

October 2019

Why are you removing wood from the Site C reservoir area?

We are clearing the reservoir area of trees and loose woody debris, where practical, in order to prepare for river diversion in 2020 and reservoir inundation in 2023. Removing debris helps to ensure boater safety and reduce impacts to dam construction and operations.

What areas of the Site C reservoir are you clearing?

We are removing trees that are merchantable, or those that will grow above the safe boating line once the reservoir is created. We only clear where it is safe and the land is stable. Otherwise, trees and vegetation are left behind. Debris that is left behind will be cut to 4 metres in length to ensure the safe operations of the river diversion tunnels, the generating station, and in other areas downstream. We are also installing four debris management structures (booms and piles) upstream of the dam site to catch debris in the water.

What are “merchantable” trees?

Any merchantable trees removed as part of Site C clearing will be hauled to local mills. To be merchantable, the trees need to have market demand, being the right size, species and in the right location. At the moment, local mills only accept coniferous trees. There is no market demand for deciduous trees at this time, which are common in the Peace Region. In addition, location plays a factor, as the area where the trees are being cut needs to be in close proximity to access roads so they can be hauled to local mills.

Why are you burning the wood, instead of disposing it in other ways?

It is common practice for infrastructure and resource projects in northern British Columbia to dispose of non-merchantable wood by burning, chipping or mulching it. Compared to other ways of disposal, these methods have the least economic and environmental impact. **How are you going to manage the impact of smoke on the community?**

We carefully plan and monitor all burning. This includes the timing, size and location of the wood piles, and the smoke being emitted. We comply with regulatory requirements and Site C's [Smoke Management Plan](#).

We also monitor weather and air quality at four BC Hydro monitoring stations near Site C. In addition, the Province of B.C. has weather and fine particulate monitoring stations in the Fort St. John area. We share monitoring results with the Province of B.C. which may issue public weather and air quality warnings, if needed.

How do you decide when you are going to burn?

Burning occurs during a specific weather condition, known as a “venting window”. A venting window means that there is enough air flow to disperse smoke. We burn during custom venting windows authorized under provincial regulations, specific to Site C. We often receive less than 24 hours of notice of a venting window.

How do I find out when burning is taking place?

Prior to any burning, we will notify local and regional governments, Indigenous groups, provincial agencies, first responders, health care providers, and nearby property owners, as outlined in the Smoke Management Plan. We will make every effort to provide 24-hour notification to these groups prior to burning.

In some circumstances, daily forecasts may not allow for a 24-hour notification. In these cases, stakeholders will be notified the morning of burning.

You can also visit www.sitecproject.com or www.twitter.com/sitecproject to get the latest information on planned burning.

What do I do if I see uncontrolled burning or a wildfire?

Safety is our top priority.

For the fastest response, any potential wildfire or uncontrolled burn should be reported to the BC Wildfire Service at 1 800 663-5555 or *5555 on a cell phone.

Contact us

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