

# Media Release

For Immediate Release

## **AESO reaffirms need for upgrades; seeks comments on draft transmission plan**

CALGARY, ALBERTA (June 2, 2011) – The need for a significant investment in transmission infrastructure was reaffirmed today with the release of the draft Alberta Electric System Operator’s (AESO) 2011 Long-term Transmission Plan (the Plan).

“The 2011 Plan provides efficient, reliable and cost effective solutions to meet the growing needs of Alberta’s economy, including industries, business and household demand,” says David Erickson, AESO president and chief executive officer. “It has gone through comprehensive internal and external expert analysis and development as well as thorough consultation with public stakeholders including industry, customers and government.”

Designed to be a comprehensive, flexible and dynamic roadmap, the 2011 Plan outlines future transmission development required to meet forecasted growth, provide continued reliability, facilitate a fair, efficient and openly competitive market and support short and long-term economic development in Alberta. It is consistent with legislation, regulation and government policy.

The 2011 Plan relies on updated inputs to forecasts, economic trends, changing customer demand and regulatory requirements to identify system upgrades required over the next 10 years. The Plan validates the need for four projects previously identified as critical transmission infrastructure (CTI) by the Government of Alberta in 2009 as well as the major regional transmission projects required to meet future demands.

The total estimated cost for the projects identified in the 2011 Plan is \$13.5 billion. Sixty per cent of the total cost, or \$8.3 billion, relates to approximately 50 regional projects and supports more than 200 customer connection requests. The remaining forty per cent of the total cost, or \$5.2 billion relates to the four CTI projects. To put this into perspective, for every \$1 billion spent on transmission, the increased cost to the average residential consumer is about one dollar per month.

All of the regional projects have or will be subject to a two-stage regulatory review including fulsome consultation prior to proceeding. It should also be noted that no new CTI projects have been identified in the 2011 Plan.

“Demand for electricity has increased 32 per cent over the last 10 years with annual peak demand growth forecast to average 3.2 per cent over the next 20 years,” adds Erickson. “The fact of the matter is that transmission capacity has not kept pace with load growth or generation development in the last decade and, as a result, we need to invest in upgrades today in order to maintain reliability of the system, now and into the future.”

As part of its ongoing public education and consultation efforts, the AESO released the 2011 Plan as a draft to allow for input from Albertans prior to filing the final copy with the Alberta Utilities Commission. Interested parties can view a copy of the Plan and Executive Summary, as well as submit comments through the AESO’s public engagement website, [www.poweringalberta.com](http://www.poweringalberta.com).

### **For more information**

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