

Site C Clean Energy Project Project Definition Consultation, Fall 2012 Consultation Summary Report

January 2013

Appendix 3: Open House Meeting Notes



MEETING DETAILS	BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project Project Definition Consultation, Fall 2012
OPEN HOUSE	Fort St. John – Open House September 11, 2012, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. Quality Inn Northern Grand – Grand 1 9830 100 th Avenue Fort St. John, B.C.

PURPOSE	Notes from a public open house for the BC Hydro Site C Clean Energy Project held with stakeholders and representatives of the Site C Project on September 11, 2012 at Quality Inn Northern Grand, Fort St. John, B.C.
FACILITATOR	Judy Kirk, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.
SITE C PROJECT TEAM ATTENDEES	Dave Conway, BC Hydro Siobhan Jackson, BC Hydro Duane Anderson, BC Hydro Judith Reynier, BC Hydro Don Wharf, BC Hydro Paul Veltmeyer, BC Hydro Paul Christie, Site C Project Team Jack Weisgerber, BC Hydro Mike Savidant, BC Hydro Karen Schroder, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd. Lisa Santos, Kirk & Co. Consulting Ltd.

KEY THEMES

Agriculture

- Participants were concerned with the loss of valuable agricultural land as a result of the project.

Transportation

- Participants asked about the length of new roads that would be created as part of the project, timing of access that would be needed for clearing, and whether construction of new roads for the Site C project would impact regional aggregate supplies.

Expressions of Opposition

- Some participants expressed their opposition to the Site C project.
 - Two First Nations participants stated their opposition to the Site C project.
 - One participant expressed concerns about soil stability and erosion and said the soil stability was a 'showstopper' for the project.

The record notes that the Q&A session was called to order at 8:00 p.m.

DISCUSSION

(Abbreviations will be used and mean – Q: Question, A: Answer, C: Comment)

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1. Welcome and Introductions – Judy Kirk

Judy Kirk welcomed participants to the open house, and explained the format of the Q & A. Judy informed participants that the question and answer session was being recorded for accuracy. The BC Hydro Site C team members introduced themselves.

2. Questions and Answers - All

Q: *Diane Culling* : I don't expect you're going to be able to answer this and I don't mean any disrespect by that. However, I would like the question on public record. On the agriculture table for capability, the ranking system where there is no Class 1 in the valley without irrigation, do you know how that compares to the Okanagan? Because I strongly suspect that the Okanagan Valley and all those vineyards and all that amazing agricultural wealth would have that same type of restrictions without irrigation. Can you speak to that at all? Or else I would just like to point out that these are extremely valuable agricultural lands – with or without irrigation.

Q: *Paul Christie*: My name is Paul Christie and I am a professional agrologist assisting Site C and the Golder team with the agricultural assessment; soils and agricultural capability is my background. The agricultural land improves with irrigation to Class 1, without irrigation, the land capability classification for agriculture on the good land is Class 2 or 3 because of climatic and soil limitations – a climatic moisture deficit. That has been known since 1983 and our recent climate data and study has confirmed that. With respect to the Okanagan, both areas have a Class 1 climate. To have a Class 1 agriculture rating for agriculture you need a Class 1 climate and you Class 1 soils – soil without any major limitations, such as stoniness. The Okanagan has a Class 1 climate that is different than the Class 1 climate here but they are both rated Class 1 because of the number of growing days and other attributes. They are both capable of producing a range of crops – different types of crops grow in the two areas.

Q: *Diane Culling*: So they both have Class 1 climates, but are the lands comparable? The lands are very capable even if they are not all very suitable currently due to the flood reserve but I want to point out these lands are very valuable. My question, the lands in the Okanagan do they also have the caveat of having to be irrigated?

A: *Paul Christie*: Yes, most of those lands in the Okanagan bench land are more like a Class 5 or 6 without irrigation as the area gets little rain. So in the unimproved state, in a natural state, the lands would not be capable of producing much at all without irrigation. For a long time here in the Peace Valley the unimproved rating was used because they thought that there was a very small, if any moisture deficit. But it is now realized that there is a moisture deficit that could be improved with irrigation. Does that help answer your question?

Q: *Diane Culling*: Yes, I just want to make abundantly clear that we are talking about valuable, high capability lands that would be inundated.

Q: *Ken Boon*: Is it not true that the Class 1 land in the Peace Valley is the farthest north Class 1 agriculture land in B.C. and the next nearest agricultural land is near Quesnel?

