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August 4, 2023

British Columbia Utilities Commission
Suite 410, 900 Howe Street
Vancouver, B.C.
V6Z 2N3

Attention: Patrick Wruck, Commission Secretary

Dear Patrick Wruck:

Re: FortisBC Energy Inc. (FEI)

Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) for the Okanagan Capacity Upgrade (OCU) Project (Application) ~ Project No. 1599152
Response to the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) Panel Information Request (IR) No. 1

On November 16, 2020, FEI filed the Application referenced above. On August 1, 2023, the BCUC responded by email with BCUC Panel IR No. 1.¹

FEI respectfully submits the attached response to BCUC Panel IR No. 1.

If further information is required, please contact the undersigned.

Sincerely,

FORTISBC ENERGY INC.

Original signed:

Sarah Walsh

Attachments

cc (email only): Registered Interveners

¹ Exhibit A-34.

FortisBC Energy Inc. (FEI or the Company) Application for a CPCN for the Okanagan Capacity Upgrade (OCU) Project (Application)	Submission Date: August 4, 2023
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1 an agreement with Indigenous communities on the Project as described in the Supplementary
2 Filing, FEI suggests that it would be helpful for the BCUC's decision on the Project to also be
3 informed by the PIB's consent for the Project. Accordingly, FEI suggests that the regulatory
4 process should continue to argument and that the BCUC's decision could be made following
5 notification of the PIB's decision. FEI confirms that it will notify the BCUC once the PIB's decision
6 on consent is received.

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10 1.1.1 If FEI does not currently expect there to be a requirement for the BCUC
11 to issue a CPCN for the OCU Project while the PIB opposes the OCU
12 Project, please further explain why FEI considers the proceeding should
13 continue to final argument at this time.

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Response:

16 Further to the response to BCUC Panel IR1 1.1, FEI believes the review of the Application should
17 proceed to final argument as there is sufficient evidence on the record to support the argument
18 process, including evidence regarding the Project need, evaluation of alternatives, Project costs
19 and rate impacts, environmental and archaeological considerations, public consultation and
20 Indigenous engagement, and alignment with government policy and long-term resource plans.

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24 1.2 If FEI does not intend to proceed with the OCU Project as currently proposed in
25 the absence of consent from the PIB, please further explain why FEI considers the
26 proceeding should continue to final argument at this time.

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Response:

29 The OCU Project proceeding has now been ongoing since 2020, and since that time, the need
30 for the Project to serve the growing load in the Okanagan region has only become more imminent.
31 With the inclusion of the Supplementary Filing and the IR responses on that filing, in addition to
32 the extensive evidence filed on the record, FEI believes that it has sufficiently demonstrated the
33 need for the OCU Project and has provided the necessary evidence for the process to move
34 forward to final argument. This will contribute to a more timely and expeditious regulatory process.

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1 In response to BCOAPO Supplementary IR 8.5, FEI stated:

2 In order to meet the Project timeline outlined in the Supplementary Filing, FEI
3 would need to reach an agreement before the end of 2023.

4 1.3 Please further discuss the actions FEI would need to take if it is unable to reach
5 an agreement with PIB before the end of 2023.

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7 **Response:**

8 Based on the need to serve growing demand in the Okanagan region, FEI needs to reach a
9 conclusion on whether the Proposed Alternative can move forward shortly, both from the PIB and
10 the BCUC. FEI anticipates knowing whether it will be able to reach an agreement with the PIB in
11 Q3 2023, or shortly thereafter.

12 In the event that FEI is unable to reach an agreement with the PIB before the end of 2023 and
13 the prospect of reaching an agreement in short order appears unlikely, FEI will need to consider
14 other alternatives outlined in its Application to meet customer demand in the Okanagan area and
15 would engage with affected Indigenous communities as necessary as described in the response
16 to BCOAPO Supplementary IR1 8.6.

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