

April 29, 2010

## **Alberta Utilities Commission approves need for electricity transmission reinforcement in Hanna region**

**Calgary, Alberta...** Alberta's independent utilities regulator, the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC), has approved an application from the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) for the need to phase in electrical transmission reinforcement in the Hanna region. In its application, the AESO said the need is driven by substantial increases in demand or load and new wind-powered generation forecast for the area.

In *Decision 2010-188*, released Thursday, April 29, the AUC also accepted the AESO's preferred alternative to meet the identified need; a single extended 240-kilovolt (kV) alternating current (AC) looped system. The AESO has estimated the cost of this preferred alternative to be approximately \$1 billion. The AUC decision followed a public hearing.

In the decision, the AUC concluded the AESO's preferred alternative "will contribute to a transmission system in the Hanna region that is flexible and preserves options for future growth, without incurring any unnecessary additional environmental impacts in the future."

The AUC's decision confirms only the need for transmission reinforcement. No construction is imminent. This will require a separate facilities application from a transmission facility operator selected and assigned by the AESO. Such a facilities application would have to undergo a completely new and thorough AUC regulatory process, including a public hearing, to determine if project specifics are in the public interest.

The Alberta Utilities Commission is an independent, quasi-judicial agency of the province of Alberta. As part of its mandate the AUC regulates transmission lines, electric substations, power generation facilities and gas utility pipelines in Alberta. The AUC is committed to ensuring that every Albertan whose rights may be directly and adversely affected by an application for these facilities is informed of the application and has the opportunity to have their concerns heard, considered and understood.

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**This news release and Decision 2010-188 are available at <http://www.auc.ab.ca>.**

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