



Aboriginal Group Communication Plan 2015-2016 Annual Report

Site C Clean Energy Project

Reporting period: June 5, 2015 to May 31, 2016

Date: July 5, 2016

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Table of Contents

1	Background	1
1.1	The Site C Clean Energy Project	1
1.2	Description of Site Preparation and Construction Activities During the Reporting Period	1
2	Objective and Scope	1
2.1	Objective of the Aboriginal Group Communication Plan	1
2.2	Scope and Reporting Period	2
3	Implementation of the Plan – June 2015 through May 2016.....	2
3.1	Notices of Construction Activities	2
3.2	E-mail Updates	4
3.3	Saulteau First Nations registered trapline holders	5
3.4	<i>Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups</i> SharePoint Site	5
3.5	Consultation Meetings	6
3.6	Fish Monitoring Program.....	8

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1 Background

1.1 The Site C Clean Energy Project

The Site C Clean Energy Project (the Project) will be the third dam and generating station on the Peace River in northeast B.C. The Project will provide 1,100 megawatts of capacity and about 5,100 gigawatt hours of energy each year to the province's integrated electricity system. The Project will be a source of clean, reliable and cost-effective electricity for BC Hydro's customers for more than 100 years.

The key components of the Project are:

- an earthfill dam, approximately 1,050 metres long and 60 metres high above the riverbed;
- an 83 kilometre long reservoir that will be, on average, two to three times the width of the current river;
- a generating station with six 183 MW generating units;
- two new 500 kilovolt AC transmission lines that will connect the Project facilities to the Peace Canyon Substation, along an existing right-of-way;
- realignment of six segments of Highway 29 over a total distance of approximately 30 kilometers; and
- construction of a berm at Hudson's Hope.

The Project will also include the construction of temporary access roads, a temporary bridge across the Peace River, and worker accommodation at the dam site.

1.2 Description of Site Preparation and Construction Activities During the Reporting Period

Construction of the Site C Clean Energy Project has been underway since late July 2015. During this period, construction crews have been undertaking site preparation activities in advance of the main civil works contractor's mobilization to site. These activities included the following: clearing trees and vegetation at the dam site, upgrading public roads, building construction access roads at the dam site, constructing a 1,600-person worker accommodation facility, excavation and slope stabilization, and completion of a temporary construction bridge.

The reporting period for this annual report coincides generally with the first year of Project construction.

2 Objective and Scope

2.1 Objective of the Aboriginal Group Communication Plan

The objective of the June 5, 2015 Aboriginal Group Communication Plan (AGCP) is to fulfill the requirements of EAC conditions 27 and 72, and federal Decision Statement condition 14.2. The AGCP establishes a communications program for informing Aboriginal harvesters about

construction activities related to the Site C Project (the “Project”) that may affect their harvesting opportunities for plants, fish and game, as well as access to those opportunities.

2.2 Scope and Reporting Period

This annual report describes BC Hydro’s communications and engagement activities with Aboriginal groups through implementation of the AGCP in the first year of the plan’s implementation; June 2015 through May 2016.

3 Implementation of the Plan – June 2015 through May 2016

This report summarizes the implementation of the communication and consultation initiatives specific to Aboriginal groups that are described in section 5.0 of the AGCP. The communications activities described at the beginning of section 5.0 are not specific to Aboriginal communities, but these materials are publicly available and it is expected that they are utilized by members of Aboriginal communities. Communications specific to Aboriginal groups that were undertaken in the reporting period are described below.

Unless otherwise indicated, the communications summarized below are sent out to all Aboriginal groups named in the EAC and federal Decision Statement: Sauteau First Nations, West Moberly First Nations, Prophet River First Nation, Blueberry River First Nations, Doig River First Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Halfway River First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Métis Nation British Columbia, Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, Duncan’s First Nation, and Dene Tha’ First Nation.

3.1 Notices of Construction Activities

These quarterly Notices to Aboriginal groups describe construction-related activities that are expected to commence, continue or be completed in the three-month period covered by the letter. They are intended to address EAC condition 27 and FDS 14.2 requiring BC Hydro to provide information to Aboriginal harvesters about construction activities that may affect their harvesting opportunities; they serve as the “Aboriginal Harvesters Information Sheet” described in the Aboriginal Group Communication Plan. The current schedule seeks to send out the construction notices roughly 30 days prior to the start of the notification period; i.e., the Notice of Construction Activities for April through June, 2016 was sent out on March 1, 2016.

On **July 8, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of mid-July through August 2015. The Notice provided information on the construction activities planned for the period, a 10-year construction schedule, and where to find more information about Project construction. BC Hydro also advised that open houses had been scheduled to provide residents and the community with an update on construction planning.

