



As Alberta's South Saskatchewan Region awaits its long-promised Regional Plan, an increasing number of major development projects are being proposed in the region. Although the Land-Use Framework proposed a new system of planning in the region, the rules of the old "broken" system still seem to prevail.

The latest proposal is from Alalink, for a 50-kilometre, 240KV transmission line in the southern Livingstone region. Please take the time to find out how you can help.

- Nigel Douglas

In This Issue:

Proposed Livingstone
Transmission Line

AWA

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Proposed Livingstone Transmission Line**The Issue**

A proposed Alalink project to build new 240KV transmission lines in the southern Livingstone region would impose an appalling visual blight on a spectacular signature southern Alberta landscape. Public input may be invited on where the route will go: but whether or not the line is needed in the first place, and what the alternatives are, has never been publicly discussed. It needs to be.

Background

Alalink's proposed Fidler to Chapel Rock Transmission Project would see approximately 50 kilometres of new transmission line constructed across the beautiful landscapes of the southern Livingstone area, from the flanks of the Livingstone Range to the Oldman Dam. Transmission towers would be up to 197 feet high and 79 feet wide. Anybody who has seen the transmission towers marching up the valleys of the Whaleback will know just how visually offensive any new towers would be.

A number of possible alternative routes have been suggested, but no public discussions have taken place about the perceived need of the transmission lines.

[Click here](#) to see a map of the proposed transmission lines.

AWA and local landowners are objecting to the proposed project for a number of

reasons:

Absence of discussion on the need for the transmission line

- No justification has been offered for the need for the proposed transmission line. This need has not been discussed in any public forum. AWA firmly believes that this project should not be approved without any public discussion of the need for the project.
- Nowhere in the documentation is there any suggestion that alternatives to an above-ground 240 kV 60-metre high transmission line have ever been considered. In jurisdictions around the world, the use of underground transmission is increasingly being used. Why has this not option been discussed in this case?

Public Input

- There is no process to allow public input into the decision on whether or not transmission lines are needed in the area. When the Alberta government passed Bill 50, The *Electric Utilities Act* in November 2009, it allowed itself to make these decisions behind closed doors, with no public input. Instead, the public are invited to comment on which of three possible routes would be preferable (or "least worst").
- This "divide and conquer" approach encourages residents to argue amongst themselves about which is the least damaging route, but with no chance to discuss whether a line is needed in the first place.

Cumulative Effects

- Altalink's proposed transmission lines are not the only proposed developments which would significantly alter this spectacular landscape. Micrex's proposed [magnetite mine](#) on the flanks of the Livingstone Range would be another major visual blight if approved.

Pre-empting the Land-Use Framework

- The 2008 *Land-Use Framework* recognized that "If we want our children to enjoy the same quality of life that current generations have, we need a new land-use system." A Regional Plan for the South Saskatchewan region is being developed, and it makes no sense to make such major landscape-scale decisions before such a plan is in place.
- AWA also notes that in the October 2007 *Land-Use Framework Workbook Summary Report*, 74.3% of participants believed that "At present, the balance between developing and using our land versus conservation of our land is too focused on economic development and growth."

Take action

[Click here](#) to see AWA's letter to Premier Stelmach.

You can send comments to:

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Your MLA:
[Click here](#) to find contact information for your MLA.

And to opposition parties:

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And don't forget to send us a copy to awa.nd@shaw.ca
Defending Wild Alberta through Awareness and Action