

# Site C Clean Energy Project

## Regional Community Liaison Committee Meeting

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*Meeting Summary*  
*December 8, 2021, 1:00 to 3:00 pm MST*  
*Video Conference Call*

<b>ATTENDEES</b> <i>Regional Community Liaison Committee Members</i>	<p>Director Brad Sperling, Area C, Peace River Regional District</p> <p>Director Dan Rose, Area E, Peace River Regional District</p> <p>Director Karen Goodings, Area B, Peace River Regional District</p> <p>Mayor Rob Fraser, District of Taylor</p> <p>Mayor Dave Heiberg, District of Hudson's Hope</p> <p>Mayor Allan Courtoreille, District of Chetwynd</p> <p>Margaret McDonald, McLeod Lake Indian Band</p> <p>Dave Conway, BC Hydro</p> <p>Chris Waite, BC Hydro</p> <p>Lisa Clement, BC Hydro</p> <p>Matt Drown, BC Hydro</p> <p>Wendy Laluk, BC Hydro</p> <p>Shanna Mason, BC Hydro</p> <p>Kate O'Neil, BC Hydro</p> <p>Nich Burnett, BC Hydro</p> <p>Carmen Brooks, BC Hydro</p> <p>Dave Hunter, BC Hydro</p> <p>James Thomas, BC Hydro</p> <p>Ben Raucher, BC Hydro</p> <p>Katrina Kelly, BC Hydro</p> <p>Alex Gray, BC Hydro</p>
<b>INVITED GUESTS</b>	
<b>ATTENDED</b>	<p>Troy Van Bostelen, AFDE</p> <p>Jamie Bodnarchuk, PRHP</p>
<b>ABSENT WITH REGRET</b>	<p>Ranish Shakya, Blueberry River First Nations</p> <p>Carol Newsom, CAO, District of Chetwynd</p> <p>Mayor Dale Bumstead, City of Dawson Creek</p> <p>Blair Lekstrom, CAO, City of Dawson Creek</p> <p>Jennifer McCracken, Doig River First Nation</p> <p>Milo McDonald, CAO, City of Fort St. John</p> <p>Mokles Rahman, CAO, District of Hudson's Hope</p> <p>Naiomi McKinnon, McLeod Lake Indian Band</p>

	Stephanie Rocheleau, Land & Stewardship Director, McLeod Lake Indian Band MLA Dan Davies, Peace River North Tamara Wilkinson, MLA Assistant, for MLA Dan Davies Mike Bernier, MLA, Peace River South Terri Paulovich, Constituency Assistant, Peace River South Danielle Veach, Village of Pouce Coupe Mayor Keith Bertrand, District of Tumbler Ridge Jennifer Thomas, CAO, District of Tumbler Ridge Adriana DaCosta, MOTI Chief Justin Napoleon, Sauleau First Nation Director Leonard Hiebert, Area D, Peace River Regional District Mayor Lori Ackerman, City of Fort St. John Moir Green, District of Taylor Shawn Dahlen – Peace River Regional District Jim Morgan, ATCO
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**Documents Distributed for the December meeting:**

- RCLC Meeting Agenda
- RCLC Presentation Slides
- RCLC Action item log
- RCLC Workforce Reports
- RCLC Q3 Business Report
- RCLC September 28 Meeting Notes
- RCLC Public Enquiries FAQ

**Opening / Welcome**

- Dave welcomed all attendees.
- Acknowledgement of Indigenous Treaty 8 traditional territories.

**Review of Agenda & Action Items**

Dave reviewed the agenda and action items along with the status of each item.

**Site C COVID-19 Update**

Shanna Mason provided a Site C COVID-19 update.

- There were two active cases as of yesterday. It was nice to see there were no cases for a short period of time last week. Currently eight people in isolation in camp and six at home. BC Hydro continues to administer vaccinations. To date 2,800 first doses and 1,900 second doses have been administered with some third doses being administered now.

- BC Hydro instituted a vaccine mandate for all staff that started on November 22. Some people did not or could not get vaccinated so there were some impacts to our staff. Luckily it was lower than anticipated. As of January 10<sup>th</sup>, everyone on site including contractors and subcontractors need to be vaccinated. There will be limited exceptions such as delivery drivers; however, as a rule Site C will be a vaccine mandatory site.