On **August 7, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of September 2015. The Notice provided information on the construction activities planned for the period, the establishment and implementation of a Communications Forum, and ways to find more information about Project construction. The Notice also requested feedback on how best to communicate with Aboriginal groups regarding ongoing construction, and affirmed BC Hydro’s commitment to meeting directly with interested communities.

On **September 15, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of October through December 2015. The Notice provided information on the construction activities planned for the period, as well as ways to find out more information about Project

construction. The Notice also requested input and suggestions for the upcoming Communications Forum, and affirmed BC Hydro's commitment to meeting directly with interested communities.

On **October 23, 2015**, BC Hydro sent an email update to the October through December 2015 Notice of Construction Activities. BC Hydro provided information on the installation of the temporary Moberly River clearing bridge, as well as docks on both shores of the Peace River at the dam site. BC Hydro also offered to meet with interested communities to discuss upcoming construction work in greater detail.

On **December 1, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of January through March 2016. The Notice provided information on the construction activities planned for the period, as well as ways to find out more information about Project construction. The Notice introduced the *Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups* SharePoint Site that was established to share information with Aboriginal groups during Project construction, along with an overview of the information available on the SharePoint site. The Notice also advised that the first Communications Forum took place on November 26, 2015, and the next one would be planned for spring 2016. BC Hydro also offered to meet with interested communities to discuss upcoming construction work in greater detail.

On **February 19, 2016**, BC Hydro sent an e-mail update to the January through March 2016 Notice of Construction Activities. The e-mail provided information on the geotechnical investigation work related to Highway 29 realignment that was expected to commence the following week at Cache Creek/ Bear Flat. The email update also reminded Aboriginal groups about, and welcomed participation in, the fourth Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting on March 2, 2016, and the second Communications Forum, on April 21, 2016, to discuss construction related topics, exchange information, and develop mitigation measures related to cultural and heritage resources.

On **March 1, 2016**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of April through June 2016. The Notice provided information on the construction activities planned for the period and a reminder about the types of Project information available on the *Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups* SharePoint site. The Notice also advised that the next Communications Forum would be held on April 21, 2016. BC Hydro also offered to meet with interested communities to discuss upcoming construction work in greater detail.

On **March 4, 2016**, BC Hydro sent an e-mail to Sauleau First Nations registered trapline holders, and attached the Notice of Construction Activities for April through June 2016. BC Hydro advised that the Notice was provided in response to the meeting with registered trapline holders in December 2015 whereby BC Hydro agreed to share information about construction activities directly with the registered trapline holders.

On **May 31, 2016**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of July through September 2016. The Notice provided information on construction planned for the period and a reminder about the types of Project information available on the *Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups* SharePoint site. The notice also reminded that the next Aboriginal group Communication Forum would be held in October 2016.

The Notices of Construction Activities are posted for Aboriginal groups on the *Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups* SharePoint site (see section 3.4). Confidential information such as SharePoint log-in information or other sensitive material is removed from public versions that are posted with other construction bulletins on the Project's public website at the following address:

<https://www.sitecproject.com/construction-activities/construction-bulletins>

3.2 E-mail Updates

On **November 2, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out an e-mail with the attached Monthly Environmental Monitoring Summary Report for August 2015. The report summarizes information provided by environmental monitors, field inspections, environmental incidents, and construction activities, and are submitted to the Independent Environmental Monitor for the Project, and to government agencies.

On **November 17, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out an e-mail providing several Environmental Protection Plans to Aboriginal Groups via the SharePoint site. BC Hydro provided the hyperlink and sign-in information for the SharePoint location where the plans are saved.

On **December 23, 2015**, BC Hydro sent out the monthly environmental monitoring summary reports for September and October 2015. The reports summarize information provided by environmental monitors, field inspections, environmental incidents, and construction activities, and are submitted to the Independent Environmental Monitor for the Project and to government agencies. BC Hydro provided the hyperlink and sign-in information for the SharePoint location where the reports are saved.

On **January 8, 2016**, BC Hydro sent a letter updating Aboriginal Groups on the transmission line component. The letter provided an overview on the construction of two new transmission lines within the existing transmission right-of-way located south of the Peace River. The letter also provided information on clearing activities, access roads, substation and the anticipated construction schedule. BC Hydro expressed interest in hearing from Aboriginal groups regarding ground truthing activities and site visits to identify areas of interest within the transmission line activity area and the general project area, and identified the availability of funding to facilitate the Aboriginal participation.

On **January 22, 2016**, BC Hydro sent out an email providing the Vegetation and Wildlife Mitigation and Monitoring Plan - 2015 Annual Report, dated January 22, 2016, and the Traffic and Pavement Monitoring Report, dated January 22, 2016. The documents were made available on the SharePoint site, and a hyperlink and access information was provided in the email.