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A: *Paul Christie:* Yes, certainly this is far north for the Class 1 climate. There is one other area, in the Stikine that has good vegetable production but I am not sure it's Class 1 capability or not. But I think we take your point, it is pretty far north for the Class 1 climate.

C: *Heather Paris Dominic:* I am going to speak for the Doig River First Nations. Through the Attachie, where you are going flood, that is where my ancestors are buried. Are you going to take them out of the caskets before you berm and dike? I have lots of family members in the Moberly First Nations because I'm a Davis, but based out of Doig River First Nations. What are you guys going to do before you flood? What are you going to do with my ancestors who are buried in the Attachie and Hudson's Hope. I am speaking for my people, the Doig River First Nations. Are you going to take them out of the caskets and bring them back to our lands?

When I came back from work from Mackenzie on Friday, I was shown how high the flood levels would be. It would take out all those beautiful homes. It's going to be all flooded out – what are you guys going to gain from that? More power? I'm not even going to get angry about this. But this is very senseless. Even though we protest, I know you are going to do it. You guys are going win. You put a Smart Meter on my house. And now I have to work extra every month just to pay my power bill. I do not like it. Even though I live on a god damn reservation, I do not like it. I am speaking for the Doig River First Nation and in November I am going to run for Council and I am going to oppose the government. I was thinking of a road block in front of here today. But they told me I would be arrested for that. This is very senseless.

I go fishing to get away. And now you are going to destroy our fish, you are going to kill all our moose. Where are my people going to go hunting? This is all very senseless, just for power. Why don't you do it in Vancouver? You are going to kill all the deer, moose and elks for my people. What's the sense of this? I think make the energy somewhere else. Why should we supply Vancouver? I check my internet, I know what I'm talking about.

I am going to run for council in November for Doig River. I am going to fight you people until the day I die. I wish Custer was alive. It's so senseless. I don't usually speak to people but I am standing up for my people of Doig River and we oppose the dam. I like to fight the government every chance I get – with the Hydro, with the rates. But I stand for all my people.

Q: *Henry Burgens:* I have lived in the Peace region for 37 years and we need another road to Chetwynd, one that is a lot shorter than the one we have now. The bridge to Taylor is getting old, every summer they do welding and maintenance on it. A new bridge to Taylor would take a lot of traffic off that road.

Q: *Diane Culling:* With respect to this man's comment, the current cost estimate does not include a bridge for public use over the Peace River, correct?

A: *Mike Savidant:* The design we have moved to, includes a temporary construction access bridge over the Peace and there would be no permanent bridge. The current cost estimate is based on that design, so no, it does not include a bridge over the Peace River.

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- Q: *Diane Culling:* So if anyone is looking for a bridge and access over the Peace that is additive to the current cost estimate. In so far as depletion of the regional aggregate supply, you are looking at Wuthridge and Pine Pass which has been earmarked for highway maintenance. If Site C was to go ahead, it would be depleting the supply needed for regional road maintenance and construction, so what provisions are there for that?
- A: *Duane Anderson:* We look to sourcing the materials for construction as close to the dam site as possible and it's part of the reason the dam is located where it is. The vast majority of material for the dam itself would come from the dam site, on the right bank terrace. We are going off-site, to the Wuthridge Quarry as you mentioned, for rip rap. We are looking existing quarries since that will lessen our impact as the quarry and the road infrastructure already exists. When we are looking at aggregate for highway realignment, we are looking at the same thing, getting materials as close to the construction area as possible. We are looking at taking aggregate from areas that would be inundated and so would not available in the future.
- A: *Don Wharf:* With respect to the Ministry's interest in those aggregate sources, the amount available at Wuthridge far exceeds the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure's long-term plans, so that's why they have allowed us access to the site. With regard to West Pine, we are developing a site next to the Ministry's site, so we will not be depleting their reserves. So again, they have enough materials for their long-term needs.
- Q: *Arlene Boon:* The proposed access roads on the map are too small to be seen in the Discussion Guide. I had to go home and look at it through a magnifying glass. It's very disturbing that you can't publish something that can be seen a lot more easily than this and determine where the impacts will be so we can discuss them.
- Q: *Judy Kirk:* Arlene, did you have a chance to look at the big maps here tonight? We are also looking at putting those online.
- A: *Arlene Boon:* No, I didn't have a chance. And it's even worse online to be honest. Unless you have a massive screen and I am energy conscious so I don't. What is the total kilometres of new access roads that will be needed?
- A: *Don Wharf:* The information about the roads needed for clearing are on page 28. With respect to Highway 29 realignment that's 30 kilometres, the Jackfish Lake Road is 34 kilometres so you are looking at about 300 kilometres of road.
- Q: *Arlene Boon:* Does that include the roads you are going to make up Cache Creek and the Halfway?
- A: *Don Wharf:* Yes, it does.
- Q: *Arlene Boon:* So then how many kilometres for the bridges that you are going to have to make to go from the mainland to the islands?
- C: *Siobhan Jackson:* Just in terms of cost estimates for specific items, we don't provide those for commercial reasons. We need to go to procurement and from a competitive point of view we don't put specific estimates on components. But Paul Veltmeyer is our forester and he can speak to the total number of crossings.
- A: *Paul Veltmeyer:* I can only give you an estimate.

