

Alberta Electrical Transmission Timeline

Version 04 - MAR 27/13

Please note: Most recent updates to the timeline are indicated by a purple date

May/1995 - Premier Ralph Klein and his Alberta Government pass the Electric Utilities Act. Objective of the EUA is to:

- create an efficient and competitive market for electrical generation
- insure a level playing field existed for buyers and sellers of electricity
- reduce regulatory costs
- create competition so consumers would benefit from lower electricity prices
- separate generation and transmission

1996 - Under the Electric Utilities Act, the Alberta Government deregulates electricity in Alberta. Prior to deregulation, three privately run utilities dominated the electrical system ... Transalta, Alberta Power [now ATCO] and Edmonton Power [now Epcor / Capital Power]. Each of these companies owned their own generation, transmission lines, distribution lines and were regulated by the Alberta Energies and Utilities Board [EUB].

January/1996 - The Power Pool of Alberta [now called Alberta Electric System Operator or AESO] is introduced. Alberta's generated and imported electricity is now pooled, then sold to distributors or exporters in a spot market. Prices are set hourly and with an active wholesale spot market, electricity prices become more volatile. AESO also oversees transmission in the province. A tariff is charged to users of electricity and given back to transmission line owners for use of their lines.

April/1998 - The Electric Utilities Amendment Act creates an Independent Market Surveillance Administrator to ensure efficient operation and compliance with electricity regulation in Alberta.

January/2001 - Electricity distribution and retailing are separated. Customers can now choose their electrical retailers. Legislation also requires that municipal distributors offer residential, farm and small business time to select their retailer.

2003 - Alberta Government officials including then provincial Energy Minister Murray Smith quietly promote this province's willingness to export electricity to the United States. Smith states Alberta currently lacks transmission lines needed to export power to the USA. A diplomatic cable written by former US Ambassador to Canada Paul Cellucci and released by WikiLeaks in 2011, details discussions between US Government officials and Alberta politicians about the Alberta Government's desire to export power to the US. Publicly, the Alberta Government denies any interest in exporting power. See WikiLeaks document at:

http://www.ndpoposition.ab.ca/sites/default/files/wikileaks_power_exports.pdf

2003 - Alberta Energy Minister Murray Smith, places cost of financing transmission lines entirely on the backs of Alberta electricity ratepayers. Prior to this change, transmission line costs were split 50/50 between transmission industry and the ratepayers.

January 1/2003 - In an article called the Future of Transmission in North America, the publication Transmission & Distribution World tells of the Northern Lights Transmission Project that will see a HVDC (500-kV) transmission link connecting Alberta (originating near Fort McMurray) to the U.S. Pacific Northwest. (terminating at the Mid-Columbia trading hub in Washington State). This project would enable the U.S. Pacific Northwest market to tap into low-cost, base load generation projects in Alberta.

2004 - The NorthWest Transmission Assessment Committee [NTAC] convenes a study group to investigate options to increase the capacity of transmission systems between resources located in Western Canada / Pacific Northwest and electricity demands in California. The study group is called the Canada-NorthWest-California [CNC] Study Group.

May 7/2004 - The Alberta Electric System Operator [AESO] submits final application to the Alberta Energy Utility Board [EUB] to build a new 500KV line between Edmonton and Calgary.