On **February 4, 2016**, BC Hydro sent out an email advising Revision 2 of the Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), dated February 4, 2016, had been uploaded to the SharePoint Site. The document replaced Revision 1 of the CEMP, dated June 5, 2015. The revised CEMP was made available on the SharePoint site, and a hyperlink and access information was provided in the email.

On **April 8, 2016**, BC Hydro sent out an email introducing new bi-weekly e-mail updates for Aboriginal groups. In this e-mail, BC Hydro provided an overview of the ways it was currently sharing information with Aboriginal groups: Notices of Construction Activities; the Communications Forum; the Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups SharePoint site; email updates to the Notices (as required); and, email notification of new documents made available on the SharePoint site. BC Hydro advised that this would be the first of new bi-weekly e-mail updates that would be consolidate the "as-needed" updates; e.g., new documents available on SharePoint, updates to the Notices of Construction Activities, procurement or permitting updates, etc. This would allow for predictable scheduled e-mails and reduce the number of e-mails sent out to Aboriginal groups. In this email, BC Hydro provided the following information as the first update: regulatory and permitting update; upcoming CHRC and Communications Forum meetings; new monitoring reports and Environmental Protection Plans on SharePoint; and an update that the contract for turbines and generators had been awarded to Voith Hydro Inc.

The **April 26, 2016** bi-weekly information update notified Aboriginal groups of a new Environmental Protection Plan uploaded to the SharePoint site, as well as notice of the upcoming Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting and the next Communications Forum.

The **May 6, 2016** bi-weekly information update notified Aboriginal groups about new interim reports filed pursuant to the Heritage Conservation Act permit, and reminded Aboriginal groups about the Heritage Reports currently saved on the SharePoint site. Information about the Request for Qualifications for the generating station and spillways was also provided, along with links to more information on the Site C Project's public website.

The **May 20, 2016** bi-weekly information update notified Aboriginal groups of the bi-weekly Construction Bulletins that are issued to provide information about upcoming construction activities, the anticipated duration of work, and potential impacts to residents and businesses adjacent to work areas. The information sheet on upcoming activities at the 85th Ave Industrial Lands and the conveyor corridor was also attached. The update also provided notification that vegetation clearing at Portage Mountain Quarry was completed.

3.3 Saulteau First Nations registered trapline holders

Site C's Aboriginal Relations staff met with Saulteau First Nations registered trapline holders in **December 2015** to share construction activity information related to the transmission line. As a result of this meeting, they have been subscribed to receive general project notifications, including those relating to construction activities, as well as the most recent construction notices for the periods of January through March, 2016 as well as April through June, 2016 (described above).

A follow-up letter was sent out to Aboriginal groups on **January 8, 2016**, detailing works planned for the transmission line component of the Project. The letter provided an overview of the transmission line, clearing activities, access roads, substation, the anticipated construction schedule, and an invitation for further discussion, ground truthing, and site visits. Site C's Properties group continues to work with registered trapline holders respecting compensation for any impacts to their tenure.

3.4 Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups SharePoint Site

BC Hydro is using a SharePoint site for purposes of sharing Project information with Aboriginal groups as construction proceeds. BC Hydro adds documents periodically as they are finalized and made available, or as required by conditions attached to permits & authorizations, the EAC, or the federal Decision Statement.

Information on the following topics is saved to the SharePoint site:

- Bi-weekly Updates
- Communications Forum Materials
- Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee Materials
- Environmental Protection Plans (EPPs)
- Environmental Reporting, including monitoring summary reports
- Heritage Reports from Golder Associates

- Permits and Authorizations, including information on the Leaves to Commence Construction issued under the Water Licence.
- Mitigation and Monitoring Plans, including finalized plans and draft plans available for consultation
- Notices of Construction Activities

Information about the SharePoint site along with sign-in information is provided to Aboriginal groups in communications described above in sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 of this report.

3.5 Consultation Meetings

3.5.1 Communications Forum

As required by *Land Act* Licences, BC Hydro holds bi-annual consultation meetings (i.e., a Communications Forum) with Aboriginal groups to discuss the following:

- Updates to construction schedule
- Initiation or completion of key phases or activities of construction
- Amendments or updates to relevant mitigation, management and monitoring plans
- Summaries of Environmental Incidents
- Review of key values and concerns identified through implementation of mitigation and management plans and how those issues were addressed (i.e. Environmental Protection Plans).
- New or upcoming applications for construction, operation. Or mitigation works related to Site C
- Coordination of site visits and ground truthing exercises

On **August 7, 2015**, BC Hydro sent a letter to the 13 Aboriginal Groups regarding notice of construction activities for the month of September, and asked for input about the establishment and implementation of a Communications Forum.

