

## NEWS RELEASE

### ***"Livingstone Landowners Group asks AUC to reconsider \$500M infrastructure project"***

1. The Livingstone Landowners Group (LLG) does not endorse any AltaLink route proposals, as we are not proponents of a new power line in the area.
2. Given the values at stake and recent changes in the electric energy sector, LLG has requested the Premier of Alberta to re-evaluate the need for this proposed line and consider whether it should be deferred or cancelled.
3. The LLG has advised AltaLink that, should a line be built, it should avoid native fescue grasslands, environmentally sensitive areas and scenic areas that give the Livingstone area and Cowboy Trail (Highway 22) their iconic beauty.
4. The South Saskatchewan Regional Plan (SSRP) sets clear direction that new development should minimize landscape fragmentation and be concentrated in existing developed areas. The LLG supports this policy direction.

**Background:** The LLG believes the proposed new AltaLink transmission line could have significant negative impacts on sustainable agriculture operations, native biodiversity and one of Canada's most scenic landscapes.

Ongoing changes in the energy sector have resulted in re-evaluation and subsequent cancellation of other portions of the Southwest Alberta Transmission Reinforcement (SATR) that were previously considered necessary. In light of this, and given the significant environmental risks, the LLG has asked Premier Prentice to order a re-assessment of the SATR including the need for new transmission capacity in our area. The risk of lasting harm warrants careful consideration of whether a costly new line is even needed.

LLG has advised AltaLink that, should a line be developed, it is essential to avoid native fescue grassland and other sensitive environmental areas that are difficult or impossible to fully restore, and to avoid further fragmentation of a landscape of which our members are careful stewards. The SSRP provides policy direction for development in our area. Released by the Government of Alberta in September 2014, it specifies that new development must be concentrated whenever possible in areas already disturbed by previous development.

AltaLink's latest (January 2015) new routing options for the proposed transmission line demonstrate that the company understands our concerns and the SSRP policy direction and can find route options that use existing industrial corridors, but also that the company remains willing to deviate into environmentally-sensitive lands where a new line would cause lasting harm.

One of AltaLink's new route options violates the SSRP and would further fragment and industrialize the LLG landscape. Part of the new route option impinges on an important wildlife corridor and natural habitat whose protection has been the subject of significant investment by

Albertans, the Southern Alberta Land Trust Society, the Nature Conservancy of Canada, and the Government of Alberta.

The LLG is committed to the principle that any necessary development in this area must respect its unique environmental attributes, agricultural stewardship and wealth of natural capital. If industrial development is deemed necessary, it should be conducted with best practices that protect wildlife habitat and sensitive environments for all Albertans and with minimal impact on sustainable agriculture and world-renowned scenic landscapes. Proposed development must adhere to policy direction contained in the SSRP approved by the Government of Alberta under its land-use framework. Burying transmission lines may be a viable alternative where sensitive areas cannot be avoided by careful route selection as well as where the line unduly affects residents' views.

The LLG encourages everyone with a stake in sustainable management of this world-class area to attend AltaLink's feedback sessions on February 10<sup>th</sup> (Cowley) and 11<sup>th</sup> (Lundbreck).

Please take the opportunity to learn more about the project and express your concerns. More information is available on the AltaLink website: [www.altalink.ca/projects/CRRCR](http://www.altalink.ca/projects/CRRCR).

Learn more about the Livingstone Landowners Group, please visit:  
<http://www.livingstonelandowners.net>

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