



**AltaLink Management Ltd.
Facility Applications**

**TransCanada Energy Ltd.
Facility Application**

Saddlebrook Solar and Battery Storage Connection

November 9, 2022

Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 27699-D01-2022: Saddlebrook Solar and Battery Storage Connection

AltaLink Management Ltd.
Facility Applications
Applications 27699-A001 to 27699-A003

TransCanada Energy Ltd.
Facility Application
Application 27699-A004

November 9, 2022

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Eau Claire Tower
1400, 600 Third Avenue S.W.
Calgary, Alberta T2P 0G5

Telephone: 310-4AUC (310-4282) in Alberta
1-833-511-4AUC (1-833-511-4282) outside Alberta

Email: info@auc.ab.ca

Website: www.auc.ab.ca

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, for the reasons that follow, the Alberta Utilities Commission approves the facility applications from AltaLink Management Ltd. for the transmission facilities for the Saddlebrook Solar and Battery Storage Connection project. The project consists of a new transmission line, a new telecommunications fibre optic cable, a transmission line alteration, and a connection of the Saddlebrook Solar and Battery Storage Project power plant to the Alberta Interconnected Electric System. As well, the Commission denies the interconnection application from TransCanada Energy Ltd. because it is duplicative given the interconnection application from AltaLink.

2 The applications

2. TransCanada has approval¹ from the Commission to construct and operate a 102.5-megawatt (MW) solar facility and a 6.5-MW battery storage facility, designated as the Saddlebrook Solar and Battery Storage Project, located in the hamlet of Aldersyde. It also has approval to construct and operate the power plant substation, designated as Saddlebrook 303S Substation.²

3. TransCanada 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 138-kilovolt transmission line connecting the Saddlebrook 303S Substation to an existing transmission line. On September 16, 2022, under 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. AltaLink applied to the Commission for approval to construct and operate a 138-kilovolt transmission line, which would be designated as Transmission Line 727AAL. The new line would be approximately 80 metres in length and run from existing Transmission Line 727AL to TransCanada's Saddlebrook 303S Substation to connect the power plant to the Alberta Interconnected Electric System.

5. AltaLink also filed applications to alter existing Transmission Line 727AL to accommodate the connection and for approval to connect the proposed Transmission Line

¹ Power Plant Approval 27588-D02-2022, Proceeding 27588, Application 27588-A001, October 12, 2022.

² Substation Permit and Licence 27588-D03-2022, Proceeding 27588, Application 27588-A001, October 12, 2022.

³ Exhibit 27699-X0006, Appendix C AESO Direction Letters and Functional Spec, PDF pages 4 to 7.

727AAL to TransCanada's Saddlebrook 303S Substation. In addition, AltaLink would construct approximately two kilometres of underground fibre optic cable for telecommunications along the existing Transmission Line 727AL, the proposed Transmission Line 727AAL and within the government road allowance along 434 Avenue East. This transmission development by AltaLink is required as part of the technical solution identified and approved by the AESO.

6. TransCanada applied to the Commission to connect its Saddlebrook 303S Substation to AltaLink's proposed Transmission Line 727AAL.

7. The applications were filed under sections 14, 15, 18 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act* and registered as applications 27699-A001 to 27699-A003 and Application 27699-A004 on October 7 and October 18, 2022, respectively.

3 Findings

8. 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.

9. The Commission finds that 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 approved need and the requirements of the AESO's functional specification.

10. AltaLink's participant involvement program meets the requirements of Rule 007. The Commission accepts that no Indigenous consultation was required as the project is on private land, will not impact Crown land, and there are no Indigenous-owned lands within 800 metres of the project area. Based on the nature of the applications, and that the 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 would not directly and adversely affect the rights of a person pursuant to Section 9 of the *Alberta Utilities Commission Act*.

11. AltaLink retained Stantec Consulting Ltd. to conduct an environmental evaluation. Stantec concluded that the potential effects of the project on vegetation, wetlands, wildlife and wildlife habitat would not be significant provided that AltaLink implements environmental protection measures.⁴ Further, AltaLink stated that it will update its project specific environmental protection plan prior to construction.⁵

12. Given that AltaLink applied for a connection order to connect the proposed Transmission Line 727AAL to TransCanada's Saddlebrook 303S Substation, TransCanada's application for the same connection is redundant.

⁴ Exhibit 27699-X0017, Appendix G Environmental Supporting Documents, PDF page 20.

⁵ Exhibit 27699-X0017, Appendix G Environmental Supporting Documents, PDF page 222.

13. 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

14. The Commission approves applications 27699-A001 to 27699-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:

- Transmission Line Permit and Licence 27699-D02-2022, to alter Transmission Line 727AL (Appendix 1).
- Transmission Line Permit and Licence 27699-D03-2022, to construct and operate Transmission Line 727AAL (Appendix 2).
- Connection Order 27699-D04-2022, to connect Transmission Line 727AAL to TransCanada Energy Ltd.'s Saddlebrook 303S Substation (Appendix 3).

15. The Commission denies Application 27699-A004 from TransCanada Energy Ltd. as the necessary connection order will be issued to AltaLink Management Ltd. not TransCanada Energy Ltd..

16. The appendices will be distributed separately.

Dated on November 9, 2022.

Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Renée Marx
Commission Member