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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

### **NTL AGREEMENTS WILL CREATE JOBS, POWER B.C.'S NORTHWEST**

VICTORIA – Clean energy agreements between BC Hydro, British Columbia Transmission Corporation (BCTC), Coast Mountain Hydro L.P., a wholly owned subsidiary of AltaGas Income Trust Ltd. (AltaGas) and the Tahltan Nation will help to create jobs, provide clean and renewable electricity to B.C.'s Northwest, and power the development of the Northwest Transmission Line (NTL), announced Blair Lekstrom, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

“I congratulate all the partners for working to make these agreements a reality,” said Lekstrom. “These agreements will open up the Northwest by providing access to some of the up to 2,000 megawatts of clean energy potential that has been identified in the region and will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. They are part of our long-term vision for clean, renewable, low-cost energy for all British Columbians.”

The agreements, which will support construction of the NTL, include:

- A \$180-million umbrella agreement between AltaGas and BCTC for the construction and development of the NTL.
- An electricity-purchase agreement between BC Hydro and AltaGas for the Forrest Kerr clean energy project near Bob Quinn Lake.
- An impact-benefit agreement between AltaGas and the Tahltan Nation for the Forrest Kerr project.

The NTL project also includes \$130 million in funding through the Government of Canada's Green Infrastructure Fund, announced by Prime Minister Stephen Harper last September. The estimated ratepayer contribution to the NTL will be \$94 million, which is expected to be offset by contributions from future clean, renewable energy projects and/or mine developments.

“The Forrest Kerr project represents an important evolution in AltaGas' power business as we continue to build long-term, contracted, generation assets,” said David Cornhill, chairman and chief executive officer of AltaGas. “This project will provide the people of British Columbia with clean and reliable power from a significant water resource. For our investors, this announcement comes at an important time in history as governments move to reduce emissions while building for the future.”

The NTL is a \$404-million, 287-kilovolt, 335-kilometre, publicly owned transmission line from Skeena Substation (near Terrace) to Bob Quinn Lake. It will provide a secure interconnection point for clean generation projects, supply clean electricity to support industrial developments in the area, and reduce greenhouse gas emission by enabling communities now relying on diesel generation to connect to the grid.

An application for an environmental assessment certificate for the NTL was accepted by the B.C. Environmental Assessment Office on April 14, 2010. The 180-day application review period is underway, and public meetings have been held in the project area.

“BC Hydro welcomes the opportunity to extend the provincial grid to ensure industries that generate jobs for British Columbians are fuelled by clean energy and to improve the quality of life in rural and remote communities that are now dependent on diesel generators,” said Dave Cobb, BC Hydro president and CEO. “In addition, the transmission line will enable us to purchase clean energy from the Forrest Kerr project and, in the future, from other renewable power projects, helping us to become electricity self-sufficient by 2016.”

Construction of the NTL is scheduled to begin in late 2010 and will create an estimated 280 construction jobs, subject to receiving necessary environmental assessment and regulatory approvals and accommodation of First Nations’ interests. The NTL is the first step in reinvigorating the regional economy of B.C.’s Northwest. It will provide significant direct economic stimulus to the region. It will also leverage an investment of more than \$700 million from AltaGas’s clean energy project that will lead to the creation of 400 jobs. The investment and number of jobs is expected to rise with new industrial development.

British Columbia’s new Clean Energy Act, which is currently before the B.C. legislature, sets the foundation for a new future of electricity self-sufficiency, job creation and reduced greenhouse gas emissions, powered by unprecedented investments in clean, renewable energy across the province.

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