



Gleichen Solar Project Inc.

**Gleichen Solar Project Minor Alterations and
Time Extension**

June 24, 2024

Alberta Utilities Commission

Decision 29032-D01-2024

Gleichen Solar Project Inc.

Gleichen Solar Project Minor Alterations and Time Extension

Proceeding 29032

Application 29032-A001

June 24, 2024

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1 Decision summary

1. In this decision, the Alberta Utilities Commission approves an application from Gleichen Solar Project Inc. for minor alterations to the power plant and to extend the construction completion date of the Gleichen Solar Project.

2 Application

2. Gleichen Solar Project Inc. (GSPI), pursuant to Approval 28079-D02-2023,¹ has approval to construct and operate a 13.3-megawatt (MW) power plant, designated as the Gleichen Solar Project, located in the Gleichen area.

3. GSPI filed an application with the Commission for approval of minor alterations to the power plant and to extend the construction completion date for the Gleichen Solar Project from June 30, 2024, to May 31, 2025.

4. GSPI stated that the project is delayed due to a significant administrative challenge. GSPI and its original Indigenous partner were awarded federal government funding in December 2022 and were positioned to execute project construction between May 2023 and June 2024. In February 2023, post funding award, its original Indigenous partner withdrew from the project and as a result, all preliminary activities, including pre-construction activities were put on hold. GSPI was able to secure another Indigenous partner (Ermineskin Cree Nation) but had to go through a re-application process to secure the previously allocated federal funds, which took over nine months. GSPI anticipates restarting construction activities in Q2 2024. The revised in-service date is May 31, 2025.

5. GSPI stated that the proposed minor alterations to the design and equipment of the power plant will not result in any negative impacts and the total generating capability will remain 13.3 MW. The proposed alterations are listed below:

Proposed alterations	Previously approved
16,300 Longi 72 cell Bifacial 540W solar panels	16,307 Longi 72 cell Bifacial 540W solar panels
16,300 Longi 72 cell Bifacial 545W solar panels	16,307 Longi 72 cell Bifacial 545W solar panels
Five Medium Voltage transformers (Sungrow MVS3200) and 43 Sungrow string inverters (SG 350HX)	Nine SMA Sunny Central 2200-US Solar inverters-transformer stations

¹ Power Plant Approval 28079-D02-2023, Proceeding 28079, Application 28079-A001, March 27, 2023.

6. GSPI notified stakeholders about the minor alterations in addition to the updated project schedule and did not receive any feedback or concerns.
7. GSPI conducted field assessments and submitted a new Alberta Environment and Protected Areas renewable energy referral report, which confirmed that the project continues to have an overall low risk to wildlife and wildlife habitat.
8. GSPI submitted an updated noise impact assessment (NIA), which concluded that the project would comply with the permissible sound levels at all receptors without further noise mitigation. GSPI requested to remove the condition for a post-construction comprehensive sound level survey at Receptor R03, which was based on the previous NIA.
9. GSPI submitted an updated glare impact assessment, which concluded that the overall glare impact from the project will be the same or less compared to the previous layout.
10. GSPI also applied to correct an administrative error regarding the legal land description of the project.

3 Findings

11. GSPI has provided information respecting the need, nature and the duration of the requested time extension, which supports its request for an extension, and the Commission approves a time extension to May 31, 2025, for the construction completion date of the power plant.
12. Based upon the information provided, the Commission is satisfied that the proposed alterations are of a minor nature, no person is directly and adversely affected by the proposal and no significant adverse environmental impact will be caused by the proposed alterations, thereby meeting the requirements of Section 2(1) of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Regulation*. The Commission approves the proposed alterations to the power plant.
13. The updated NIA with the proposed alterations concluded that no mitigation is needed for all of the receptors to be in compliance with the permissible sound levels stipulated in Rule 012: *Noise Control*. The Commission is satisfied that the project will comply with Rule 012 without further noise mitigation and has removed Condition 3d of Approval 28079-D02-2023.
14. The Commission has revised Condition 1 of Approval 28079-D02-2023 to correct an administrative error regarding the legal land description of the project.
15. The Commission has revised Condition 3a of Approval 28079-D02-2023 to reflect an administrative timing update related to post construction monitoring survey reports and correspondence with Alberta Environment and Protected Areas.

4 Decision

16. Under sections 11 and 19 of the *Hydro and Electric Energy Act*, the Commission approves Application 29032-A001 and grants Gleichen Solar Project Inc. the approval set out in Appendix 1 – Power Plant Approval 29032-D02-2024, to construct and operate the Gleichen Solar Project.

17. The appendix will be distributed separately.

Dated on June 24, 2024.

Alberta Utilities Commission

(original signed by)

Cairns Price
Commission Member