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Five companies selected to bid on Fort McMurray West 500 kV Transmission Project

CALGARY, Jan. 17, 2014 /CNW/ - The Alberta Electric System Operator (AESO) has announced the five companies who will compete for the opportunity to build, finance, own and operate a major component of Alberta's transmission infrastructure from the Wabamun area to the Fort McMurray area under the newly created Competitive Process.

The AESO received submissions from companies around the world, including Asia, Europe, South America and North America. Independent experts were brought in from across North America to evaluate, score and make a final recommendation to the AESO Board. After an exhaustive analysis of technical, financial and route development expertise, the five companies selected to enter the Request for Proposals (RFP) stage are:

1. Alberta PowerLine - owned by Canadian Utilities Limited and Quanta Capital Solutions Inc. Valard Construction LP would undertake design and construction work and ATCO Electric Ltd. would be responsible for operating and maintaining the transmission facilities.
2. Athabasca Transmission - owned by AltaLink LP and AEP Transmission Holding Company LLC. Burns and McDonnell Canada Ltd. and SNC Lavalin T&D would design and construct the facilities while AltaLink LP and AEP Transmission Holding Company LLC would be responsible for ongoing operations and maintenance.
3. NorSpan Partners LP - owned by EPCOR Utilities Inc. and LS Power Associates LP. Kiewit Energy Canada Corp. and Sargent & Lundy LLC would undertake design and construction work while EPCOR Utilities Inc. would be responsible for operating and maintaining the transmission facilities.
4. TAMA Transmission LP - owned by MidAmerican Energy Holdings Company and TransAlta. MidAmerican Energy Holdings Company (through its wholly owned subsidiary MidAmerican Transmission) would undertake design and construction work while TAMA Transmission would be responsible for ongoing operations and maintenance.
5. TransCanada/Elecnor - owned by TransCanada PipeLines Limited and Elecnor S.A. Elecnor would be responsible for the design and construction of the facilities while TransCanada PipeLines Limited would be responsible for operating and maintaining the transmission facilities.

"Alberta is leading the way across North America to inject competitive pressures into the transmission system and to see so many world-class companies from across the globe looking to invest in Alberta is a testament to the success of the competition to date," said David Erickson, AESO President and CEO. The Fort McMurray West 500 Kilovolt Transmission Project will consist of approximately 500 kilometres of transmission line and associated facilities and is needed to support increasing growth in northeastern Alberta.

"The Competitive Process is designed to put downward pressure on transmission costs and will allow competitively priced power to reach consumers," says Elizabeth Moore, Director of the Competitive Process. "At the completion of the RFP stage, the qualified company who can undertake the project at the lowest life-cycle cost will be identified and selected."

The AESO was mandated by the Government of Alberta to develop a Competitive Process and have it approved by the provincial electricity regulator, the Alberta Utilities Commission. The AESO received approval from the regulator on February 14, 2013 and will select a winning company in December 2014. The target in-service date for the project is 2019.

As an independent system operator, the AESO leads the safe, reliable and economic planning and operation of Alberta's interconnected power system. The AESO also facilitates Alberta's fair, efficient and openly competitive wholesale electricity market, which in 2012 had 170 participants and approximately \$6.4 billion in annual energy transactions.

SOURCE Alberta Electric System Operator

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