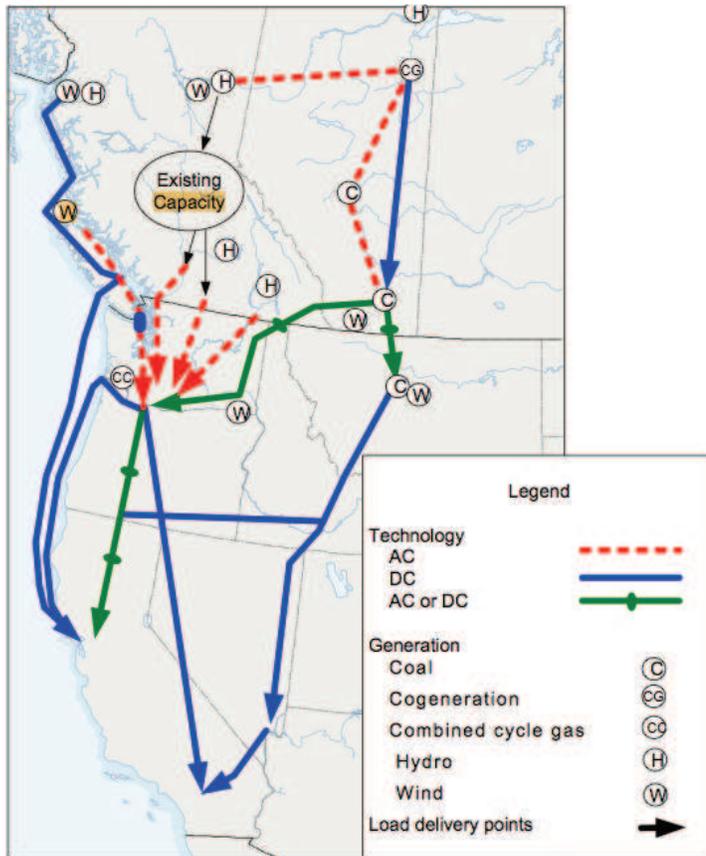
April 14/2005 - Despite opposition from the City of Calgary, the Industrial Power Consumers Association of Alberta and the Alberta Direct Connect Consumer Association, AESO receives approval from the EUB for AltaLink to build a new 500KV transmission line from Genesee [west of Edmonton] to Langdon [southeast of Calgary]. Landowners and most Albertan's do not find out about the AltaLink line until after it is approved.

2006 - The Alberta Government makes a presentation at the Oil Sands Experts Group meeting in Houston, Texas promising to export at least 2.5 million MWh of electricity to the United States by 2020.

May/2006 - The CNC Group releases their Canada-NorthWest-California Transmission Options Study. The study clearly shows Alberta as an exporter of power to the USA. The Alberta Electric Systems Operator [AESO] is identified as an active participant in CNC Transmission Options Study.

See CNC Transmission Options Study at:

<http://theyee.ca/News/2011/02/08/CNC%20Report%202006.pdf>



Transmission corridors proposed in the CNC Transmission Options Study to supply power to California

Figure 1: Alternative Corridors and Technologies Studied

May 5/2006 - ATCO and Canadian Utilities Ltd. CEO Nancy Southern says the proposed AltaLink transmission line [Western Alberta Transmission Line or WATL] is designed solely to increase supplies, improve grid reliability and potentially reduce power costs in the Calgary area. She says the AltaLink project does not include electricity exports.

Southern also states that an eastern power line [Eastern Alberta Transmission Line or EATL] would tap into growing electricity surpluses building up at expanding Fort McMurray oilsands plants. Plans call for extending the year-old ATCO Electric Fort McMurray to Edmonton transmission line down to Calgary and eventually into the USA. The eastern transmission line would at first serve as a backup for the Alberta grid, then mature into a new international network capable of importing as well as exporting electricity, says Southern.

May 11/2006 - ATCO CEO Nancy Southern states ATCO Ltd. is looking to build a north-south electrical transmission corridor along the eastern edge of Alberta that could be expanded to provide service to the United States.

July/2006 - Under increasing pressure from disgruntled landowners and Albertan's, the Alberta Energy Utility Board grants a review of the already approved AltaLink 500KV transmission line. In the review process, landowners are not allowed to discuss or submit any evidence challenging the EUB's original decision on the line, nor can they address need for the line.

