

FORTISALBERTA COMPLETES FINAL COMMISSIONING OF BATTERY BACKUP SYSTEM IN WATERTON NATIONAL PARK

Waterton, Alberta (April 20, 2023) – FortisAlberta Inc. celebrated a milestone today as the company completed the final commissioning of a unique reliability solution to meet the needs of the residents of the Town of Waterton and the hundreds of thousands of tourists who visit Waterton National Park each year. FortisAlberta is the province’s largest distributor of electricity, serving almost 600,000 customer sites across central and southern Alberta.

Alberta’s geographic and environmental diversity is a treasured part of the province’s natural heritage, but it can pose challenges for those who live in remote areas, as well as to the utilities that work to provide them with energy year-round. For example, the time that it takes to restore electricity to customers living in remote areas like Waterton is typically longer, as these communities are connected to the grid by dedicated radial lines. For those living in Waterton, the fact that these lines pass over environmentally sensitive areas can make the use of traditional outage restoration methods even more complex.

“People choose to live in Waterton and tourists flock to this area because of the rugged beauty of the surroundings. We are proud to play a part in providing the people of Waterton with the electricity that they need to power their homes and businesses and welcome the world to this special area,” says Janine Sullivan, FortisAlberta President and CEO. “We have known for some time that our customers in Waterton needed an innovative solution to improve local reliability and I am happy to say that our employees have addressed that need. FortisAlberta is excited to explore how the lessons that we learned in Waterton can help customers living in other remote communities.”

As Curtis Eck, FortisAlberta’s Vice President, Engineering explains, “We’ve designed and constructed a microgrid that will seamlessly transfer the community between grid and battery supply during large system disturbances.” Mr. Eck confirms that the Waterton facility, which combines a Battery Energy Storage Solution (BESS) with solar photovoltaic (PV) renewable generation operated by Parks Canada, will leverage the company’s existing advanced distribution control system to provide customers with up to four hours of backup power during peak periods.

FortisAlberta completed the \$6 million pilot project using a combination of funding obtained from Alberta Innovates and Emissions Reduction Alberta and Natural Resources Canada’s Smart Grid Program. “This energy storage system is a positive development that will help strengthen the reliability of Waterton’s grid,” says Alberta’s Minister of Affordability and Utilities, Matt Jones.

“The Government of Canada is pleased to support important projects like this, including through the Smart Grid Program. Solar power and battery storage are vital components of the energy mix as we build a prosperous and sustainable energy future,” says The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Natural Resources.

“Today’s announcement is another step toward a reliable and sustainable energy grid for all Albertans and will also help ensure that one of our province’s iconic tourism destinations has the infrastructure it needs to thrive,” says The Honourable Randy Boissonnault, Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance.

About FortisAlberta

As owner and operator of more than 60 per cent of Alberta’s total electricity distribution network, FortisAlberta’s focus is delivering safe and reliable electricity to almost 600,000 customer sites across central and southern Alberta. The Company serves more than 240 communities with 128,000 kilometres of distribution power lines across Alberta.

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