



**Hilda Wind G.P. Inc.
Facility Application**

**AltaLink Management Ltd.
Facility Applications**

Hilda Wind Power Project Connection

June 14, 2022

Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 27320-D01-2022: Hilda Wind Power Project Connection

Hilda Wind G.P. Inc.
Facility Application
Application 27320-A004

AltaLink Management Ltd.
Facility Applications
Applications 27320-A001 to 27320-A003

June 14, 2022

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The Commission may, no later than 60 days of the date of this decision and without notice, correct typographical, spelling and calculation errors and other similar types of errors and post the corrected decision on its website.

1 Decision summary

1. In this decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission approves the facility applications from Hilda Wind G.P. Inc. (Hilda Wind) and AltaLink Management Ltd. for the Hilda Wind Power Project Connection. For the reasons that follow, the Commission finds that approval of the proposed development is in the public interest having regard to the social, economic, and other effects of the proposed facilities, including their effect on the environment.

2 The applications

2. Hilda Wind has approval¹ from the Commission to construct and operate a 100-megawatt wind power plant, designated as the Hilda Wind Power Plant, in Cypress County. It also has approval to construct and operate the power plant substation, designated as Hilda 662S Substation.²

3. Hilda Wind submitted a system access service request to the Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) to connect the power plant to the Alberta Interconnected Electric System. The AESO determined a technical solution to meet the need for a connection, consisting of a new transmission line connecting the Hilda 662S Substation to an existing transmission line. On April 20, 2022, pursuant to ISO Rules Section 501.3 - *Abbreviated Needs Approval Process*, the AESO issued a letter of approval for the need for transmission development to respond to the system access service request from the market participant.³

4. Hilda Wind applied to the Commission for approval to construct and operate a 138-kilovolt transmission line, designated as Transmission Line 658AL, from its Hilda 662S Substation to AltaLink's existing Transmission Line 658L to connect the wind power plant to the Alberta Interconnected Electric System.

5. Hilda Wind, as an electricity market participant under Section 24.31 of the *Transmission Regulation*, would jointly operate Transmission Line 658AL with AltaLink following construction completion. After a period of time, Hilda Wind would transfer the ownership and operation of the transmission line to AltaLink. The costs of the project are allocated to Hilda Wind; there are no system costs.

¹ Power Plant Approval 27115-D02-2022, Proceeding 27115, Application 27115-A001, February 22, 2022.

² Substation Permit and Licence 27115-D03-2022, Proceeding 27115, Application 27115-A001, February 22, 2022.

³ Exhibit 27320-X0005, Appendix C AESO Documents, PDF pages 5 to 7.

6. AltaLink, in its capacity as the legal owner of an electric transmission system, filed an application with the AUC seeking approval to alter the existing Transmission Line 658L to accommodate the connection, and for approval to connect its Transmission Line 658L to Hilda Wind's proposed Transmission Line 658AL. AltaLink also applied to construct and operate a radio site within Hilda Wind's Hilda 662S Substation and approximately 620 metres of underground fibre optic cable from its Chappice Lake 649S Substation to a splice box on Transmission Line 676L/879L. This transmission development by AltaLink is required as part of the technical solution identified and approved by the AESO.

7. The applications were filed pursuant to sections 14, 15, 18 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act* and registered as Application 27320-A004 and applications 27320-A001 to 27320-A003 on April 20 and 21, 2022, respectively.

3 Findings

8. The Commission finds that Hilda Wind's and AltaLink's applications comply with the information requirements prescribed in Rule 007: *Applications for Power Plants, Substations, Transmission Lines, Industrial System Designations, Hydro Developments and Gas Utility Pipelines* and the proposed development is consistent with meeting the need and the requirements of the Alberta Electric System Operator's Functional Specification.

9. Hilda Wind's and AltaLink's participant involvement programs met the requirements of Rule 007. Based on the nature of the applications, and that each applicant stated that there are no outstanding or unresolved stakeholder concerns regarding the project, a notice of applications was not issued and 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*.

10. AltaLink stated that it would enter into any required agreements with Hilda Wind in order to access the Hilda 662S Substation to construct and operate the radio site. Further, AltaLink stated that Hilda Wind does not have any concerns with it constructing and operating the radio site within its substation. The Commission is satisfied that Hilda Wind and AltaLink will reach agreements for AltaLink to access the substation to construct and operate the radio site.

11. Hilda Wind retained Golder Associates Ltd. to conduct an environmental evaluation. Golder concluded that the potential effects of the new transmission line on vegetation, wetlands, wildlife and wildlife habitat would not be significant.

12. AltaLink also retained Golder Associates Ltd. to conduct an environmental evaluation. Golder concluded that the impact on wildlife would not be significant with the implementation of mitigation measures for the construction of the fibre optic cable. AltaLink stated that construction of the fibre optic cable would occur within the existing road allowance. Further, AltaLink committed to constructing the fibre optic cable outside of the grassland bird breeding season (April 1 to July 15) in accordance with the *Wildlife Directive for Alberta Wind Energy* to reduce the risks of impacts to sensitive native grassland species.

13. The Commission agrees that the environmental impacts of the project are not expected to be significant as the transmission line would be only 306 metres long and sited on pre-disturbed land.

14. Based on the foregoing, the Commission considers the applications to be in the public interest in accordance with Section 17 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

4 Decision

15. The Commission approves applications 27320-A001 to 27320-A003, under sections 14, 15, 18 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, and grants AltaLink Management Ltd. the following approvals set out in appendices to this decision:

- Telecommunications Facilities Permit and Licence 27320-D02-2022, to construct and operate the Hilda 662R Radio Site (Appendix 1).
- Transmission Line Permit and Licence 27320-D03-2022, to alter Transmission Line 658L (Appendix 2).
- Connection Order 27320-D04-2022, to connect Transmission Line 658L to Transmission Line 658AL (Appendix 3).

16. The Commission approves Application 27320-A004, under sections 14, 15 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, and grants Hilda Wind G.P. Inc. the following approval set out in an appendix to this decision:

- Transmission Line Permit and Licence 27320-D04-2022, to construct and operate Transmission Line 658AL (Appendix 4).

17. The appendices will be distributed separately.

Dated on June 14, 2022.

Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Neil Jamieson
Panel Chair

(original signed by)

Matthew Oliver, CD
Commission Member