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- C: *Arlene Boon*: That's all we've been getting this whole project, so it's not surprising. Thanks.
- A: *Paul Veltmeyer*: In terms of total spans, there will be 80 20-metre spans. Some of those would be connected together for one crossing and some would be used individually. Some of the crossings in the Halfway would use ice
- Q: *Arlene Boon*: So will some of them be in the summer and some in the winter?
- A: *Paul Veltmeyer*: No, they will be in the wintertime.
- Q: *Arlene Boon*: The wintertime...it's disgusting. So my next comment is, when you guys are going to remove the flood reserve and let us live in peace in this Peace Valley?
- A: *Dave Conway*: There are no plans to remove the flood reserve. We've been asked to move forward into the environmental assessment process and project requires certification and the provincial government would have to make a decision ultimately about the flood reserve.
- C: *Arlene Boon*: You guys are beating a dead cat so you might as well go home. Thanks.
- Q: *Judy Kirk*: Any other questions or comments?
- A: *Heather Paris Dominic*: Yes, I do. I am going to speak in my native tongue for my people of the Moberly River (speaks for 1 minute). I am going to put some white man tongue in there as well... Where are the fish going to move to? They will be dead. Where is my white family going to move to? My native family going to move to? To higher ground?
I kind of wish I was there for Custer, I wish I was his warrior. But now I am speaking for my people and the people who live in this region. This is terrible. I don't know why you are doing this. Why don't you just get the power from Victoria or Alberta?
I am a welder. But they are having a hard time getting the Enbridge through so I am out of work. I wish I could stop the B.C. government and pick a right Premier just to get rid of you guys. But as a native woman, I can't do nothing until I get on the council in November. I'll be fighting you guys every moment. You guys take half my paycheque so what's the use. I'm a native woman from the Doig River Reservoir. You guys take half my paycheque so why the hell should I go to work? We are just small people. You guys are just going to go ahead and do it. One day, I wish you would just be phased out. You tell us how to run our reservation. How do our government. I pay my taxes and you know what? My son graduated in June and joined the army just to get away from B.C. and now my other son who is 15, wants to join the army in the U.S. He said mom when you come back from your welding job, the government has all your goddamn money.
I'd love to go to jail; I'd love to put up a road block. I wanted to put a road block up here but they told me no. I'm speaking for my people in Doig River. You guys are going to flood where my ancestors are buried, at Attachie. What are you going to do unbury them? And take them to Doig River and bury them again? I think not. I want go on another Paddle to the Peace and go to Victoria and speak to the Premier. The stupid Premier. Last time in 2010, he was too scared to meet us. Us Indians. We paddled all the way to parliament but no big chiefs from the parliament would talk to us. No one would talk to us. I was so pissed off. I don't see the sense in what you are doing. More money, I bet you make about \$100K a month. I think it's a sense of power from the government. I am speaking for my people, for all the people who live in that peaceful valley, all those people who are going to get flooded out. For what? For power. We don't want no power. You gotta see my power bill every month. I do not like it. Maybe I should just get a teepee and go without power.

