

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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BC HYDRO WELCOMES JOINT REVIEW PANEL PROCESS FOR SITE C

VANCOUVER – BC Hydro today welcomed the announcement that a draft agreement has been developed by the federal and provincial governments for a harmonized environmental review of the Site C Clean Energy Project (Site C). The draft agreement includes a joint review panel process for Site C, and initiates the environmental assessment.

“We are pleased that the Site C project has been referred to a joint review panel, and we look forward to commencing what will be a rigorous and independent process,” said Dave Cobb, CEO of BC Hydro. “The environmental assessment for Site C will provide multiple opportunities for consultation and input by the public, communities, Aboriginal groups, and stakeholders.”

As part of the environmental assessment of Site C, BC Hydro will identify and assess potential project effects — environmental, economic, social, heritage and health — and opportunities to provide lasting benefits for the region and First Nations. Where effects cannot be avoided, BC Hydro will identify and evaluate options for mitigation.

The Site C project requires environmental certification and other regulatory permits and approvals before it can proceed to construction. In addition, the Crown has a duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Aboriginal groups.

BC Hydro forecasts that electricity demand in the province will increase by approximately 40 per cent in the next 20 years, and new sources of clean, reliable and cost-effective electricity will be required.

“We are proposing to construct the Site C project as part of our overall regeneration program to invest in and renew the province’s electricity system,” said Cobb.

Site C would also contribute to economic development by creating approximately 7,000 person-years of direct construction employment through the seven-year construction period. The project is estimated to create up to 35,000 direct and indirect jobs through all stages of development and construction.

BC Hydro has adopted a multi-stage approach for the evaluation of Site C. The project is currently in Stage 3, Environmental and Regulatory Review. This stage includes an independent environmental assessment process led by the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office. The multi-stage process provides the Province with milestones for assessing the project and deciding whether to proceed to the next stage.

About Site C

The Site C Clean Energy Project is a proposed third dam and hydroelectric generating station on the Peace River in northeast B.C. It would provide up to 1,100 megawatts (MW) of capacity, and produce about 5,100 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity each year — enough energy to power more than 450,000 homes per year in B.C.

As the third project on the Peace River, Site C would take advantage of water already stored upstream in the Williston Reservoir. This means that Site C would generate approximately 35 per cent of the energy produced at W.A.C. Bennett Dam with five per cent of the reservoir area.

At a cost per megawatt hour ranging from \$87 to \$95, Site C would be among the most cost-effective options to help meet future electricity needs in B.C.

Subject to approvals, Site C would be a source of clean and renewable electricity for more than 100 years.

About BC Hydro

Fifty years ago, British Columbians turned to BC Hydro to build the clean electricity system they count on to power B.C.'s economy, create jobs in every region, and keep the lights on. Now, BC Hydro is building again for the next 50 years.

B.C. continues to grow and so has the need for more electricity. That's why BC Hydro is building, renewing, and encouraging conservation to meet today's needs and those of future generations. In 2011, BC Hydro is celebrating 50 years of providing power for British Columbians, and inviting them to help prepare for the next 50 years.

More information on Site C can be found at: www.bchydro.com/sitec.

About the Environmental Assessment Process

Information on the environmental assessment process for Site C is available online at:

- British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office:
http://a100.gov.bc.ca/appsdata/epic/html/deploy/epic_project_home_371.html.
- Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency: <http://www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca/050/details-eng.cfm?evaluation=63919>.

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