

# New Stakeholder group to challenge AltaLink

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Last Sunday night a group of about twenty five Talon Peak/Lee Lake/Passburg area residents met at a Talon Peak residence to form an official stakeholders group in response to AltaLink's latest route proposal. MD of Pincher Creek councillor Terry Yagos, an area landowner, spoke at length about the implications of this latest route alternate for the Castle Rock Ridge to Chapel Rock power line. The line is part of an area transmission development referred to as the Southern Alberta Transmission Reinforcement. AltaLink has been pushing for a northern route to the 1201L line that runs north-south past Burmis but the stakeholders known as the Livingstone Landowners Group are unequivocally against this northern proposal on many grounds.

Yagos and the area residents in attendance all agreed that this new stakeholder suggested route is an even worse proposal than the northern route with as many if not more drawbacks to it. One resident who lives near the weigh scale where the new line would cross the highway brought his own personal list of seventeen concerns. Pictures were produced of large elk herds grazing on the flats north and south of Highway 3 suggesting that they would be affected by this major undertaking which is slated to take almost two years to complete. Yagos also reminded the stakeholders in attendance that there are several environmental easements and agreements through the proposed route and also land owned directly by the Nature Conservancy of Canada. The group all felt that the wildlife corridors in their area were critical and most certainly would be affected. Also the cost of right-of-ways on this route would be extremely high and complicated to negotiate. Councillor Yagos was quick to point out that a lot of area residents close to the route had not been notified of this proposal and that it is possible to book a one-on-one consultation with an AltaLink rep. It is AltaLink's responsibility to contact all occupants, residents and landowners who are on or directly adjacent to the proposed substation and transmission lines for input.

Using existing utility corridors as this plan attempts to do does not necessarily minimize the impact. The size of line proposed requires right-of-ways from between 70 and 120 meters wide depending on whether they choose a single-circuit or double-circuit structure for the line. Every tree, limber pine or

otherwise, must be cleared from that width. The double-circuit towers range in height from 44 to 75 meters (246 feet high!) with a 365 metre spacing. If one roughs in how many towers that would be between say the portion that runs from the east side of Lee Lake to the line's end up Lille Creek Valley one would get about 47 towers through this approximate 16 kilometer distance. The line runs from north of Lee Lake, crosses the Crowsnest River and then Highway 3 east of the rock quarry turns west and then passes over the south edge of Talon Peak Estates. It appears, in plan view at least, that the line passes almost directly over two Talon Estates residents' houses. There will definitely be some seriously compromised landscape views there. The line continues west then turns near the Passburg Cemetery, runs northwest up that valley and crosses over the ridge above Bellevue.

The towers would be very prominent to those in the Dairy Road area and Valley Ridge Estates as they head north to connect with the existing line in the Lille Creek Valley bottom. A strong contingent of this stakeholder group will undoubtedly be present at the two scheduled AltaLink open houses. They will both run from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m., on Feb. 10 in Cowley and Feb 11 in Lundbreck. Crowsnest Pass municipal councillor Shar Lazzarotto challenged AltaLink's community relations manager John Grove at the Jan. 25 meeting as to why no open house in the Pass had been scheduled. So barring this happening Pass residents who have concerns about yet another linear intrusion into their valley should try and attend the sessions to make their concerns known. AltaLink has an interactive map site that one can visit to view the overall power line layout. There are also downloadable pdf strip mosaic's that show more detail in each area. They are orthophoto's (accurate air photos) that one can use to study the line's course more closely.