November/2006 - An evaluation of the Northern Lights Transmission Project is released by the Institute for Sustainable Energy, Environment and Economy - University of Calgary. The paper can be read at:
<http://www.ucalgary.ca/files/iseee/ABEnergyFutures-13.pdf>

July/2007 - The TransCanada Northern Lights Celilo Transmission project proposes a that a 500kV HVDC line be built between Fort McMurray and the Celilo convertor station in Oregon, USA. A line extension to California may follow. See presentation at:
<http://pnwer.dataweb.com/tables/jointables/meetingparticipantjoin/files/presentation/Northern%20Lights%20Transmission%20Projects.pdf>



*HVDC transmission line
proposed in
TransCanada's Northern
Lights Celilo Project*

September 13/2007 - Alberta's Privacy Commissioner says the Alberta Energy and Utilities Board (EUB) broke provincial privacy laws when it hired private investigators to collect personal information on landowners opposed to AltaLink's proposed 500-kilovolt Western Alberta Transmission Line. The report also states that the AUC doesn't have the authority to collect information on landowners, nor is that information necessary to maintain safety at the May transmission line hearings in Rimbey.

2008 - Another cable sent from the US Embassy in Ottawa shows Alberta politicians offering to export power to the US. This info became available when WikiLeaks released US documents in 2011.

January 1/2008 - The Alberta Energy Utility Board [EUB] is split into the Alberta Utilities Commission [AUC] and the Energy Resources Conservation Board [ERCB].

January 22/2008 - TransCanada releases their NorthernLights Celilo Project / WECC Regional Planning Project Report - Final. In the report Ft McMurray is identified as the northern point of the transmission line project and the Celilo converter station in Oregon as the southern point. Document shows that the Alberta Electric System Operator [AESO] was consulted and participated in meetings. At least one representative of the Alberta Government and at least one representative from Alberta Energy also participated in meetings. You can see the TransAlta NorthernLights Celilo Project Final at:

<http://www.wecc.biz/committees/StandingCommittees/PCC/TSS/Shared%20Documents/Projects%20Undergoing%20Regional%20Planning%20Rating%20Review/NorthernLights%20Transmission%20Project/FINALnltcelilorprv4.pdf>

2009 - AESO's Long-Term Transmission System Plan - Powering Albertan's into the Future states "*The NorthernLights bi-directional merchant transmission project is being developed by TransCanada Corporation from the Industrial Heartland (Fort Saskatchewan) area of Alberta to the U.S. Pacific Northwest where energy can reach the Pacific Northwest and California markets. The transmission line would be 1,550 km long and has a tentative in-service date of 2015.*" The Powering Alberta's into the Future plan can be seen at:

http://www.aeso.ca/downloads/Long_Term_Brochure_FINAL.pdf

March 2/2009 - Bill 19 [Land Assembly Property Act] is introduced in the Legislature by Jack Hayden. It receives Royal Assent on May 26/2009.

April 27/2009 - Bill 36 [Alberta Land Stewardship Act] is introduced in the Legislature by Ted Morton. It receives Royal Assent on June 4/2009.

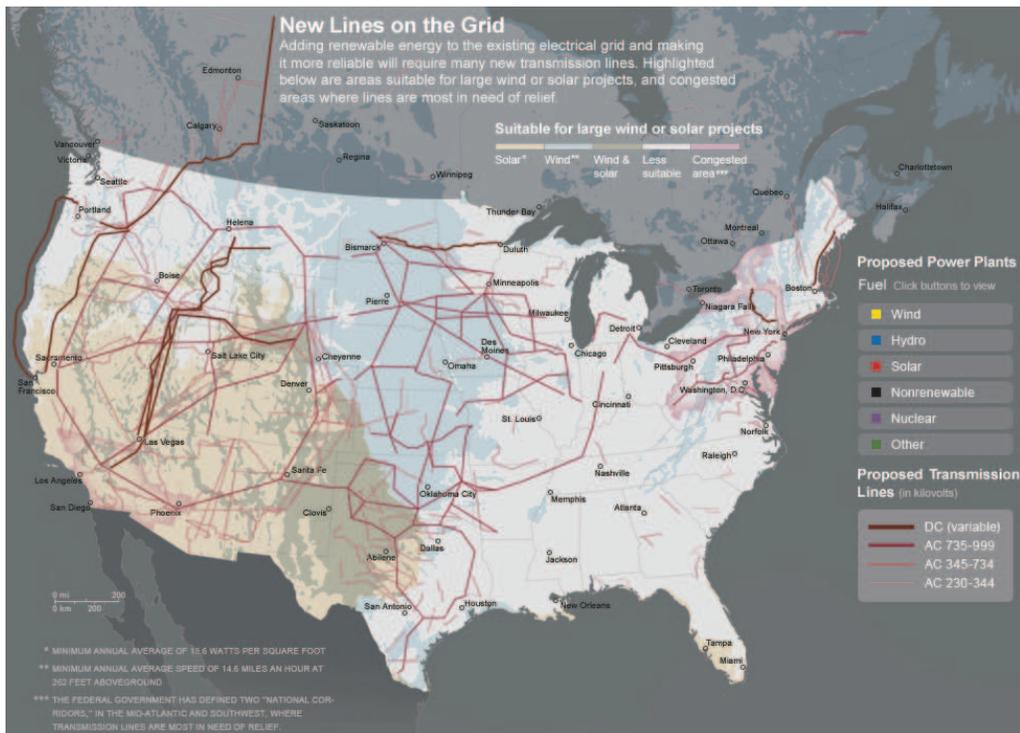
June 1/2009 - Bill 50 [Electric Statutes Amendment Act] is introduced in the Legislature by Mel Knight. It receives Royal Assent on November 26/2009.

