For Immediate Release

Fort McMurray West Transmission Line Moves to Next Step

*National and International Interest Shown in Project*

CALGARY, ALBERTA (July 29, 2013) – The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) is moving into the next stage of selecting a successful proponent for the Fort McMurray West 500 kV Transmission Project.

The project will be the first in Alberta to use the Competitive Process, which is designed to maximize efficiency and provide downward pressure on transmission costs to Alberta ratepayers.

The AESO is pleased with the interest shown in the project so far. “We’ve had 30 organizations indicate they are interested in the next phase of the process, the Request for Qualifications (RFQ) stage, which officially launched today,” says Elizabeth Moore, Director of the Competitive Process. “It’s been very gratifying to have companies from across Alberta, all over Canada and around the world, express interest in the project. It shows us that we are on the right track.”

The RFQ stage will conclude in December 2013, when an AESO-selected panel of experts will shortlist up to five bidders to move to the Request for Proposals stage. The AESO expects that a winning proponent will be named by the end of 2014.

“At the end of the day the proponent who can deliver the project at the lowest cost, while ensuring high quality and meeting all industry standards in construction, safety, and ongoing operations maintenance, will be identified and awarded the opportunity to develop, design, build, finance, own, operate and maintain this major transmission facility,” adds Moore.

The Fort McMurray West 500 kV Transmission Project is needed to support continued oilsands growth, the key economic driver of Alberta’s economy. This reinforcement of Alberta’s transmission system will allow competitively priced power to reach consumers. It will consist of approximately 500 kilometres of transmission line and associated facilities between the Edmonton and Fort McMurray regions and is expected to be in service by 2019.

A second competition for the Fort McMurray East 500 kV Transmission Project is expected to commence in 2015/2016.

For more information about the Competitive Process, please refer to the AESO’s website: [www.aeso.ca/cp](http://www.aeso.ca/cp)

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As an independent system operator, the AESO leads the safe, reliable and economic planning and operation of Alberta’s interconnected power system. The AESO also facilitates Alberta’s fair, efficient and openly competitive wholesale electricity market, which in 2012 had 170 participants and approximately $6.4 billion in annual energy transactions.