



MEDIA RELEASE

For Immediate Release

AESO to file for transmission development reinforcement in the Hanna Region (east central Alberta)

CALGARY, Alberta (August 14, 2009) – The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) is recommending the construction of 240 kilovolt (kV) transmission lines to connect up to 700 megawatts (MW) of wind power proposed throughout east central Alberta over the next 10 years, as well as to meet the demand for electricity caused by industrial development. The AESO filed its Needs Identification Document and recommendation with the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) today.

Over the past year, the AESO conducted technical, land impact assessment and economic studies. The AESO also met with stakeholders and hosted public information sessions to assess the need for transmission reinforcement in east central Alberta, and to develop a recommendation for meeting this need.

The recommended 240 kV lines and associated facilities will provide a transmission highway to wind farms spread over a wide geographic area throughout east central Alberta, and will channel this electricity into the grid. The lines will also supply power to pipelines being developed in the area.

"The Provincial Energy Strategy recognizes electricity as a facilitator of economic development and that a robust electricity transmission system is required to enable that development," says Bill Strongman, director of Regional System Planning, AESO. "This is especially true for the Hanna transmission development in that it will enable both electric generation in the form of wind energy and at the same time provide supply for growing pipeline loads. It also has the benefit of enabling renewable energy which is a key component of the Provincial Energy Strategy."

The estimated cost of this project is approximately \$1.006 billion. The Hanna area transmission project will be developed in two stages. Stage I is targeted to be in service by 2012, and stage II is targeted to be in service by 2017.

Upon approval of the Needs Identification Document from the AUC, the transmission facility owners ATCO Electric and AltaLink must submit Facilities Applications to the AUC for approval. Further consultation with stakeholders, particularly on routing of transmission lines, will form a critical component of this application process.

The application is available for viewing at <http://www.aeso.ca/transmission/16386.html>.

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 has about 200 participants and approximately \$9 billion in annual energy transactions.

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