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For more information:
Liz Moran (518) 610-1828
emoran@nypirg.org

NYPIRG STATEMENT ON RELEASE OF DRAFT PERMIT RENEWAL FOR THE GREENIDGE BITCOIN MINING FACILITY

(Albany, N.Y.) The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) released draft Article V (air) and Article IV (acid rain) permits for the Greenidge Generating Station, located along Seneca Lake in Yates County. DEC Commissioner Basil Seggos issued [a statement](#) to twitter stating “Greenidge has not shown compliance with New York’s climate law.”

Formerly a coal plant, the facility was converted to a gas-powered plant for the purposes of proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining, commonly known as “Bitcoin” mining. Recent reporting has found that Bitcoin mining consumes a tremendous amount of energy in order to operate computers that run 24/7. According to research from the New York Times, globally, Bitcoin mining consumes more electricity than the entire country of Finland, which is almost 0.5% of all electricity consumption worldwide.¹

The Department is holding a hearing on the Greenidge permits on October 13th and the public has until October 22nd to submit written comments.

The following statement is attributable to Liz Moran, Environmental Policy Director for NYPIRG:

“This is the first test to determine if New York State is serious about meeting its critical climate goals when it comes to the threat of Bitcoin mining: **The permits for the Greenidge Bitcoin mining facility must be resoundingly denied.** Not only does New York’s Climate Law mandate net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, but the law also has a specific goal for energy reduction. Should proof-of-work bitcoin mining be allowed to grow in New York, there is no doubt that the climate goals would be unachievable. NYPIRG urges the Department to reject the permits for the Greenidge facility and for Governor Hochul to institute a statewide moratorium on proof-of-work cryptocurrency mining until a full environmental review is conducted.”

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¹ Eugene Kim, “Bitcoin mining consumes 0.5% of all electricity used globally and 7 times Google's total usage, new report says,” Insider, September 6, 2021, <https://www.businessinsider.com/bitcoin-mining-electricity-usage-more-than-google-2021-9>