## **BC Hydro Project Update**

### **Dam On-site Construction Update**

Chris Waite provided updates about on-site construction activities

Shanna let the committee know that BC Hydro is not planning to operate in Teko pit but rather in an area adjacent to Teko pit referred to as Area E. This area has already been leased to BC Rail and there is a crown grant subleased to CN Rail for quarry usage. Area E and the upgrades to Ice Bridge Road were identified in the project description and was included in the environmental impact assessment that formed the basis of the project approval.

Area E is a large quarry source and it is expected that up to one million cubic meters will be quarried. BC Hydro understands the environmental impacts that need to be mitigated, for example sharp tailed grouse have leks in the area; therefore, a noise buffering berm will be built to reduce impacts. BC Hydro will keep the site as small as reasonable to try to keep impacts to the grasslands area minimal. The working area marked on the map does not take up all of the grasslands area as this is an important feature of the area. When the area is reclaimed it will be redressed and revegetated with grass seeds that are native species to re-establish the grasslands. It is a temporary exclusion from the ALR in terms of work; short term usage and then reclaiming it.

BC Hydro will be widening or upgrading Ice Bridge road to allow two trucks to pass, it would be a standard forestry road upgrade. It will not be reclaimed as there are users in the area that would prefer it to remain for access in the future. At present, it is an unmaintained industry road and there would not be future maintenance. BC Hydro is waiting for permits from Forests Lands and Natural Resources, the Agricultural Land Commission and others. Although BC Hydro has been proceeding with procurement contracts they will not be awarded until the permits are received from the province.

- Director Rose asked if this area was already looked at during the original environmental assessment. BC Hydro must have done some kind of change as Front Counter BC provided notification of the change or the intention to go ahead and use this particular area. Director Rose expressed concerned about the native prairie grasslands described in the site, that can be seen on the photo. It is one of the larger pieces left, they are not in abundance in the region. Can BC Hydro confirm that most of area E is subleased to CN Rail and CN Rail can develop at their leisure without any notification?
  - James Thomas confirmed that this is true. The area is licensed to BC Rail and CN rail who can excavate that area with the submission of a mine site permit, no further land tenure is required as it is already assigned with a license of occupation for a gravel pit.
- Director Rose stated that it's odd that CN rail would give up access to BC Hydro. Front Counter BC documents regarding the permits indicate that there was lack of appropriate material or access elsewhere. Could there be a more appropriate area, perhaps under some poplar trees rather than disturbing the grassland area? Even though CN Rail could use it at some point it is unlikely that

would happen in the near future as they have not indicated they are investing in the area. Director Rose appreciated the information and the map.

- Shanna confirmed that BC Hydro did look very hard at areas closer to site. The type of gravel needed is unique and not in abundance everywhere. BC Hydro is constrained to areas that were identified in the project description and have had the impacts assessed. To source material outside these areas would require BC Hydro to amend the EA certificate which would take six months or longer. This would mean the construction schedule for 2022 would not be met nor the in-service date. BC Hydro will only be looking at areas that were part of the project description and that have been assessed and consulted on.
- BC Hydro does require permits as well as a mines act permit, forestry related lands permits and other related permits.
- Chair Sperling stated that he is concerned about the plan to leave the upgraded Ice Bridge Road as being the wish of property owners, what about non-property owners who may begin to use it as now there is access to the area? At a time when oil and gas companies are putting the land back to the way it was there is no indication that BC Hydro is looking to reclaim the road nor has it been identified. Is BC Hydro opening it up for everyone to use? Are existing property owners going to want a whole bunch of people using it?
  - Shanna explained that BC Hydro is getting mixed feedback. One individual who owns lands in the area appreciates the access but also has concerns about others accessing the road. There are very few using the road. If there is a concern about the road being left that feedback will come through the permitting process. There could be more feedback for BC Hydro to reclaim the road to the narrow dirt state it currently is. At this time the feedback says more people would like it to remain, but if the permitting process gives a different message BC Hydro will do that. The road is unmaintained so it likely won't take mother nature long to naturally reclaim it.
- Chair Sperling stated that the regional district is looking at reclaiming well sites in the area, putting the land healthy. Chair Sperling is concerned that BC Hydro takes the idea that since one person is using it the road will be left to let mother nature put it back.
  - Shanna confirmed that if the desire is to reclaim the road then BC Hydro will do that, that is why there is a referral out for comments.
- Director Rose commented that this far into the project most sources of materials should have been identified by now. Is the use of this area because something else hasn't worked out? It seems like the use of this area is plan C. Is this because this site looks easier to use?

