
NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Energy and Mines
and Minister Responsible for Core Review

\$184K to support career and skills training in Northeast

FORT ST. JOHN – Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Core Review, announced today at the 2013 Fort St. John Energy Conference that BC Hydro is providing \$184,000 to support the creation of a school district career counsellor position. The goal of the career counsellor is to encourage students to stay in school by facilitating a transition into trades and career training.

Funding will be provided for a two-year period and will benefit students in School District 60 (Peace River North), School District 59 (Peace River South), School District 81 (Fort Nelson) and the First Nations Chalo School. BC Hydro is providing this funding so large scale projects like the proposed Site C dam, with an estimated 10,000 direct jobs during construction and 33,000 total jobs through all stages of development, can employ skilled workers from the Northeast.

BC Hydro is providing the funding to Northern Opportunities to support student education and the development of a skilled workforce in the region. Northern Opportunities will also serve as a liaison for BC Hydro with respect to its future recruitment and/or training requirements in northeast B.C.

Bennett made the announcement while speaking to delegates at the 2013 Energy Conference in Fort St. John. The annual conference attracts politicians, regulators, and industry leaders to discuss and share valuable information and to recognize the industry and its importance to the Northeast.

Quotes

Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines and Responsible for Core Review –

“Trades training is a priority for our government and this funding will help students get the skills they need to have a successful career. The opportunities in the north are substantial, particularly with projects on the horizon like Site C, liquefied natural gas plants and new mines.”

Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Responsible for Labour –

“Encouraging more high school students to choose a career in the trades is a key part of our Skills and Training Plan. This career counsellor position will play a vital role in helping our northern youth to benefit from the many job opportunities that are coming their way.”

Pat Pimm, MLA for Peace River North –

“The Northern Opportunities is such a valuable partnership and it is great to see BC Hydro providing its support for its career counsellor program. It’s another rewarding example of industry, school boards, and colleges all coming together for the betterment of our young people. There will be many jobs in the future and this program certainly gets our students ready for those good, skilled jobs.”

Susan Yurkovich, executive vice president, Site C, BC Hydro –

“BC Hydro understands the need for a skilled workforce in the northeast and we believe that funding a career counsellor position will benefit both students and industry. Site C will require a large number of skilled workers, and trades and skills training is needed to prepare students for these job opportunities.”

Doug Boyd, co-chair, Northern Opportunities –

“The career counsellor position is critical to the ongoing efforts currently underway by Northern Opportunities to increase awareness of career options for students and to increase student participation rates. Ultimately, we want students to stay in school and get the skills they need to have career success within their local communities.”

Quick Facts

Today’s funding announcement by BC Hydro builds on previous initiatives aimed at increasing skills and trades training in the northeast.

- In 2012, BC Hydro invested \$1 million to support trades and skills training at Northern Lights College, which has seen the creation of student bursaries that focus on recruitment and retention of students.
- In 2012, BC Hydro provided \$100,000 in funding to the North East Native Advancing Society to support trades training under its North East Aboriginal Trades Training (NEATT) program.
- In 2011, BC Hydro announced a three-year funding agreement with Northern Opportunities totalling \$105,000 for its pre-apprenticeship program.

About Northern Opportunities

Northern Opportunities is an innovative northeastern B.C. partnership of the Fort Nelson, Peace River North, and Peace River South school districts, Northern Lights College, First Nations, industry and your community with a common goal: to provide young people with a seamless learning pathway from secondary school to post-secondary training leading to career success.

About Site C

The Site C Clean Energy Project is a proposed third dam and hydroelectric generating station on the Peace River in northeast B.C. Site C would provide 1,100 megawatts (MW) of capacity, and produce about 5,100 gigawatt hours (GWh) of electricity each year — enough energy to power the equivalent of about 450,000 homes per year in B.C.

Subject to environmental certification, Site C would be a source of clean and renewable electricity for more than 100 years. More information on Site C can be found at:

www.bchydro.com/sitec.

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