
NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier
Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

NEW TRANSMISSION LINE WILL BOOST NORTHERN B.C. ECONOMY

VANCOUVER – Government has asked the British Columbia Transmission Corp. (BCTC) to proceed with the \$400-million Northwest Transmission Line (NTL) in northern B.C., opening the door to investment and community development, Premier Gordon Campbell announced today.

“The electrification of the northwest region will benefit all British Columbians by building new infrastructure that will improve access to clean, green electricity sources,” said Campbell. “Designed as a form of public-private partnership, the Northwest Transmission Line will not only stimulate job creation but also reduce greenhouse gas emissions by improving access to renewable resources and decreasing reliance on diesel-electric power generation for industry and communities.”

The new 287-kilovolt line will extend 335 km from Terrace to Meziadin Junction and north to Bob Quinn Lake, providing access to the electricity grid for customers while supporting the economic diversification of the area.

“This kind of capital investment delivers on an Energy Plan commitment to deliver reliable, clean power to meet our province’s growing demand,” said Richard Neufeld, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. “The Northwest Transmission Line reflects sound transmission planning and shows this government is looking ahead to find long-term opportunities.”

The pursuit of the NTL project is based on a proposed cost-sharing agreement with the Galore Creek Partnership. Galore Creek Partnership’s contribution to the capital cost of NTL is \$158 million. The balance will be paid by BC Hydro and recovered through rates.

“The Galore Creek Partnership sees the high-capacity transmission line as very positive for the communities of northwest B.C. and for the Galore Creek mine,” said Doug Brown, president of the Galore Creek Mining Corporation. “NovaGold and Teck Cominco are pleased to be able to support the development of infrastructure that encourages long-term use of clean, renewable energy sources.”

Building the NTL project will depend on an environmental assessment, permitting and First Nations consultation. Community and First Nations engagement has begun through a process of consultation and information exchange. Future public and stakeholder engagement will include meetings, public open houses and information sessions by BCTC.

The new line will be owned by BC Hydro and operated by BCTC as part of BC Hydro’s transmission system. BCTC will be responsible for planning this transmission project, ensuring appropriate approvals and permits are received, and contracting for the project’s construction. BCTC is scheduled to deliver power to the Bob Quinn substation by October 2009, with full project completion by fall 2011.

The province's resurging mining sector reached a major milestone with the issuance of a Mines Act permit that will allow NovaGold and Teck Cominco to develop British Columbia's first new metal mine in over a decade. The Galore Creek mine has the potential to create over 1,000 construction jobs and 500 full-time jobs during operations, which, combined with indirect jobs to support the operation, will provide enormous benefits to communities throughout northwestern B.C.

1 backgrounder(s) attached.

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