

British Columbia Transmission Siting Information

General Information:

The transmission siting process in British Columbia is a centralized, single-step process controlled by the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC). Any utility wanting to build a transmission line, or expansion, must obtain a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity from the BCUC.

Siting Entities:

British Columbia Utilities Commission. [UCAP Part 3 §45\(1\)](#), [UCAP Part 3 §46\(8\)](#).

Authorizations Needed:

Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity.

Planning:

The British Columbia Utilities Commission is required to conduct an inquiry into the province's transmission infrastructure every 6 years. The study must examine electricity transmission capacity and needs for 20 years from the inquiry start date. The first inquiry must be started by March 31, 2009. [Utilities Commission Act Part \(UCAP\) 1, §5](#). In addition, utilities must file with the BCUC every year a plan for all extensions to its electricity facilities that it plans to construct. [UCAP Part 3 §45\(6\)](#).

All utilities must file with the BCUC a long-term resource plan that includes:

- an estimate of the demand for energy the public utility would expect to serve if the public utility does not take new demand-side measures during the period addressed by the plan;
- a plan of how the public utility intends to reduce the demand referred to in paragraph (a) by taking cost-effective demand-side measures;
- an estimate of the demand for energy that the public utility expects to serve after it has taken cost-effective demand-side measures;
- a description of the facilities that the public utility intends to construct or extend in order to serve the estimated demand referred to in paragraph (c);
- information regarding the energy purchases from other persons that the public utility intends to make in order to serve the estimated demand referred to in paragraph (c);
- an explanation of why the demand for energy to be served by the facilities referred to in paragraph (d) and the purchases referred to in paragraph (e) are not planned to be replaced by demand-side measures;
- any other information required by the commission.
[UCAP Part 3 §44.1\(2\)\(a\)-\(g\)](#).

General Siting Process:

The applicant must submit whatever documents, etc. the BCUC prescribes. The BCUC then must decide whether or not to hold a hearing. The BCUC is not required to hold a hearing on an application for CPCN. [UCAP Part 3 §46\(2\)](#). If the project or matters in the application were “determined to be in the public interest in the course of considering a long-term resource plan” then the BCUC may grant the certificate. [UCAP Part 3 §46\(3.2\)](#). If, however, the matters addressed in the application were not addressed in the long-term resource plan, then the BCUC must consider the following in making a decision to issue the CPCN:

- the government's energy objectives,
- the most recent long-term resource plan filed by the public utility under section 44.1, if any, and
- whether the application for the certificate is consistent with the requirements imposed on the public utility under sections 64.01 and 64.02, if applicable. [UCAP Part 3 §46\(3.1\)](#).

Projects must also obtain an Environmental Assessment Certificate under the Environmental Assessment Act. The Lieutenant Governor in Council may make regulations prescribing what projects are considered reviewable projects under the Act. [Environmental Assessment Act, §5](#). The Executive Director of the Environmental Assessment Office determines what information the applicant must provide and oversees the decision process. In some cases, projects will need approval under the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act.