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Expropriation of rights not property
No new land required

VANCOUVER, BC – Members of TRAHVOL (Tsawwassen Residents Against Higher Voltage Overhead Transmission Lines), a community group opposed to British Columbia Transmission Corporation's proposal to upgrade the existing power line through Tsawwassen, have suggested BCTC intends to expropriate private properties through Tsawwassen. This is not the case.

The BCTC proposal, now before the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) for review, recommends placing the new lines underground in an existing transmission right-of-way.

BCTC currently has the right to install and operate overhead facilities on the existing right-of-way but does not have underground rights. If the BCUC approves BCTC's proposal, BCTC will be required to negotiate with local homeowners for use of the underground rights:

- No acquisition of private or city land is required
- The residents' land will not be taken away from them. After work is completed, the land will be restored to the same or better condition
- No new right-of-way is required
- The upgraded lines will be placed within the existing right-of-way through Tsawwassen, which has been in place for 50 years
- The width of the right-of-way will remain the same
- If negotiations fail and expropriation becomes necessary, it applies only to the legal underground rights.

BCTC would strongly prefer to negotiate an exchange of its overhead rights for underground rights. However, if residents do not agree to the exchange, the legal rights to the underground area of the right-of-way could be subject to expropriation. It is important to stress that no properties will be subject to expropriation. Expropriation in this context refers to acquiring a right to have underground facilities in the existing right-of-way.

The BCTC proposal to underground the new facilities was put forward primarily to respond to objections from TRAHVOL to new overhead facilities on the existing right-of-way. The proposal strictly adheres to all public health, safety and environmental protection standards and is well below the 830 mG Precautionary Guideline for EMFs endorsed by the World Health Organization and other leading health authorities.

The BC Utilities Commission has now established the process for review of the Application and BCTC is pleased to see so many people registered to be involved. This participation will ensure that there is a thorough review of the Project.

The Vancouver Island Transmission Reinforcement Project is a plan to replace and upgrade existing 138 kV transmission facilities in the Southern Corridor (including overhead transmission lines, submarine cables and AC/DC converters) which are 35 to 50 years old. This infrastructure is nearing the end of its reliable life and must be replaced by the fall of 2008 to meet current and projected electricity demand on the southern Gulf Islands and Vancouver Island. The upgrade also reinforces the reliability of the entire transmission system ensuring safe, reliable power for all B.C. users.

The British Columbia Transmission Corporation is a Crown corporation that began operations in August 2003. It is an independent electric transmission company that is accountable for the operations, maintenance and planning of BC Hydro's high-voltage electric transmission system. BCTC ensures fair and open access to the electricity grid, and creates value and new opportunities for our customers and stakeholders by providing safe, reliable and cost-effective transmission services.

CONTACT: Jenn Hartman
phone: 604.699.7336
e-mail: jenn.hartman@bctc.com