Shanna explained that BC Hydro is accessing all sources of aggregate on site, under transmission lines, under other working areas. Some contractors will be decommissioning crushers and moving stockpiles; every source will be used. BC Hydro is accessing the downstream fish enhancement projects and will be taking aggregate from there as well.

  - Again, Area E was identified as a source of aggregates for dam building at the time the project was described and approved. We are simply accessing it now as it is now needed.
  - At the beginning of the project BC Hydro estimated how much aggregate is likely available on the dam site and identified Area E as an aggregate source for up to 1,000,000 m<sup>3</sup>. On site aggregate is mined down to bedrock. The depth to bedrock is different on all areas of the site and was estimated based on test pits. If bedrock was found deeper during excavation, more aggregate would have been available on site and may have reduced the need for activating

Area E. At the beginning of the project it was thought this resource may be needed and now it is.

- Mayor Fraser agrees with Director Rose. It is disconcerting to see the grasslands impacted. It is understood that BC Hydro has done the environmental assessment and there is no other place to go. There is not much of it in the valley bottom and unfortunately it looks like a quarter of it will be used by BC Hydro. There is concern about the road itself as it crosses the CN Rail line. Has a geotechnical evaluation been done as it crosses the CN Rail line that has slid at least twice? With the volume of traffic and size of traffic it could cause another slide. The railroad is the lifeblood of industry. Second, the area is a well used recreation area, will that be taken into account during reclamation? Steep slopes could be a danger for snowmobile and ATV users.
  - Shanna confirmed that geotechnical engineers are employed as well as design engineering firms to design the road. For the two CN Rail crossings BC Hydro will be doing a realignment to improve the crossing access. A permit application approach will be done with CN and they approve it. Yes, BC Hydro is aware of safety concerns when reclaiming the quarry area. Some areas are trickier than others and part of the design is to deal with those issues. Area E will be left in a safe state and hazards will be eliminated.
  - Shanna further explained that BC Hydro's Site C Environmental manager, Greg Scarborough, is looking closely at the grasslands impacts and grasslands as a total in the region, BC Hydro is alive to those concerns. There is a program to revegetate with native seeds and encourage regrowth as soon as possible. Greg is working with the biologists on his team and our expert consultants on the revegetation, so this can be done as quickly as possible.

#### 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue Laydown area

Carmen Brooks provided information regarding plans to develop a 3.5-hectare laydown area which will include removal and clearing of vegetation as well as compaction and grading of the area. Storage will include spare parts and equipment for the conveyor belt system, debris booms, chains, barrels and traffic control materials. These materials will be moved over a four to six-week period from the dam site to the laydown area in stages. This will minimize any impacts to the road and traffic; traffic control will be used during the transit of the materials. Items will be stored for up to two years in this area.

- Chair Sperling asked if this new laydown area will increase traffic? Will there be a comment period? What does MOTI have to say? Chair Sperling is concerned that if BC Hydro keeps making changes and moving items around the original impact study will be affected.
  - Carmen explained that traffic volume would be on an incremental basis. After moving items to site, removal would be intermittent when items were needed or something broke down.
  - Shanna was not sure if a comment period and public consultation would be required and will confirm. Consultation with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MoTI) is the next step in planning. BC Hydro wanted to come to this committee early before speaking with MoTI. This project is connected to our search for aggregate by removing items off site allows access to the aggregate beneath them. BC Hydro has been working aggressively to meet the original in-service date and great strides are being made.

**ACTION 2021-016** – Shanna Mason to confirm if public consultation and a comment period is required for the 85<sup>th</sup> Ave laydown area.

- Mayor Fraser asked if the area is fenced or will there be security. This site is closer to town and kids could access the site and be injured.

- Carmen explained that the area is currently fenced, and the design of the laydown area will ensure that existing or new fencing will keep the public safe as well as storage items secure.
- Director Rose asked if stripping and de-vegetating the area will affect the water flow as there have been concerns regarding water in that area.
  - Carmen confirmed that the same engineering firm that designed the original area will be looking at the care of water. BC Hydro will be working to ensure there are no impacts.
  - Shanna added that some intentional drainage control or ponding will likely be required. BC Hydro will not be creating water on site it will simply be water that falls as rain or snow.

