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Tighe & Bond breaks ground on \$10 million interconnection project

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The \$10 million East Lyme - New London Interconnection Project, which will provide a water interconnection between the town of East Lyme and the city of New London, broke ground. More than 40 public officials and municipal leaders attended the groundbreaking ceremony for this regional collaborative effort that will end more than twenty years of summer water shortages in East Lyme. Simultaneously, it will maintain flows in the town's streams to protect aquatic life. The ceremony took place at the Lake Konomoc Water Treatment Plant, located off of the Hartford - New London Tpke.

Historically, East Lyme has experienced summer water shortages due to the influx of visitors who come to the waterfront town. The current water system serves approximately 18,000 persons in the winter, but the population spikes to 30,000 in the summer. To manage this seasonal strain, the Town of East Lyme has been forced to impose water restrictions in the summer so that water demands do not exceed the available water supply.

After considering numerous alternatives to relieve the summer water shortage, the Town of East Lyme elected to design and construct a water system interconnection with the City of New London. This landmark project, which has been five years in the making, includes an elevated 425,000 gallon water storage tank and two pump stations. It also includes a four-mile transmission main from the northern terminus of the existing East Lyme water distribution system to the Lake Konomoc Water Treatment Plant, which is owned by the city of New London.

This inter-municipal agreement represents a unique solution to address the water shortage by allowing East Lyme to "bank" excess water from its wells at New London's Lake Konomoc reservoir and water treatment facility from September 15 through May 15, which is when East Lyme's water demands are traditionally at their lowest. From May 16 through September 14, New London will then provide East Lyme with drinking water during the peak demands period of the summer, and East Lyme can then reduce its pumping from its wells to maintain adequate stream flows. East Lyme can take up to 85% of the total quantities of water transferred to New London during the previous September through May period.

Tighe & Bond, charged with overseeing this project, has provided engineering, environmental and permitting services. Contractors include Haluch Water Contracting, Inc., Mid-Atlantic Storage Systems, and D'Armato Construction Company, Inc.

Funded largely by the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund with a 20% grant and 80% loan, project construction is scheduled for completion in May 2014.