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## NEWS RELEASE

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Office of the Premier  
Ministry of Energy and Mines

### **West Kelowna to benefit from new power line**

WEST KELOWNA – Premier Christy Clark announced today that BC Hydro will build a new transmission line in the Okanagan. The new line will strengthen the transmission network to deliver power reliably to the communities of West Kelowna, Westside and Peachland.

“As more people and businesses move to the West Kelowna area, infrastructure has to keep pace,” said Premier Clark. “Over the next 10 years, electricity demand is expected to grow by 18%. This addition will ensure a reliable power supply as the economy and communities grow.”

BC Hydro has identified three route options for the new line after conducting comprehensive system studies. The new line will also require an upgrade to the Westbank substation. The final route, timing and budget will be determined after consultation with the public and First Nations. Consultation will begin this spring.

“BC Hydro has an extensive capital plan underway that requires them to invest, on average, \$2.4 billion a year, for the next 10 years, to upgrade existing assets and build new infrastructure,” said Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines. “This investment is needed to ensure B.C. continues to get reliable power to meet our growing electricity needs. In fact, the transmission and distribution network alone will benefit from an investment of \$10 billion over a 10-year period.”

West Kelowna is currently powered by an existing 138-kilovolt transmission line that runs from the Nicola Substation near Merritt to the Westbank Substation in West Kelowna. It travels 80 kilometres through remote, heavily forested terrain where the wildfire risk during the summer is high.

"We had committed several years ago to study the feasibility of a new line and after extensive review we've decided this is the right time to invest in an upgrade to West Kelowna's transmission network," said Jessica McDonald, president and CEO, BC Hydro. "We will work closely with First Nations, the public and stakeholders to determine the best route option for the community while delivering the project efficiently and prudently."

BC Hydro has made significant improvements to the existing transmission system in the area in recent years. In 2008, BC Hydro installed a new transformer at the Westbank Substation and in 2011 and 2012, BC Hydro made upgrades to the line to increase capacity.

“The new transmission line recognizes the growth we are seeing in the West Kelowna, Peachland and Westside areas,” said Dan Ashton, MLA for Penticton. “The project will help ensure we have dependable, clean electricity to support our quality of life, expand our businesses and attract investment to our communities.”

“The need for a secondary transmission line to West Kelowna was identified shortly after incorporation in 2007,” said Doug Findlater, mayor of the District of West Kelowna.

“Guaranteeing a dependable power supply in West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation, and the District of Peachland provides peace of mind and safety for over 60,000-plus residents. The economic benefit in providing power reliability to West Kelowna and area will be realized immediately. Business will have confidence that their power needs can be met.”

**Quick Facts:**

BC Hydro will now enter the “identification phase” for the line to determine the preferred option. This will involve extensive consultation with stakeholders.

The three options include:

1. A new line running down from the north, west of Okanagan Lake.
2. A new line running from Nicola Substation near Merritt to the Westbank Substation in West Kelowna that follows a different route than the existing line.
3. A new submarine cable connecting Westbank substation to the FortisBC system on the east-side of Okanagan Lake.

Historically, the transmission line has delivered a good level of reliability over the years. Three major outages have been recorded over the past 18 years ranging in duration from 4.2 to 8.8 hours.

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