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- Q: *Cheryl*: My name is Cheryl and I am from the Halfway River. What do you think about the about Site C protests?
- A: *Dave Conway*: We respect your decision to make your concerns heard and we respect your right to do that. We welcome you in and we know you want other people to hear that whether it is to us directly or to have it on the record. And that is part of the process and we welcome it.
- C: *Cheryl*: My name is Cheryl Lilly and I am a protester against the Site C dam. The only time the government can take away our land is when the Earth stops going around, when the river stops flowing, when the sun stops shining, when the people stop praying, that's when they can take away our land. So no more Site C, I am against it. I am from Halfway River. That's all I have to say.
- Q: *Brian Ridell*: There is an omission in this Guide. There is no discussion of how to mitigate for the extra moisture that will be generated from the dam's lake and would be brought to the Fort St. John airport. I am feeling slighted that it is not in this Guide. I need to bring it back up to you folks, so you know that should not have happened. It is very important part that must be included in the environmental assessment that you are doing. There is all whole science around this condensation cycle. When you have a brand new dam coming just seven kilometres downstream from the airport there is going to be a whole lot more evaporating water coming up to the airport and fogging in the airport. It will do that, no matter how many times someone says it won't. There was been a difference since the OSB plant went it. It is stacking up airplanes seven high trying to get into the airport. And that's what's happening now, what's going to happen when you get in there and bring this beautiful lake in here? Our planes are up the creek without a paddle. You have to look at it seriously, you really do. That's a heck of a lot of moisture that will generate more fog. Plus it's right next to the town of Taylor which is the biggest producer of condensation nuclei from here to Prince George.
- C: *Siobhan Jackson*: These are only four topics with new information. I can confirm and re-assure you that assessment of potential climate and fog changes at the airport are included in the environmental assessment. We have engaged climate specialists, the company is called RWDI and they are completing climate models for the valley, the areas adjacent to the reservoir, the airport and Taylor. The Environment Impact Statement Guidelines were just finalized last week and you can find them online so you can look at those assessment areas yourself.
- C: *Pamela Denowdan*: I would like to comment on what Mr. Riddell just said, not to be contrary but he said a beautiful lake. It is not going to be a lake, behind a dam is a reservoir. Although it says on the map Williston Lake, it is also a reservoir. We have to be wary of the language we use and strike that from our minds that it was going to be a beautiful lake. We know if this project goes ahead, there would be seven years of plenty. Seven years of building and frantic work in Fort St. John. It will remind many of the boom in the late 1970s. And once the dam is completed, should it go ahead, there would be very few people needed to operate it. On the other hand, we all know that the amount of natural gas that has been discovered in this area recently will yield over the next tens of dozens of years, far surpassing the lifespan of the dam, steady employment for many. Thank you.

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C: *Heather Paris Dominic:* Why are you even thinking of this? You already have a dam – leave it at that. Why do you have to get rid of these people? This is senseless. Why don't you do it somewhere else? In Vancouver. Get it away from us. You guys are going to destroy all this beautiful land. You are going to do that for what? Money? Power? I am going to oppose this until the day I die. I hope you guys can sleep at night. You are going to destroy all the wildlife. You are going to destroy beautiful family homes, where they have lived all their lives. They made my late dad cut off all his braids off and live like a white man when they did that his spirit died. My 17-year old son joined the army. And for what?

We were told to move, way the hell out of here. I graduated and I went to UBC for social work but I did not like white authority and I rebelled. I came back to this land, this is my land and I am going to protect my people from Moberly Lake. Everything is going to be wiped out just because you want to build a damn dam. Why? This is senseless.

Q: *Arthur Hadland:* I have to bring this back to the Site C committee; I guess you are the committee. "The uncertainties of predicting both the extent and rate of the reservoir shoreline impacts leads to the proposal to adopt an observational approach for periodically reviewing and updating the reservoir impact lines after the reservoir has been filled." To me that's a showstopper. And I'm not sure how you can get around that. I have asked various members of the team to take the impact lines that were established around the one end of Williston Lake and see how close you were with the predictions back in 1973, or whenever that was, because I don't think anyone can predict what the shoreline impacts are going to be. I guess that is a thorn in your side because when I look at the centerline, the shales have actually slumped or failed right on the centerline. And I look at those lacustrine soils right above that, those clays, at the time I don't think engineers knew what they were. They are going to either slide in or you are going to spend billions of dollars trying to rectify it. I think this thing is a major mistake and I think your engineers got it right the first time. I guess I am just disappointed this isn't addressed. Just a comment.

C: *Heather Paris Dominic:* I have brought this up before about the height of the dam. BC Hydro has indicated before they were interested in lowering the height of the dam. I do not think the dam should go above the stable land deposited by the ice age water movements. It would reduce the dam a little bit but it would be much. It would reduce the amount of farmland destroyed and would reduce the amount of slides later on, which would impact the fish and everything else. And if BC Hydro still needed more power they could go to the Alberta border and build another little dam in there that would hardly impact anybody. That should still be looked. Thank you.

C: *Judy Kirk:* Thank you very much. We are going to end the question and answer period now. We are going to be here for a little to take any further individual questions. Going to ask Dave to wrap up.

Dave Conway wrapped up the meeting, thanked participants for their time and encouraged participants to complete the feedback form and encourage friends and others to participate.

The record notes that the question and answer session ended at 9:00 p.m.