beginning in 2018 now requires suppliers of wind energy, solar energy, hydroelectricity, nuclear energy and other supplies of energy within Illinois to report to the ICC on their supplier diversity spending and goals for the current year. This panel focused on ways energy suppliers can achieve supplier diversity goals, comply with reporting requirements and overcome structural impediments to achieving supplier diversity goals.

The final panel, *Professional Services*, was led by Carrera Thibodeaux, Legal and Policy Advisor to Commissioner Ethan Kimbrel. During this panel, the Commission reiterated its call to action to the utilities to prioritize supplier diversity spend in professional services. Panelists spoke about the opportunities available to support minority businesses and the commitment it takes from corporate partners.

The policy session concluded with a presentation by Illinois Utilities Business Diversity Council (IUBDC) Chair Bruce Hauk. IUBDC is a forum for best practice sharing and information exchange among Illinois utilities. **IEF**

Nicor Gas VP Christa Markgraff Among HERoes 100 Women Executives List

Christa Markgraff, vice president of operations at Nicor Gas, the largest natural gas distribution company in Illinois, is among those named to the 2019 HERoes 100 Women Executives List. The annual list celebrates 100 women who are leading by example and driving change to increase gender diversity in the workplace. **IEF**

Future Supply of Natural Gas Sees Largest Increase in 54-Year History

The Potential Gas Committee (PGC) and the American Gas Association (AGA) recently announced that the United States has a natural gas resource base of 3,374 trillion cubic feet (Tcf). It comes as a result of the PGC's latest biennial assessment of the nation's natural gas resources as of year-end 2018. This is the highest resource evaluation in the Committee's 54-year history, exceeding the 2016 assessment by about 20% - the largest two-year increase in the report's history.

"This report verifies that our nation has more natural gas than at any point in our history, ensuring that American families and businesses can rely on this clean, affordable source of energy for many generations," said AGA President and CEO Karen Harbert. "The United States continues to set new natural gas supply records because of technological improvements and continued learning in gas exploration and production. That same spirit of innovation drives the entire natural gas industry from the companies that transport and deliver natural gas, to the entrepreneurs that develop new technologies that are making natural gas cleaner and more accessible."

The increase resulted from reassessments of shale gas resources in the Atlantic and Mid-Continent areas and conventional and tight gas in the Mid-Continent and Rocky Mountain areas.

Harbert continued, "Natural gas has transformed the American economy and energy future for the better. Any realistic plan to continue towards a cleaner energy future will have natural gas as a foundation."

Since its establishment in the 1960s, the PGC has been the only group that assesses the future supply of natural gas in the United States. The Committee is made up of over 800 experienced volunteer geoscientist and engineers contributing to the assessment. **IEF**

Exelon Generation Employees Tee Off To Help The Community

Exelon Generation employees at LaSalle Generating Station recently teed up donations totaling \$33,000 for four local charities at the nuclear station's annual golf outing. The event has raised more than \$200,000 for non-profit organizations in its four-year history.

More than 200 golfers participated in this year's LaSalle Station Charity Golf Outing on Friday, Aug. 30, raising money and awareness for the following local charities: Illinois Valley Brain Injury Clubhouse, the Dani-Brandon Center for Children, Perfectly Flawed Foundation and Blessings in a Backpack.

"We are so excited about the money raised by employees at LaSalle Station," said Tonya Carter, coordinator for Blessings in a Backpack. "Without generous donations like this, many children in our community would go without food on the weekends."

According to Carter, 50 children can be fed for the entire school year with money raised during the golf outing. The organization sends backpacks stuffed with food home with disadvantaged children.


The golf outing is just the latest of many philanthropic and volunteer events organized by LaSalle Station employees. Other efforts this year have included a clean-up day at Camp Tuckabatchee in Ottawa, a school supply drive benefitting eight neighboring schools, and participation in the United Way of Eastern LaSalle County Labor of Love.

"LaSalle Station employees care a great deal about the community where they live and work," said John Washko, LaSalle Generating Station Site Vice President. "It means a lot that we're able to make a difference by volunteering at and raising money for local charitable organizations."

LaSalle Generating Station is a nuclear power facility located about 75 miles southwest of Chicago near Marseilles, Ill. At full power, the facility's two reactors produce more than 2,200 megawatts of carbon free electricity, enough to power 2.3 million typical homes. **IEF**


IRPS Conference To Be Held on October 22-23

The Institute for Regulatory Policy studies at Illinois State University is sponsoring a conference entitled “*Increasing Renewables and Competition in a Digital Age*” on Tuesday and Wednesday, October 22-23, 2019 at the Abraham Lincoln Hotel in Springfield, Illinois.

For more information and registration, please visit the IRPS website at www.irps.ilstu.edu 

NARUC Annual Convention in San Antonio

The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners (NARUC) will hold its Annual Convention in San Antonio, Texas, from November 17-20, 2019. State Commissioners and staff members from around the country will meet in various committees and subcommittees with an eye toward developing NARUC policy on several important issues of interest to the regulatory community.

Members of the Illinois Commerce Commission serve on key NARUC policy committees. An Illinois Night Reception will be held on Monday, November 18. 

Illinois Energy Forum is published monthly by the Illinois Energy Association, Springfield, Illinois. For questions or comments, please contact James Monk at 217-523-7348 or e-mail at jmonk@ilenergyassn.org.

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