

March 9, 2009

ALBERTA UTILITIES COMMISSION SCHEDULES HEARING, SEEKS COMMENT ON NEED APPLICATION FOR ELECTRICITY TRANSMISSION REINFORCEMENT IN SOUTHERN ALBERTA

Calgary, Alberta... Alberta's independent utilities regulator has issued a notice of hearing and seeks comment on a need application from the provincial electricity transmission system operator that contends substantial system reinforcement is needed in southern Alberta.

The system operator's application centres solely on the need for transmission capacity and is not a request or proposal for the construction of specific transmission facilities.

The Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC) - as part of its mandate to ensure transmission development in Alberta takes place in a manner that is in the public interest - will be reviewing this need application from the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO). The AUC plans information sessions throughout southern Alberta in April and a public hearing in June as part of its review process. The review will focus specifically on whether the reinforcement is needed, and is in the public interest bearing in mind social, environmental and economic considerations.

The AESO believes as much as \$3.5 billion in system reinforcement (\$1.8 billion in 2008 dollars) may be required in southern Alberta to accommodate forecast wind-power generation growth and system constraints, in three stages, by 2017. Details of the AESO's application including maps, on opportunities for comment from interested parties and information about the AUC's review and assessment of the application can be found on the AUC's website, at www.auc.ab.ca. Notice of the application is also being advertised extensively throughout southern Alberta.

The AUC has established an April 7, 2009 deadline for initial comment from interested parties and scheduled a public hearing to begin June 22, 2009. Information sessions will be held in De Winton, Claresholm, Nanton, Fort Macleod, Lethbridge, Taber, Pincher Creek, Medicine Hat, Strathmore and Brooks in April on dates and at locations that are being finalized. If no objections are received by the AUC by June 1, the hearing will be cancelled and the Commission must approve the application.

The AUC values well-prepared arguments and discussion and is committed to reviewing the application in a thorough and transparent manner to ensure it makes a sound, informed decision in the public interest. As a result, funding is available to eligible parties to support competent and effective submissions to the Commission.

The Alberta Utilities Commission is an independent, quasi-judicial agency of the Province of Alberta. As part of its mandate the commission has jurisdiction over the siting of facilities including electric transmission facilities, electric power plants and natural gas transmission pipelines.

This news release is available at <http://www.auc.ab.ca>

Media inquiries may be directed to:

Jim Law

Director, External Relations – Public Affairs, Alberta Utilities Commission

Phone: 403-512-3417

Email: jim.law@auc.ab.ca

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