



PetroChina Canada Ltd.

**Athabasca 85-Megawatt Cogeneration Power Plant
Time Extension**

January 9, 2018

Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 23037-D01-2018

PetroChina Canada Ltd.

Athabasca 85-Megawatt Cogeneration Power Plant

Time Extension

Proceeding 23037

Application 23037-A001

January 9, 2018

Published by the:

Alberta Utilities Commission

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1 Decision summary

1. In this decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission must decide whether to approve an application from PetroChina Canada Ltd. for a time extension to complete the construction of an 85-megawatt cogeneration power plant in the Athabasca oilsands region. After consideration of the record of the proceeding, and for the reasons outlined in this decision, the Commission finds that approval of the time extension is in the public interest, having regard to the social, economic, and other effects of the project, including its effect on the environment.

2 Introduction and background

2. PetroChina Canada Ltd. (PetroChina), pursuant to Approval 22935-D03-2017,¹ has approval to construct and operate an 85-megawatt cogeneration power plant in the Athabasca oilsands region. The power plant shall consist of one unit with a total generating capability of 85 megawatts.

3. PetroChina, by Application 23037-A001, registered with the Commission on October 23, 2017, requested approval of a time extension from December 31, 2017, to December 31, 2025, in order to complete construction of the power plant.

3 Discussion

4. PetroChina stated that the requested time extension is required to align with the current MacKay River Commercial Project Phase 2 plans. Further, PetroChina stated that in its 2016 annual construction progress report, PetroChina informed the Commission that the cogeneration power plant was always intended as part of the MacKay River Commercial Project Phase 2.

5. PetroChina holds many approvals from the Alberta Energy Regulator and Alberta Environment and Parks for its MacKay River Commercial Project including approvals under the *Oil Sands Conservation Act*, the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, the *Public Lands Act*, the *Pipeline Act* and the *Water Act*.

6. PetroChina stated that there are no dwellings in the vicinity of the project study area. PetroChina stated that it did not conduct a participant involvement program for this application. PetroChina indicated that no new work is being proposed and that it does not believe there are any companies or persons that would be directly and adversely affected by the time extension application. PetroChina stated that it provided notification packages to the operators of the new

¹ Power Plant Approval 22935-D03-2017, Proceeding 22935, Application 22935-A002, October 2, 2017.

energy-related facilities that have been approved since the original noise impact assessment was completed in 2009. PetroChina indicated that it had not received any concerns from any party with regard to the project or the requested time extension.

7. The Commission issued information requests to PetroChina on November 15, 2017, and received responses on December 15, 2017. In its responses, PetroChina indicated that they had already obtained the public land approval for the power plant, which includes detailed vegetation and wildlife assessments. PetroChina stated that it provides annual reports including those related to its caribou protection plan and conservation reclamation. Also, PetroChina stated that it has in place a woodland caribou mitigation and monitoring plan and a wetland monitoring program. PetroChina confirmed that no further regulatory approval is required from Alberta Environment and Parks. PetroChina added that, should new wildlife issues rise, it would address them by following existing plans and programs.

8. PetroChina confirmed that an amendment to its *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act* approval would not be required as a result of the proposed power plant construction time extension.

9. PetroChina confirmed that it is committed to meeting the requirements within Rule 012: *Noise Control*.

4 Findings

10. PetroChina has provided information respecting the need, nature and the duration of the requested time extension. Based upon the information provided, the Commission finds that PetroChina has demonstrated that the requested time extension is of a minor nature.

11. Due to the minor nature of the application, and that there were no concerns arising from PetroChina's notification packages, a notice of application was not issued and, therefore, a hearing was not required. The Commission considered that its decision would not directly and adversely affect the rights of a person, pursuant to Section 9 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

12. Given the considerations discussed above, the Commission considers the application to be in the public interest in accordance with Section 17 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*. The Commission grants approval of a time extension to December 31, 2025, in order to complete construction of the project.

5 Decision

13. Pursuant to sections 11 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, the Commission approves the application and grants PetroChina the approval set out in Appendix 1 – Power Plant Approval 23037-D02-2018 – January 9, 2018, for a time extension from December 31, 2017, to December 31, 2025, to complete the construction of the 85-megawatt cogeneration power plant (Appendix 1 will be distributed separately).

Dated on January 9, 2018.

Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Henry van Egteren
Commission Member