



For Immediate Release

Application to connect wind development projects to Alberta transmission system approved

Calgary, Alberta – The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) has received regulatory approval for its plan to reinforce electricity transmission throughout southern Alberta to interconnect a significant number of wind-powered projects.

In its decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) agreed with the AESO’s assessment that the existing capacity of the transmission system in southern Alberta is insufficient to provide adequate system access for the interconnection of additional wind-powered generation and that an upgrade is necessary.

“We’re pleased that our need application has been approved by the AUC,” said Bill Strongman, AESO Director of Regional System Planning. “Currently, there is approximately 500 Megawatts (MW) of installed wind power capacity on the Alberta Interconnected Electric System and we are forecasting an additional 1,200 MW to 2,700 MW of new wind development in the next ten years in southern Alberta.”

Strongman explains this is only the first phase in the approval process to get new transmission development built: “Two approvals from the AUC are required to build new transmission in Alberta; approval of the need for the expansion or enhancement to the system, which is now in place, and secondly, a permit to construct and operate the transmission line.”

With the AUC’s approval of the AESO application, the next step is for a transmission facility owner to develop and submit a Facilities Application detailing specific routes. Earlier this year AltaLink Management Limited was assigned by the AESO to begin this work and has initiated public consultation on potential routes for transmission lines.

The AESO transmission plan outlines the need for a 240 kilovolt (kV) alternating current (AC) looped system with three stages of implementation between 2013 and 2017 depending on the development of the market for wind power in the region.

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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