September 23/2009 - Enmax launches a public campaign against the proposed Bill 50 transmission lines. Despite being in the electricity generating business, Enmax considers the transmission line upgrade for Alberta to be an expensive overbuild and unnecessary for the needs of Alberta ratepayers.

July/2010 - National Geographic magazine publishes an article on the North American power grid called 21st Century Grid. Included with the article are maps showing generation and transmission lines. The extensive map shows a north-south DC transmission line running through Alberta, exiting the province in the south west corner and then carrying on through BC, south into Montana or Idaho and eventually ending up near San Francisco. AESO [Alberta Electric Systems Operator] and the Alberta Government deny that the extensive transmission line upgrade planned for this province has anything to do with exporting electricity to the US.

See North American grid article at:

<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2010/07/power-grid/achenbach-text>



North American electrical grid map from July 2010 National Geographic magazine

October 18/2010 - A hydroelectric project proposed to be built on the Slave River in Northern Alberta by ATCO and TransCanada is shelved because agreement could not be made with First Nations members who would lose land to flooding.

February 2/2011 - RETA [Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans] sends a short list of transmission line related questions to 21 Alberta MLA's who represent areas affected by proposed Bill 50 transmission lines in this province. Rob Anderson [WildRose] was the only MLA to reply. None of the 20 PC MLA's replied to the questionnaire.

March 02/2011 - AltaLink confirms that cost of building the Western Alberta Transmission Line will rise to \$1.4 billion. This is a 30% increase over the 2007 price projection of \$1.1 billion.

April 8/2011 - The City of Edmonton joins Strathcona County in demanding that the proposed Heartland Transmission Line be buried.

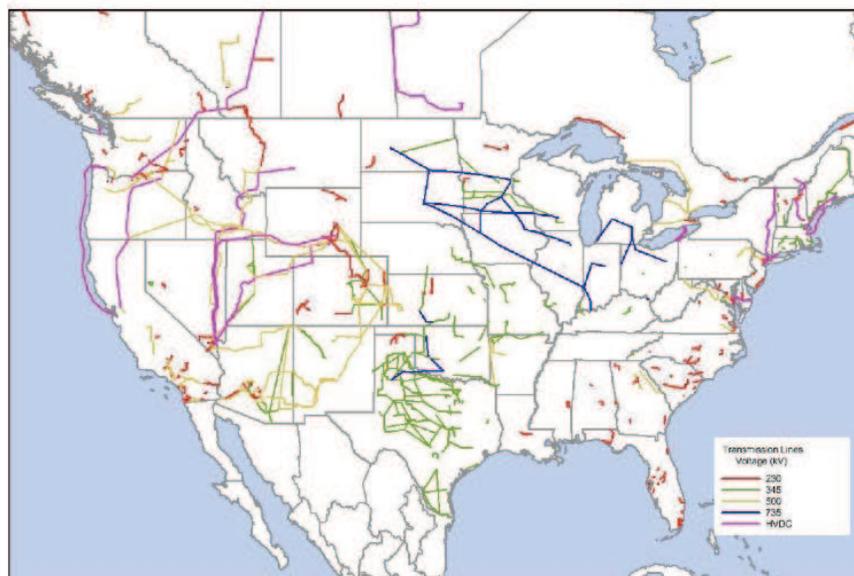
April 11/2011 - The AUC hearing for the AltaLink/Epcor Heartland Transmission Line starts in Edmonton.

