2025 Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI) for Capacity Information Session Q&As

June 10th, 2025 (virtual)

Disclaimer: This question and answer (Q&A) document has been prepared as a reasonable summary of select questions posed by attendees and BC Hydro's responses during the RFEOI for Capacity Information Session. They are not a transcription. BC Hydro assumes no responsibility or liability for any errors or omissions in the herein content and this information is provided on an "as is" basis with no guarantees of completeness or accuracy.

1. **Will the Information Session presentation be posted on the RFEOI website?**

   Response: Yes, the presentation is located at this link: https://www.bchydro.com/work-with-us/selling-clean-energy/2025-rfeoi-capacity.html. Participants in the session received a notification when this was posted.

2. **Can proponents submit more than one project?**

   Response: Yes.

3. **What is the minimum size of the project?**

   Response: There is no minimum size for projects that meet the capacity and/or baseload definitions in the RFEOI Document.

4. **Do projects need to comply with the *Clean Energy Act* (i.e., do they need to be 'clean')?**

   Response: No. While BC Hydro remains committed to clean energy and sustainability, the RFEOI is intended to encourage a broad range of submissions that are not limited to clean and renewable energy as defined by the *Clean Energy Act*. This information will help inform future policy decisions and identify opportunities to advance projects that might currently be constrained. However, the RFEOI does have the following two exclusions: nuclear energy projects and projects currently under contract with BC Hydro.

5. **Are there any geographic or locational preferences for projects?**

   Response: We are open to all projects located in B.C. which can be integrated into the BC Hydro system.

6. **Will the RFEOI include First Nation equity requirements similar to the 2024 and 2025 Power Calls?**

   Response: The RFEOI is an information gathering exercise only. It is the first phase in understanding potential solutions to meet winter capacity and baseload needs. BC Hydro encourages respondents to elaborate on the reconciliation opportunity offered by their projects, to articulate how First Nations would receive benefits, and to describe a First Nation engagement process for their project. This information can be provided in Part 3 of the RFEOI Questionnaire.

7. **Is Indigenous partnership a requirement?**

   Response: No. The RFEOI process will inform future procurement strategies for capacity and/or baseload resources. We will use information gathered to determine what requirement we might put in place regarding First Nation partnership or ownership for future capacity and/or baseload projects.

8. **What if the project has an existing contract?**

   Response: Projects with existing contracts with BC Hydro are not eligible to participate in this process. Existing projects may choose to go through the electricity purchase agreement (EPA) renewal program. More information can be found here: https://www.bchydro.com/work-with-us/selling-clean-energy/electricity-purchase-agreements.html.

9. **Is BC Hydro only looking for "equipment/hardware/generation" solutions or are they open to systems-based approaches or solutions which involve the engagement of BC residents and industries?**

   Response: The RFEOI is an opportunity to gather information about innovative concepts and new ideas. We are interested in understanding solutions which might be a few steps from commercial viability or creative solutions to meeting winter capacity needs. We are not looking for specific types of solutions.

   Respondents are asked to consider whether their solution is a match for the RFEOI for Capacity or rather may be a demand-side solution better directed to a separate process called the Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI) for Power Smart Partnerships. More information can be found here: https://www.bchydro.com/work-with-us/suppliers/2025-rfeoi-power-smart-partnerships.html.

   A general rule of thumb is that projects that do not provide generation on the grid are suitable for the RFEOI for Power Smart Partnership. Projects that meet the definition of capacity or baseload resources and will inject energy into the grid should submit submissions to the RFEOI for Capacity.

10. **Will we get more information on potential pricing on capacity or baseload energy?**

    Response: The RFEOI for Capacity process will help BC Hydro understand the characteristics and prices for different resource options. We request that Respondents provide information on capital costs, economic impacts, and type of involvement needed from BC Hydro. This information will inform BC Hydro decisions around procurement strategies and pricing options for capacity and baseload resources.

11. **What kind of criteria is BC Hydro using to assess projects?**

Response: BC Hydro will review submissions for their ability to contribute to system capacity needs. For projects that are of interest, BC Hydro may reach out to seek additional information.

