
INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release
2007ENV0012-000133
Feb. 15, 2007

Ministry of Environment

MAINLAND-VANCOUVER ISLAND TRANSMISSION UPGRADE APPROVED

VICTORIA – Vancouver-based British Columbia Transmission Corporation (the proponent) has received provincial environmental certification to upgrade overland and marine transmission circuits between Delta and Duncan, following a comprehensive review led by B.C.'s Environmental Assessment Office (EAO).

The project involves replacing two existing 138-kV overland transmission circuits and towers with two new 230-kV circuits on a single line of towers. The marine portion of this project involves removing one 138-kV marine circuit and replacing it with one new 230-kV circuit through the Strait of Georgia and Trincomali Channel to Salt Spring Island. All overland work will take place on an existing transmission right-of-way.

The proponent is experiencing higher growth in power load than originally forecasted, and the Vancouver Island Transmission Reinforcement Project will supply a significant portion of the power required to meet load requirements. In addition, the project will fulfil a critical need to provide secure supplies of electricity to meet future power needs on southern Vancouver Island by 2008. The BCTC transmission line system, which includes both northern and southern transmission lines to Vancouver Island, provides 70 per cent of the Island's power.

The proposed project also triggered a screening level review under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) due to authorizations required by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Environment Canada. The EAO and federal agencies have harmonized the EA process and prepared a joint Screening Report/Assessment Report for decision makers.

The EAO Assessment Report concludes that effects from the project will be within acceptable levels, subject to adherence to the application's design components and implementation of mitigation measures and commitments agreed to by the proponent.

In addition to having received the provincial environmental assessment (EA) certificate, the proponent will still need to obtain the necessary provincial and federal authorizations and approvals before the project can proceed.

The provincial EA certificate contains 201 commitments that the proponent has made and must implement throughout the various phases of the project. Some key commitments include:

- The proponent will prepare environmental management plans for the construction and operation of the overhead and submarine components of the project to guide the implementation of the project.
- The proponent will develop individual site restoration plans with those private landowners in Tsawwassen where site access will be required for removal and installation of the overhead structures.

- The proponent will continue to monitor and report to the British Columbia Utilities Commission on the state of scientific and health research data, conclusions and public policy with respect to electromagnetic field exposure with power lines.
- The proponent will develop a public communications plan to detail how it will notify the public and other stakeholders regarding project schedules, major construction activities, environmental management planning procedures, environmental monitoring programs and how to incorporate public feedback into project planning.
- The proponent will work with First Nations to avoid, mitigate and compensate for any unmitigated effects on traditional use activities.

The project capital cost is approximately \$248 million, to be invested during the construction program.

More information on the environmental certificate can be found at www.eao.gov.bc.ca.

Media Kate Thompson
contact: Media Relations
 250 953-4577

For more information on government services or to subscribe to the Province's news feeds using RSS, visit the Province's website at www.gov.bc.ca.