### **Off-Site Construction**

Matt Drown provided an update on off-site activities.

- Mayor Fraser asked if the asphalt is being sourced from the Taylor plant or if there is a plant on site?
  - Matt confirmed that asphalt sources are expected to be a mix. An asphalt plant was used on site for Farrell Creek East and there was a discussion of putting one back in the area. The haul distance is quite far from town so it is likely that the contractors will use their own plants.
- Mayor Heiberg asked if an emergency response plan was shared with local authorities in Hudson's Hope regarding helicopter use.
  - Katrina Kelly confirmed that the Fire Chief did meet on site regarding the emergency response plan and helicopter work. BC Hydro will get names and more information regarding the meeting.
- Mayor Heiberg asked about the slide in the back of the library. The contractor was making weekly inspections, can this information be shared with the District?
  - Matt confirmed this was discussed with the District's CAO, Mokles Rahman, last week and it was agreed that BC Hydro will provide monthly summaries.
- Mayor Heiberg is concerned about the burn piles and would like to ensure that site specific conditions are also considered when burn windows are provided as there were smoke issues with previous burns.
  - Matt explained that additional restrictions are in place when burning closer to the District. Piles are also seasoned for one year to reduce smoke.
  - Katrina added that when looking at venting, special conditions in that area are considered. Katrina will follow up to ensure that conditions in the valley are considered and not just the general area.
- Mayor Courtoreille is curious about the water system for Hudson's Hope, how are they obtaining water?
  - Matt confirmed that the District switched to an aquifer system. The river intake system has been decommissioned.
  - Mayor Heiberg added that the District is experiencing difficulties with the new water system and continues to work with consultants and BC Hydro. The community is not happy.

**ACTION 2021-017** – Katrina Kelly to follow up with Mayor Heiberg to confirm names of who attended the emergency response plan meeting

**ACTION 2021-018** – Katrina Kelly will confirm that with the criteria associated with the venting windows provided to BC Hydro that the special conditions in the Hudson's Hope area are being considered.

### **Fish Enhancement Site and Selection Rationale**

Katrina Kelly and Dave Hunter provide information regarding the fish enhancement sites. Katrina explained that BC Hydro has a regulatory requirement to provide specific fish habitat in the future reservoir area. BC Hydro is required to develop 33 hectares of new shallow water habitat.

Dave Hunter explained the purpose of the enhancement areas. The shallow water areas will be the most active fish habitat areas.

- Director Sperling asked about the stockpiles Katrina mentioned and the use of agricultural land. Does the ministry know where BC Hydro is building this and what it is being built on?
  - Dave Hunter explained that the stockpile is being raised above the flood impact line. The area in yellow on the slide could see inundation during extreme high reservoir levels.
  - Katrina confirmed that BC Hydro also looked to minimize the impact to agricultural land during the design process. The footprint of materials was kept as small as possible.
- Director Goodings asked for clarification on the size of land, 33 hectares or 33 acres.
  - Katrina Kelly confirmed that the land size is 33 hectares in total.
- Director Goodings enquired about access to the land in order to farm it once the reservoir is filled. BC Hydro should create a berm and road as requested by the current people farming the land. Director Goodings would like BC Hydro to do everything possible to make this area accessible for future use.
  - James Thomas explained that access to this area is very challenging; BC Hydro is looking to secure long term access to the site and once that is secure there are access challenges within the site.

### **Temporary Upstream Fishway**

Nich Burnett provided an update on the temporary fish passage facility.

- Director Goodings asked about the temperature change in the water as fish can be quite sensitive to temperature changes.
  - Nich confirmed that water temperatures are closely monitored. Water is supplied from the diversion tunnel outlet which means the water quality and temperature are the same in fishway as it would be in the river eliminating temperature concerns.

### **Community and Social Mitigation Update**

Ben Rauscher provided an update on river closures. Boat launches and BC Hydro's Go Fund.

- Director Sperling thanked Ben for reaching out to GO Fund Committee members to ensure the recent vote to fund applications was successful.
- Director Goodings asked Ben about submitting an application for 'The Gates' to be a rustic recreation site.
  - Ben responded that the intake period is closed; however, it could be looked at post reservoir clearing through the rustic recreation site program which will have a \$100,000 budget. An application will need to be made; more information can be found on the Rustic Recreation Site Fund page at SiteCProject.com at <https://www.sitecproject.com/node/3174>

## **Job and Business Update**

Kate O'Neil presented the job and business update.