Further, BC Hydro is currently updating the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). Results of the IRP will inform BC Hydro's evaluation approach and future BC Hydro procurement for capacity and baseload. BC Hydro's 2025 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) will be filed with the BC Utilities Commission by October 31, 2025. You can learn more about the 2025 IRP at this link: https://www.bchydro.com/about/strategies-plans-regulatory/supply-operations/long-term-electricity-planning/integrated-resource-plan.html.

12. **Will only proven technologies be considered, or is this process open to innovative renewable technologies that have yet to be proven?**

    Response: BC Hydro is open to all technologies, proven or otherwise. The only technology exclusion is nuclear.

13. **Will RFEOI use the BC Hydro planning definition of dependable capacity, or will you be more flexible?**

    Response: BC Hydro has defined capacity for this RFEOI in a flexible manner. Section 2 in the RFEOI document specifies the definition of capacity resource and baseload resource for the purpose of this RFEOI process. BC Hydro's planning definition is reliable output for 6 to 7 days of the week for 16 hours a day for two consecutive weeks in the winter. As indicated in Section 2 of the RFEOI, BC Hydro will accept projects that only partially meet these criteria (e.g., those which can reliability generate for less than 16 hours per day or for less than the full 2-week period).

14. **Is BC Hydro or the BC Government considering being an equity partner in projects offering firm capacity like dams?**

    Response: Respondents are encouraged to refer to Part 4 of the RFEOI Questionnaire that provides an opportunity for Respondents to comment on BC Hydro involvement in projects. BC Hydro seeks to understand what Respondents might need for the project to be successful.

15. **Are standalone battery storage projects acceptable?**

    Response: Yes, standalone battery storage projects are acceptable and meet the flexible definition of capacity for the purposes of this RFEOI.

16. **Is the baseload power plant expected to operate continuously or are there any curtailment risks?**

    Response: In general, we expect baseload power resources to operate continuously; however, curtailment risks may be project or location dependent. BC Hydro wants to understand what risks Respondents face in developing projects to meet dependable capacity criteria if these risks can be mitigated at the project level (e.g., fuel risks or extreme temperature risks). These risks and mitigation approaches can be outlined in Question 2a) of Part 3 of the RFEOI Questionnaire.

17. **Are there any estimated forecasts for the amount of capacity that will be needed and when the capacity will be required?**

    Response: Updated forecasts for the magnitude and timing of capacity needs on the BC Hydro system will be available when BC Hydro's 2025 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) is filed with the BC Utilities Commission on or before October 31, 2025.

    BC Hydro's most recent IRP forecasts are available in Clean Power 2040 (the 2023 Update to the 2021 IRP) available here: https://www.bchydro.com/toolbar/about/strategies-plans-regulatory/supply-operations/long-term-electricity-planning/integrated-resource-plan/integrated-resource-plan.html.

    The recent IRP forecasts for the reference scenario indicate we can meet our system capacity requirements without new supply-side capacity resources within our planning timeframe to 2040 (see 2023 IRP Update; Attachment 1, Table 1-7, row n). The IRP accelerated electrification scenario indicates a need for additional capacity as early as 2030, which quickly grows to 1,000 MW in 2040 (Table 1-11, row n). BC Hydro is planning for a range of potential future scenarios, many of which require BC Hydro to be informed on the range of future capacity resource options and nimble enough to advance solutions as early as 2030, but more likely later in the planning horizon.

18. **Are hybrid projects (e.g., solar plus battery storage) acceptable?**

    Response: Yes, we encourage respondents to propose stand alone battery storage and integrated storage with generation solutions.

19. **Regarding the distinction between projects for the 2025 Call for Power and the RFEOI for Capacity Projects: Can a proponent build BESS capacity backed by new build energy resource adjacent to an existing project which has contract with a BC Hydro EPA? For example, project A (100MW) has an existing BC Hydro EPA. Project B is developed independently as an additional wind + BESS project at the same location as project A, sharing project infrastructure such as transmission line and POI. Is such configuration acceptable?**

    Response: BC Hydro would need to see what the configuration looks like before providing a specific response. A few considerations include timing and the nature of the shared project infrastructure.

