



The Ontario/Quebec Interconnection Opportunity

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Ontario and Quebec have very large and well developed transmission systems, but each has only been designed to meet the needs of that province. However, if we were to strengthen the ties between the two systems and then optimize the operation by treating both provincial systems as a single system, consumers in both provinces would see a benefit.

Ontario presently has a problem with base-load generation (from nuclear, run of river, wind generation, etc.) exceeding provincial demand in some periods, which results in either generators being paid not to generate, or occasionally even to US states being paid to take excess electricity. If, instead of wasting it, that excess electricity were to be consumed in Quebec and Quebec's hydraulic plants then reduced their generation and held water behind the dam, that water could then later be released and the power returned to Ontario when demand was higher. Effectively Quebec's dams would be used to provide energy storage, but without the efficiency loss associated with pumped storage.

In the long term, an east-west transmission line would give Canadian generators an opportunity to sell renewable energy to a greater number of U.S. states than they can access today. Even after allowing for transmission losses, generation from central or western Canadian provinces could be more profitably sold into the larger and higher-priced markets of the U.S. northeast. With Canada's vast renewable energy resources and a growing US demand for low carbon generation, the possibilities are endless.

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