

# Electrification of busy tour boats helps meet goal for 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040, reduces transportation sector's contribution to greenhouse gas emissions

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has supplied a comprehensive integrated power and propulsion solution, including an onshore charging system, enabling sustainable operation with maximum reliability.

The blue and green color pattern on the exterior of the two vessels pays tribute to the fact that Maid of the Mist is investing in green energy to help preserve the natural wonder of Niagara Falls for generations to come. Prominent on each side of the vessels is a water droplet icon with three elements: waves of water representing Niagara Falls, a lightning bolt to symbolize electricity and the turbine to characterize hydroelectric power, with a blue line representing the water flowing from the upper deck of the vessel into the turbine.

"Maid of the Mist truly leads the way by building its new fleet with renewable electrical solutions and proving to the entire world that zero-emission transportation is achievable with today's technologies," said Juha Koskela, division president, ABB Marine & Ports. "Much like Nikola Tesla, under the leadership of Christopher M. Glynn, Maid of the Mist is a trailblazer that is set to inspire many others to adopt sustainable technologies."

During the COVID-19 global health crisis, the Maid of the Mist has implemented a number of operational changes to ensure a safe and enjoyable experience, including limiting occupancy in all boats and elevators at 50% capacity; placing physical distancing markers throughout the facility and boats as a reminder to maintain social distance; placing directional arrows and signage to remind visitors to maintain social distancing while guiding them in a way that minimizes contact with others; requiring all visitors to wear a face covering as a condition of admission; enhanced cleaning; and health screenings for all staff.

The Maid of the Mist first launched in 1846, making it one of North America's longest-running tourist attractions. Vessels have been continuously operating tours to the base of Niagara Falls for 134 consecutive years, providing guests from around the world with an iconic experience.

James V. Glynn joined Maid of the Mist in 1950 as a ticket seller and purchased the company in 1971. Under his leadership and that of current president Christopher Glynn, Maid of the Mist has expanded operations, now attracting more than 1.6 million guests each season.

In 2012, Maid of the Mist faced closure in the absence of storage space for its boats on the New York side of the river. Gov. Andrew Cuomo struck a deal to keep the boats running and produce increased revenues for Niagara Falls State Park. The Maid of the Mist Corp. agreed to invest \$32



Image courtesy of Kevin Keenan/Maid of the Mist

million in the former Schoellkopf Power Station site near the falls, in the Cataract City, to make it suitable for the winter storage and maintenance of its boats.

NYPA owns the land at this site. It provided clearance and technical support that enabled the boat operator to utilize the former Schoellkopf site for its boat launch and operations center. The new site replaced the previous winter storage location near the base of the Horseshoe Falls in Ontario. Also, under the memorandum, the company agreed to increase its license payments to State Parks to \$105 million over 30 years - three times the revenues that were projected for the 30-year period when a contract was initially approved in 2002.

The new Maid of the Mist vessels

build on a \$70 million revitalization of Niagara Falls State Park. The initiative has renewed the park's major viewing areas, including Luna Island, Prospect Point, Lower Grove, Three Sisters Islands, North Shoreline Trail, Luna Bridge and Terrapin Point with new pedestrian walkways, enhanced landscaping and signage, new benches, lighting and railings.

New York State Parks Commissioner Erik Kulleseid said, "New York State Parks is committed to executing Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo's vision for protecting our environment and in making New York state the cleanest state in the nation. We also know that visitors feel good when they can do their part to protect our land and water while enjoying themselves. We thank the Maid of the Mist for their leadership in sustain-

able tourism."

John R. Koelmel, Chairman of the NYPA board of trustees, said, "As a lifelong Western New York resident, I take great pride in the natural wonder we have in Niagara Falls and have always cherished our ability to share it with visitors from around the

world. I am very proud of the leadership role that NYPA has taken to help make the electrification of the Maid of the Mist tour boats happen. The new and quieter zero-carbon boats will not only be better for our environment, but they will also allow visitors to better hear the incredible roar of the Falls. Congratulations to Chris Glynn and his Maid of the Mist team, the New York State Parks Department, ABB and all those involved in making this electrification come alive, once again, making the Buffalo Niagara Region a trendsetter in energy innovation and environmental stewardship."

NYPA President and CEO Gil C. Quiniones said, "The transportation sector currently generates the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions. In order for us to meet the governor's nation-leading target of an 85% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2050, we must take bold actions now. The electrification of these two brand-new tour boats sets the example that we can electrify our economy, which is good for our communities, our health and our climate."

The vessels were christened on July 31 during a private family ceremony.

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