    The 2025 Call for Power EPAs will not be awarded until 2026, which is after the RFEOI process is completed. For these projects, there will not be an existing EPA that would exclude a project from consideration in this RFEOI. In the scenario where there is an EPA in place for projects from the 2024 Call for Power or other previous procurement process, BC Hydro would need look at the difference between the two projects and the nature of the configuration before providing advice. BC Hydro encourages Respondents to provide details on these topics in Part 3 of the RFEOI Questionnaire.

20. Would battery storage projects have to provide a minimum duration (e.g., 10 hours per day)?

Response: The RFEOI for Capacity has no threshold for minimum duration; however, solutions that can provide longer generation during winter peaks are desirable as they will contribute more towards BC Hydro system capacity needs.

21. How will BC Hydro protect proponent confidential information on concept, technology, and location?

Response: Section 5.1 of the RFEOI Document addresses confidentiality.

22. Is there any plan for a timeline to follow up the RFEOI closing with Respondents to get to a short list, and potential target dates for moving to EPAs?

Response: BC Hydro does not have a definitive timeline. Note the answers to questions 11 and 17 above.

23. Are there specific technical parameters BC hydro is looking for (e.g., ramp rates, discharge duration, startup time, startup cost, etc.)?

Response: BC Hydro asks Respondents to provide technical attributes of projects in Question 4) of Part 3 in the RFEOI Questionnaire. Please describe what technical parameters the project may have and what additional services the project may offer to the grid.

24. If BC Hydro assessed a Respondents project submission as particularly viable, would they engage directly with the Respondent on that project?

Response: BC Hydro expects to receive a range of responses. For projects that are of interest and meet our system needs, we expect to reach out directly to Respondents to seek more information during and after evaluation of submissions. We may engage to seek clarity on the responses provided or to have confidential commercial meetings with Respondents.

25. BCH has made it clear that natural gas baseload plants are within the scope of this RFEOI process. However, BC Government policy is expected to limit BC Hydro on power generation that emits greenhouse gases. Will an outcome of this RFEOI process involve assisting in reassessing this policy for 2030?

Response: BC Hydro is interested to understand what policy barriers exist in securing winter capacity and baseload energy. Policy barriers and other project constraints should be listed in Question 2b) of the RFEOI Questionnaire. We welcome submissions for projects that may have barriers under the existing policy context while meeting system needs.

26. Can Respondents offer aggregations of smaller distribution-scale resources (e.g., batteries) that are utility-controlled and thus can provide grid-level capacity?

Response: BC Hydro may accept submissions for aggregations of distributed resources. For this type of submission, BC Hydro will need additional information provided in Question 5) of Part 3 of the RFEOI Questionnaire to clarify aspects of system management, technical attributes, and the nature of the interconnection, among other factors. Also, please note the response to Question 9 above.

27. Is demand response/load curtailment eligible to participate in the RFEOI for Capacity?

Response: BC Hydro may accept submissions for demand response or load curtailment under this RFEOI. However, we advise the Respondent to clearly review the RFEOI for Power Smart Partnerships process—described in Question 9 above—to determine if their approach is a fit for that program first. A general rule of thumb is that projects that do not provide generation on the grid are not suitable for the RFEOI for Capacity.

Projects that meet the definition of capacity or baseload resources and will inject energy into the grid should submit submissions to the RFEOI for Capacity.

28. Are there specific locations in which BC Hydro is interested in capacity due to potential future inflow/outflow congestion?

Response: More information on regional priorities will follow from the 2025 IRP. In the 2023 IRP, BC Hydro saw an early need for generation in the Lower Mainland and Vancouver Island under our accelerated electrification scenario – starting around 2030 and growing to 500 MW by 2040. There are many growth opportunities for the North Coast region, but timing is uncertain. In general, future regional priorities will depend on the nature of load growth in the Province as well as our transmission system capabilities. The RFEOI for Capacity does not emphasize specific regions.