April 20/2011 - The USA National Council on Electricity Policy [NCEP] hosts a power transmission technologies workshop. A document called Transmission 101 is handed out at the workshop. To read this document go to ...

<http://www.naruc.org/grants/Documents/Silverstein%20NCEP%20T-101%200420111.pdf>

A map within that Transmission 101 document shows AltaLink's Eastern Alberta Transmission Line [EATL] as an integral piece of a North American power grid.

PROPOSED NEW TRANSMISSION, >230kV



April 21/2011 - In an attempt to defend controversial Bill's 19 [Land Assembly Project Area Act], 36 [Alberta Land Stewardship Act] and 50 [the Electric Statutes Amendment Act] Alberta Government members Ted Morton and Evan Berger take on Keith Wilson in a debate at Eckville. Wilson wins the debate easily. This is the first and last time anyone from government debates Keith Wilson in an effort to defend Bill's 19, 36 and 50.

April 22/2011 - Alberta Direct Connect and the Industrial Power Consumers Association of Alberta warn that Alberta is heading for high electricity prices because of the Alberta Government's push for unnecessary massive transmission line expansion.

May/2011 - Alberta PC leadership candidate Ted Morton admits he misled Albertans on the reason that his government wants to build transmission lines in this province. He says he now opposes Bill 50 and the transmission line overbuilds planned for Alberta.

May/2011 - Alberta PC leadership candidates Alison Redford and Gary Mar also say they do not support Bill 50 as it is written.

May 17/2011 - Recently released Wikileaks documents show that the Alberta Government could be building transmission lines in this province with intentions of exporting electricity to the United States. This falls in line with a "Canada - Northwest - California Transmission Options Study" released in May of 2006 and the TransCanada NorthernLights Celilo Project. Both clearly show Alberta as a power supplier to the USA. Documents show that AESO [Alberta Electric System Operator] was involved with both studies.

May 18/2011 - Heartland Transmission Line oral hearing ends.

July 1/2011 - Strathcona County challenges Bill 50 by sending a letter to the Alberta Government asking that the Bill be rescinded.

August 17/2011 - Maxim Power receives approval from provincial regulators to construct a new 500 megawatt coal fired power plant near Grand Cache.

October 19/2011 - Newly appointed Energy Minister Ted Morton advises the AUC that his government is reviewing the need for the Heartland, Western Alberta and Eastern Alberta transmission lines and asks that the AUC suspend hearings on these 3 applications.

October 21/2011 - OOPS, Premier Redford says Ted Morton is wrong. Her government is only going to review the need for the Western Alberta and Eastern Alberta transmission lines. The proposed Heartland transmission line is a go and its full steam ahead on that project.

November 1/2011 - The Alberta Utilities Commission approves the AltaLink/Epcor Heartland Transmission Line. The entire line will be built above ground.

November 7/2011 - The AUC fines TransAlta \$370,000 for manipulating power rates and driving up prices. It is estimated that Albertan's paid \$5.5 million in inflated electricity costs because of the manipulation.

December 6/2011 - Premier Redford's Government establishes the Critical Transmission Review Committee (CTRC) to review the need for the Western Alberta and Eastern Alberta transmission lines. Committee Chair is Brian Heidecker. Redford's choice for Chair raises the eyebrows of many. Not only does Mr. Heidecker not have any expertise in electricity or transmission, he is a very strong Alberta Progressive Conservative supporter. Heidecker ran under the federal PC banner and was vice president of the Alberta Tory party.

