



TransAlta Corporation

Spray Hydro Transformer Replacement

September 13, 2012



The Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 2012-243: TransAlta Corporation

Spray Hydro Transformer Replacement

Application No. 1608482

Proceeding ID No. 1904

September 13, 2012

Published by

The Alberta Utilities Commission

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1 Introduction and background

1. TransAlta Corporation (TransAlta) filed a letter of enquiry with the Alberta Utilities Commission (AUC or the Commission) seeking approval to replace a transformer at the Spray Hydro Power Plant. The application was registered on May 24, 2012, as Application No. 1608482.
2. On June 6, 2012, the Commission issued an information request to TransAlta regarding potential noise and environmental impacts and additional information about the equipment being replaced. TransAlta responded on June 28, 2012.
3. On July 13, 2012, the Commission issued a second information request to TransAlta to which TransAlta responded on August 23, 2012.
4. Since the transformer replacement would occur within an existing substation, a notice of application was not issued, and therefore, a hearing was not required as the Commission considered that its decision or order would not directly and adversely affect the rights of a person pursuant to Section 9 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

2 Discussion

5. TransAlta requested approval to replace the existing 138/13.2-kilovolt (kV) 27/40/50-megavolt-ampere (MVA) transformer with a 138/13.2-kV, 45/60/75-MVA transformer. TransAlta submitted that the existing transformer is more than 60 years old and the replacement is required in order to utilize the Spray 2 generator capacity increase which became available after a recent maintenance overhaul.
6. TransAlta indicated that the only residences within 800 metres of the Spray Hydro Power Plant are former TransAlta staff residences, which are currently leased to WinSport Canada. TransAlta stated that it provided notice to WinSport Canada and that they had no concerns. Since the land is located within the Bow Valley Wildland Provincial Park, TransAlta advised that they notified Alberta Parks and that Alberta Parks indicated they would issue a letter of authority closer to the construction date.
7. TransAlta submitted that all work would occur inside the fenced area and that no expansion to the substation fence would be required.

8. TransAlta Phase 1 environmental site assessment was submitted in response to information requests regarding assessment of potential polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs) contamination on site. TransAlta stated that the Phase 1 environmental site assessment did not identify existing areas of environmental concern.

9. As part of the proposed project and to ensure compliance with Section 112 of the Alberta *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*, TransAlta committed to having an independent environmental consultant onsite during construction of the project. TransAlta stated that should the potential for contamination be identified by the environmental consultant during construction, the consultant would undertake sampling in accordance with CSA Standard Z769 for a Phase 2 environmental site assessment. Following the analysis of samples, the consultant would then advise on the remediation of the impacted material and would collect confirmatory samples following remediation.

10. TransAlta stated that the concrete secondary containment structure and the concrete piles which serve as the base of the transformer will remain in place. TransAlta stated that the delineation to the south and east would be limited due to the presence of a sheer rock face located at the base of Ha Ling Peak.

11. TransAlta noted that the Spray 2 Transformer oil was replaced with non-PCB oil in the 1980's, and since that time, testing of the oil had generally been conducted annually. In 1988, TransAlta installed a secondary containment system for the Spray 2 Transformer. On an annual basis, the oil detection component of the secondary containment was tested for proper operation. TransAlta submitted that weekly and monthly inspections of the transformer and oil containment system had been conducted by facility operators.

3 Findings

12. The Commission is satisfied with the participant involvement program conducted by TransAlta for the project and that there are no outstanding concerns or objections to the proposed project.

13. The Commission accepts TransAlta's commitment to comply with environment protection guidelines and regulations.

14. Based upon the information provided, TransAlta has demonstrated that the proposal is of a minor nature, no other person is directly and adversely affected by the proposal and environmental impacts, if any, would be addressed by TransAlta's environmental investigation program.

4 Decision

15. Pursuant to Section 11 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, the Commission approves the application and grants TransAlta the approval set out in Appendix 1– Spray Hydro Transformer Replacement – Approval No. U2012-455 – September 13, 2012, to alter and operate the power plant (Appendix 1 will be distributed separately).

Dated on September 13, 2012.

The Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Neil Jamieson
Commission Member