29. Is BC Hydro interested in ancillary service like performance from capacity such as fast dispatchability or ability to provide system regulation?

Response: BC Hydro is primarily interested in winter capacity and baseload resources. We encourage Respondents to outline the ancillary services their technology can provide to the grid in Question 4f) of Part 3 of the RFEOI Questionnaire.

BC Hydro also requests that Respondents consider what makes sense for project owners to be compensated for ancillary services and to include this information in Question 5) of the RFEOI Questionnaire. BC Hydro also requests that Respondents provide commercial and technical considerations for acquisition of ancillary and grid services including.

30. What is the required or expected COD for these projects?

Response: BC Hydro does not have required COD or expected COD for projects under the RFEOI for Capacity.

31. **Will BC Hydro consider the difference between an energy storage resource's charge and discharge rate in specific conditions (e.g., if an energy storage resource is charging, it could be directed to stop charging and begin discharging, allowing more effective capacity than just its discharge rate)?**

    Response: BC Hydro requests that Respondents provide detailed information on a system's energy management features in the RFEOI Questionnaire.

32. **Must energy storage technologies output electricity to the BCH grid or can they output thermal energy to heat buildings in dense urban areas, thereby offsetting electricity demand peaks used for building heating in winter?**

    Response: A general rule of thumb is that projects that do not provide generation on the grid are not suitable for the RFEOI for Capacity.

    BC Hydro may accept submissions which consider thermal energy solutions. For this type of solution, BC Hydro asks that detailed information is provided in Question 5) of Part 3 of the RFEOI Questionnaire around the technical attributes, and potential capacity related benefits of the solution. However, we advise the Respondent to clearly review the RFEOI for Power Smart Partnerships process—described in Question 9 above—to determine if their approach is a fit for that program first.

33. **If demand response is eligible, would BC Hydro develop criteria for what sorts of load shape BC Hydro would expect for eligible resources (e.g., when a load is expected to be on in order to provide demand response)?**

    Response: Section 2 of the RFEOI Document specifies the definition of capacity resource and baseload resource for the purpose of this RFEOI. BC Hydro has defined capacity for this RFEOI in a flexible manner; however, solutions that can provide longer generation during winter peaks are desirable as they will contribute more towards BC Hydro system capacity needs.

    We advise Respondents to clearly review the RFEOI for Power Smart Partnerships process—described in Question 9 above—to determine if their approach is a fit for that program first.

34. **Would BC Hydro consider sharing the output from a large-scale, BC-based pumped storage capacity resource (~4,000 MWs) with other electrical utilities located in Western Canada?**

    Response: BC Hydro makes planning decisions based on a self-sufficiency criterion, meaning we define our system need based on the load of BC customers. We are focused on serving our domestic needs through the process we develop through the RFEOI for Capacity.

35. **Are all responses reviewed after the September 8th deadline? Or will responses be reviewed on a rolling basis?**

Response: BC Hydro will review responses on an ongoing basis. However, a key aspect of our review process is reviewing all submissions together to understanding themes and trade-offs in procurement of winter capacity and baseload resources, which will happen once all submissions have been received.

36. **How much of the system interconnection costs are expected to be covered by BC Hydro?**

    Response: Interconnection cost allocation is governed by the Open Access Transmission Tariff (OATT). More information can be found here: https://www.bchydro.com/toolbar/about/strategies-plans-regulatory/tariffs-terms-conditions/oatt.html.

37. **Following up regarding ancillary services, is there a list of services that BC Hydro is interested in or utilizes in system operation?**

    Response: There is not an existing market for ancillary service in BC. BC Hydro does not have current price markers, a current sense of supply or demand on ancillary services, or a prioritized list of ancillary services currently needed on the grid. We would be interested to understand what ancillary services your solutions can provide.

38. **Is the RFEOI focused solely on generation resources, or can transmission solutions that enable the connection of additional resources also be considered?**

    Response: BC Hydro is seeking projects that provide winter capacity and baseload energy. BC Hydro is responsible for transmission system planning, building and operation. For clarity, costs to move energy from a generation site to the point of interconnection is borne by the project.