

Bulletin 2018-04

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Roles and responsibilities of the Alberta Utilities Commission and Alberta Environment and Parks for applications to construct and operate wind and solar power plants

Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and the Alberta Utilities Commission both have authority over various aspects of approving, constructing and operating wind and solar power plants. They wish to mutually confirm their respective environmental and regulatory responsibilities for wind and solar power plants in Alberta. A roles and responsibilities document has been developed to outline the mutual understanding of regulating impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat that may potentially result from wind and solar power plants. The document confirms their respective roles and responsibilities for wildlife management matters in the approval and monitoring of wind and solar power plants in Alberta, some of which is copied below as follows:

Alberta Environment and Parks is responsible for the overall management and regulation of wildlife in Alberta, including establishing policies, directives, guidelines and similar administrative procedures (collectively, wildlife policies) under the *Wildlife Act* and the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. The legislation and wildlife policies include responsibilities for the designation, protection and recovery of wildlife, including endangered animals¹ and other sensitive species, and wildlife habitat. The legislation and wildlife policies apply to the potential impacts caused by the construction and operation of wind and solar power plants.

The Alberta Utilities Commission is responsible for approving the construction and operation of wind and solar power plants under the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act* and the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*. Its approval process includes considering the potential impacts on wildlife and wildlife habitat. The approvals, permits and licences issued by the AUC may prescribe conditions relating to wildlife protection consistent with the environmental legislation and wildlife policies, and the responsibility for surveillance and enforcement of those conditions rests with the AUC. The conditions contained in the AUC's approvals, including any related to wildlife protection, are established by the AUC during its consideration of the application for the wind or solar power plant, which includes reviewing any advice provided by AEP.

The roles and responsibilities document will be available on the AUC and AEP websites. Other relevant information is also available on the respective websites, including the AEP wildlife directives for wind and solar power plants and AUC Rule 007: *Applications for Power Plants, Substations, Transmission Lines, Industrial System Designations and Hydro Developments*. Rule 007 is being amended to reflect certain aspects of the roles and responsibilities document,

¹ "Endangered animal" is defined in the *Wildlife Act* and they are listed in Schedule 6 of the *Wildlife Regulation*.

most notably the inclusion of wildlife referral reports prepared by AEP staff in the applications submitted by prospective wind and solar power plant proponents. The amended Rule 007 will be issued in a subsequent bulletin.

The AUC website includes a [reference document](#) found under the renewable power generation section of the website.

The AUC thanks AEP for its participation and contribution to the development of the roles and responsibilities document. The AUC notes that consultation has commenced to extend this approach to other types of facilities such as electric transmission.

Any questions related to this matter should be directed to Executive Director of Facilities Wade Vienneau at wade.vienneau@auc.ab.ca, or by telephone at 403-592-4470.

(original signed by)

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