January 12/2012 - Capital Power [division of Edmonton Epcor Utilities] applies to the National Energy Board to renew their license to export power to the USA. In their application, Capital Power requests that they be authorized to export 6588 GWh firm energy plus 10541 GWh interruptible energy per year for the next 10 years. In Alberta Capital Power owns or has an interest in Genesee 3 near Warburg, Joffre Co-generation near Joffre, Clover Bar Energy Centre in Edmonton, Clover Bar Landfill in Edmonton, Keephills 3 near Keephills and the Genesee Plant, Warburg

January 20/2012 - Direct Energy makes application to the National Energy Board to export power. They ask to be allowed to export 8760 GWh firm energy plus 8760 GWh interruptible energy per year for a period of 10 years.

January 20/2012 - ATCO CEO Nancy Southern says building two north south power lines will help ATCO Power's plan to build large hydroelectric projects on two northern Alberta rivers. ATCO has completed soil testing and technical work on two sites for 800 megawatt power plants on the Athabasca River. There was also a proposal for another plant on the Slave River but First Nations members whose land would be affected, have opposed the Slave River plant.

February 22/2012 - Premier Redford announces she will order an independent panel to look into skyrocketing electricity prices in Alberta. The Alberta Government asks the AUC to freeze rates until the panel completes the review and reports their recommendations to the government.

March 29/2012 - The Alberta Court of Appeal agrees to hear arguments put forward by two landowners against the Heartland Transmission Line. Lawyer representing the landowners is Keith Wilson.

April 23/2012 - Joe Anglin is elected to represent Rimbey-Rocky Mountain House in the provincial election. Joe ran as a candidate for the Alberta Wildrose party and has been a strong opponent of planned massive expansion of electrical transmission in Alberta.

May 7/2012 - Montreal based SNC-Lavalin is given the contract by Alta-Link to provide engineering, procurement and construction portions of the Eastern Alberta Transmission Line. SNC-Lavalin owns Alta-Link and the EATL contract is awarded without any bid process.

June 11/2012 - AUC hearing for the AltaLink Western Alberta Transmission Line starts in Red Deer.

July 11/2012 - At the AUC Western Alberta Transmission Line [WATL] hearings in Red Deer, former AESO engineer Trevor Cline testifies under oath that the WATL is not in the public interest and is an overbuild of the system. He explains how new gas fired generation in the Calgary region and shutting down of coal plants near Edmonton changes transmission needs. Cline states that Alberta doesn't need to move electricity south like we used to before all of the gas generating plants came along.

A partial transcript of his testimony at the WATL hearing can be seen
http://www.albertalandownerscouncil.com/Cline%20Testimony-Excerpt%20from%20WATL%20Hearing-2012_08_08_00_47_21.pdf

The entire transcript of the July 11 hearing is on the AUC website at
http://www.auc.ab.ca/items-of-interest/western-alberta-transmission-line/Documents/transcripts/Vol_17_2012-07-11.PDF

July 18/2012 - Western Alberta Transmission Line oral hearing ends.

July 23/2012 - AUC hearing for the ATCO Eastern Alberta Transmission Line starts in Stettler.

August 10/2012 - Eastern Alberta Transmission Line oral hearing ends.

November 15/2012 - The Alberta Utilities Commission approves the ATCO 500 KV DC Eastern Alberta Transmission Line route.

November 19/2012 - ATCO and TransCanada meet with the Alberta Government multi-party Standing Committee on Resource Stewardship. You can read a transcript of that meeting at ...

http://www.assembly.ab.ca/ISYS/LADDAR_files%5Cdocs%5Ccommittees%5Crs%5Clegislature_28%5Csession_1%5C20121119_1815_01_rs.pdf

Purpose of the meeting is for ATCO and TransCanada to request from the government some regulatory certainty and financial guarantees to assist with plans to build a hydro generation facility on the Slave River in Northern Alberta. First Nations in the area have already vetoed this project because it would flood reserve land.

