



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Alberta Electric System Operator announces findings of underground technical feasibility study

CALGARY, ALBERTA (February 24, 2010) - The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) announced the results of a study on the technical feasibility of 500 kV underground transmission at a presentation in Edmonton earlier today.

“The study indicates the application of a 500 kV underground cable system is technically feasible with the condition that further testing be conducted to validate the feasibility of the cable and its accessories in Alberta’s cold weather conditions,” announced Neil Brausen, AESO Senior Planning Advisor.

The AESO commissioned Cable Consulting International Ltd., (CCI) a company headquartered in the United Kingdom, to carry out the study in response to stakeholder requests to analyze the technical feasibility and life cycle costs associated with burying a portion (10 to 20 km) of the proposed 500 kV double circuit line of the Heartland Project.

“Given limited world operating experience, additional analysis and testing is required to assess the reliability of an underground transmission system,” advised Brausen, who acknowledged CCI’s perspective that worldwide, there are currently no comparable systems of a similar length that operate under similar extreme winter weather conditions as found in northern Alberta.

“The AESO is committed to having further study and analysis of 500 kV underground conducted, and will continue to monitor industry developments in underground transmission technologies,” said Brausen.

The Alberta Utilities Commission will make the final decision regarding the location of the line and the applicability of using underground transmission as a way to mitigate siting concerns.

To view the Study, please visit our website at www.aeso.ca or www.poweringalberta.com.

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

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