Dave drew the committee's attention to the jump in the number of businesses in the Q3 Business Participation Report. This jump was due in part to data from all contractors that had not been included and should have been. All the numbers are now being reported.

## **Contractor Updates**

### **Troy Van Bostelen AFDE**

- Troy commented that AFDE is very proud of their work and would like to be part of any future tours.
- AFDE reached the half way point in terms of concrete that has been cast in place. Over 350,000 m<sup>3</sup> have been poured, since then another 80,000 m<sup>3</sup> have been place.
- AFDE sponsored advent calendars that provided proceeds to the Fort St. John Firefighters Charitable Society which provides assistant with medical transport. The Women's Resource Centre provided a needs list and AFDE employees are working hard to fulfill it by collecting donations from local business and coworkers. The delivery will be made on Monday and will fill two trailers due to the hard work and generosity of AFDE employees.
- A young engineer recently provided a presentation at a local school regarding 'Engineering your Career'. Its great to have employees out in the community.
- AFDE has a few apprentices from McLeod Lake Indian Band. Northern Lights College, McLeod Lake Indian and AFDE worked to provide carpentry apprenticeships which started with high school upgrading and pre-apprentice work. Four graduates joined AFDE in 2020 and are taking their level three technical training in the new year. This will mean that these employees will be able to obtain their red seal which is fantastic. The community has been great to work with.

### **Jamie Bodnarchuck PRHP**

- The community investment program wrapped up for the year. This holiday season PRHP contributed to 15 Peace River charities with some of the largest donations to the Fort St. John Literacy Society, The Fort St. John Salvation Army Food Bank, the Fort St. John's Women's Resource Society and North Peace Kid Sport. They each received \$5,000. Community Bridge received a donation of \$10,000. A site wide donation drive is taking place at all PRHP works locations, food and hamper items collected will be delivered to the Salvation Army shortly before Christmas.
- With the implementation of a recycling program donations were also provided to the Ann Roberts Young Elementary School, Spark Women's Leadership Conference, The Tansi Friendship Centre, The Nawican Friendship Center and the Fort St. John Friendship Society along with PPE and Dress for Success programs.

## **Roundtable**

A roundtable update occurred from the local community representatives:

- Mayor Courtoreille reported that it is sunny and warm in Chetwynd and it is wonderful to hear about the donations being made this time of the year. In the region there seems to be a big discrepancy between higher paying jobs and lower paying jobs and the help is needed.
- Chair Sperling wanted to remind BC Hydro that this is wintertime and there still seems to be an issue with trucks leaving Gate B and getting stuck. Three incidents have already happened.



There is no reason for these issues to take place after five years of construction this should be handled. Chair Sperling explained that he will be contacting the Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement as well as the local media if it occurs again.

- Dave Conway agreed that this issue is a concern and BC Hydro has recently taken steps to ensure all drivers leaving Gate B are provided with information, should there be an issue, by notifying security. Staff will confirm that vehicles will be chained when leaving site as they are also required to be chained while driving on site. Truck drivers are also being provided with contact information for flagging and tow truck companies to quickly respond. The security group will notify the construction group of any incidents as soon as they happen. There will be patrols and communication will be tightened up between BC Hydro and the Ministry's contractor as well as having a Site C contractor on standby.
- Director Goodings wishes everyone a wonderful Christmas season and hopes Dave Conway enjoys his retirement.
- Director Rose commented that this was a great meeting and appreciated the responses to the questions asked. It would be nice to see more than 25% of the workers to be from the region.
- Mayor Fraser enjoyed today's conversations and appreciate the work being done by AFDE with the Red Seal Certification program.
- Mayor Heiberg would like to thank the presenters today and wishes everyone a Merry Christmas.
- Dave Conway informed the committee that he has handed in his notice of retirement; his last day of employment will be April 29, 2022. Dave hopes to keep up his contacts in the area and that it has been a privilege to work with everyone in the Peace River Area.

### **Next Steps & Closing**

- The next meeting date is tentatively set for March 16 or March 23.
  - March 16 is preferred as this time.
  - Wendy will poll the RCLC members for their meeting date preference.

RCLC meeting ended at 3:14 p.m.