ATCO also has plans for two other 800 megawatt hydro projects on the Athabasca River in northern Alberta.

These proposed hydro projects will require construction of new transmission lines to carry electricity to Fort McMurray. From Fort Mac the power can be sent south to the Heartland area near Edmonton where it can then continue further south on ATCO's new Eastern Alberta Transmission Line.

November 24/2012 - AltaGas files an application with the National Energy Board [NEB] to export up to 5 million MWH of electricity annually to the United States. In Alberta AltaGas owns or has interest in Sundance 3, Sundance 4, AltaGas Bantry, AltaGas Burdett, AltaGas Coaldale, AltaGas Harmattan, AltaGas Parkland, AltaGas Taber, AltaGas Fort MacLeod

November 29/2012 - Alta-Link's parent company SNC-Lavalin scandal deepens as former CEO is arrested on fraud charges.

December 6/2012 - The Alberta Utilities Commission approves the AltaLink 500KV DC Western Alberta Transmission Line.

December 6/2012 - AltaGas withdraws its Nov. 24th application to the National Energy Board to export power to the USA. Spokesman for AltaGas said the application was filed in error.

December 17/2012 - The Alberta Court of Appeal rejected 2 landowners claim that the AUC should have considered economic and social impact in its evaluation of the proposed Heartland Transmission Line. Lawyer Keith Wilson argued the case on behalf of the landowners.

December 21/2012 - The Elk Island Public Schools (EIPS) Board of Trustees approves closure of Colchester Elementary School effective June 30, 2013. This closure comes as a result of consultation with Colchester families who are concerned about the 500KV Heartland Transmission Project being constructed nearby.

January 4/2013 - Landowners file lawsuit against the Western Alberta Transmission Line. Lawyer Donald Bur from Toronto is representing the landowners and is arguing that the province had no jurisdiction to designate the Western Alberta Transmission Line necessary.

January 15/2013 - Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans [RETA] goes to court in an attempt to halt construction of the AltaLink/Epcor Heartland Transmission Line. RETA's brief to the Court of Queen's Bench can be seen at : <http://retasite.files.wordpress.com/2013/01/reta-judicial-review-brief-jan-15-16-2013.pdf>

January 18/2013 - Shake up at scandal plagued SNC-Lavalin continues and filters down to AltaLink. Some AltaLink executives are moved / promoted.

January 29/2013 - Alberta Energy Minister Ken Hughes announces his government's solution to high electricity bills Albertans will now be able to purchase electricity 4 months in advance.

Current freeze on electricity rate increases will be lifted and the AUC will again consider rate increase applications.

There is no mention by the Alberta Government as to when the cost of the Bill 50 transmission lines will be added to power bills or how much that cost will be.

February 14/2013 - The Alberta Utilities Commission rules that construction of 2 new high voltage power lines to Fort McMurray must be tendered through a competitive bidding process. This is in contrast to the "no bid" awarding of construction contracts for the Heartland, Eastern and Western Alberta transmission lines.

February 14/2013 - A released report prepared for the Alberta Utilities Commission states that the cost of constructing power lines in this province will see wire charges for residential electricity users more than double [\$14 in 2011 to \$32 in 2018]. The report also says increased line costs could drive some commercial businesses and industry out of Alberta.

March 11/2013 - ATCO Electric selects Valard Construction, a Quanta Services company, to install transmission infrastructure for the Eastern Alberta Transmission Line (EATL) project. Under the terms of the contract, Valard will install approximately 310 miles (500 kilometers) of 500-kilovolt high-voltage direct current (HVDC) transmission line between the Edmonton and Calgary regions.

March 22/2013 - A judge rules against Responsible Electricity Transmission for Albertans' [RETA] claim that Alberta Infrastructure Minister Jeff Johnson was wrong to give power companies consent to begin building the Heartland Transmission line. AltaLink, SNC-Lavalin and EPCOR are constructing the Heartland line.