

SITE C CLEAN ENERGY PROJECT

INDIGENOUS CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT

BC Hydro is committed to continuing to meet its obligation to consult and accommodate Indigenous groups, where appropriate. Consultation and engagement with Indigenous groups about the Site C project began in 2007 and will continue through all stages of construction.

As part of the environmental assessment process, BC Hydro has engaged approximately 60 Indigenous groups in B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories, with a greater depth of consultation with Treaty 8 First Nations that are in close proximity to the project. Following certification, BC Hydro is required to consult with 13 Indigenous groups with respect to construction of the project.

To date, BC Hydro has provided more than \$18 million in capacity funding for First Nations groups to participate in consultations, to carry out traditional land-use studies and community baseline studies, participate in the environmental assessment process and to review and provide comment on permit authorizations.

Federal/Provincial Consultation and Accommodation Report

The Site C project received federal and provincial environmental approvals on October 14, 2014, which included the release of a *Federal/Provincial Consultation and Accommodation Report*.

The conclusion of the report stated: *“The Agency and EAO are of the view that there has been meaningful consultation with the potentially affected Aboriginal groups, to understand the potential impacts of the proposed Project on Aboriginal Interests, and to develop substantive accommodation measures that are intended to reduce, mitigate or offset these impacts.”*

The report also concluded *“that consultation has been carried out in good faith and that the process was appropriate and reasonable in the circumstances.”*

BC Hydro and six Treaty 8 First Nations have reached Site C Project Agreements that will provide benefits, including economic opportunities, related to the construction and operation of the Site C project. Each of those First Nations has confirmed that they have been adequately consulted and accommodated in relation to the impacts of Site C on their Aboriginal and Treaty rights. Negotiations with other Indigenous groups are ongoing.

Economic opportunities

One of BC Hydro’s project objectives for Site C is to provide lasting economic and social benefits for northern communities and Indigenous groups. BC Hydro’s Indigenous contracting and procurement policy is designed to increase the involvement of First Nations groups in economic opportunities associated with BC Hydro’s business activities. For more information about the policy, please visit: [Indigenous Contract & Procurement Policy](#).

Trades training and employment

BC Hydro works with Indigenous community groups, contractors, employers, educational institutions and other organizations to advance initiatives to secure a supply of local workers.

For example, BC Hydro has provided \$1 million to support trades and skills training at Northern Lights College, 50 per cent of which is dedicated to Indigenous students. In addition, BC Hydro is working to

promote job opportunities within the local community, including working with construction contractors to facilitate local and Indigenous hiring.

Consultation and engagement activities

BC Hydro is committed to ongoing consultations and continuing dialogue with Indigenous groups.

Consultation and engagement activities during the construction of the project will include:

- Providing regular updates and communications to Indigenous groups about major project milestones and construction activities.
- Meeting with Indigenous groups to discuss the project, including conducting site visits and providing opportunities to monitor activities, as appropriate.
- In coordination with provincial agencies, consult with Indigenous groups in the project area regarding permits and authorizations.
- Supporting project-area Indigenous groups in identifying and confirming important cultural sites through ground-truthing (e.g., burial, ceremonial, habitation, medicinal and food plants).
- Establishing Indigenous advisory committees and providing opportunities to provide advice on specific mitigation initiatives (e.g., Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee).
- Developing communication forums and protocols to engage with Indigenous groups on the development of monitoring and mitigation measures related to the environment and current use of land and resources for traditional purposes (e.g., Environmental Forum).
- Implementing any commitments set out in Site C Project Agreements.

Results of consultations will be provided to BC Hydro and contractors to help support the development of mitigation measures, approaches to construction or strategies to avoid or mitigate impacts, where feasible.