On **September 15, 2015**, BC Hydro sent a letter to the 13 Aboriginal Groups regarding notice of construction activities from October to December 2015, and asked for thoughts on and suggestions for the Communications Forum.

On **September 29, 2015**, BC Hydro sent a letter invitation to the 13 Aboriginal Groups to participate in the first Communications Forum, to be held on October 28, 2015, to discuss construction related topics. BC Hydro advised that honorariums and travel costs reimbursement would be provided to participants.

On **October 16, 2016**, BC Hydro sent an e-mail to the 13 Aboriginal Groups and advised that the Communications Forum had been rescheduled for November 26, 2016. The e-mail provided a proposed agenda and registration information.

The **first Communications Forum** was held on **November 26, 2015**. Representatives from the following Aboriginal groups and organizations took part in the Forum: Dene Tha' First Nation, Doig River First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Métis Nation British Columbia, McLeod Lake Indian Band, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, Transport Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and BC Hydro.

A summary of discussions and responses to action items stemming from the November 26 meeting were sent out to participating Aboriginal groups on **December 17, 2015**, and also shared with rest of the 13 Aboriginal groups via the SharePoint site. This information was also shared with MFLNRO, Transport Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

On **February 19, 2016**, BC Hydro advised Aboriginal groups that the next Communications Forum would be held on April 21, 2016. This information was included in the email update to the Notice of Construction Activities.

On **March 23, 2016**, BC Hydro sent a letter invitation to the 13 Aboriginal Groups for the upcoming Communications Forum, scheduled for April 21, 2016. BC Hydro provided the details of the meeting, registration information, and a draft meeting agenda.

The **second Communications Forum** was held on **April 21, 2016** in Fort St. John. Representatives from the following Aboriginal groups and organizations took part in the Forum: Dene Tha' First Nation, Doig River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, Métis Nation British Columbia, McLeod Lake Indian Band, BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations, Transport Canada, and BC Hydro.

A summary of discussions and responses to action items stemming from the April 21 meeting were sent out to participating Aboriginal groups on **May 24, 2016**, and also shared with rest of the Aboriginal groups via the SharePoint site. This information was also shared with MFLNRO, Transport Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

3.5.2 Site Visits

BC Hydro maintains a standing invitation to Aboriginal groups to meet and discuss any issues or concerns regarding the project as construction proceeds, as well as to host site visits in the project activity zone with interested Aboriginal groups. Site C's Aboriginal Relations staff has conducted site visits and ground truthing activities with interested Aboriginal groups in the dam site area, along the transmission line, and on the Peace River between Halfway River and Taylor.

During the reporting period, site visits were conducted with the following Aboriginal groups:

- McLeod Lake Indian Band - September 30, 2015. Approximately 20 MLIB elders participated in a site visit to the dam site area, north and south bank.
- Halfway River First Nation - October 1, 2015. Site visit with two HRFN members as well as their two consultants, visiting the dam site area north and south bank, as well as a boat trip up the Peace River as far as the confluence with the Halfway River.
- Blueberry River First Nations (April 21, 2016). Approximately 30 elders participated in a site visit to the dam site area, north and south bank.
- Dene Tha' First Nation - April 22, 2016. Site visit with three DTFN members to the north bank viewpoint, and out along Highway 29 to the construction nodes near Halfway River and Cache Creek.

3.5.3 Regional Community Liaison Committee

BC Hydro has established the Regional Community Liaison Committee (RCLC) during Project construction to foster dialogue between BC Hydro, Peace region local governments and First Nations. The RCLC will provide awareness of construction activities, construction schedules,

local interests, enquiries and concerns, and encourage participation and input from RCLC representatives. The RCLC will be an advisory committee to BC Hydro.

Invitations to sit on the Committee were sent to the following Aboriginal groups on April 6, 2016:

- Blueberry River First Nations
- Doig River First Nation
- Halfway River First Nation
- McLeod Lake Indian Band
- Saulteau First Nations
- West Moberly First Nations

To date, Doig River First Nation and McLeod Lake Indian Band have accepted the invitation to participate as members of the Committee. The invitation to the remaining four First Nations remains open. Follow-up invitations were sent to the above First Nations on June 6, 2016.

For more information on the Committee and a summary of its activities, please refer to the annual report for the Site C Construction Communications Plan.

3.6 Fish Monitoring Program

BC Hydro will communicate the results of the Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Monitoring and Follow-up Program to Aboriginal groups as annual monitoring reports are made available. Section 6, Implementation and Reporting, of that plan describes annual reporting starting in March 2017.