

# *Aboriginal Group Communication Plan 2020-2021 Annual Report*

---

*Site C Clean Energy Project  
Reporting period: April 2020 to March 2021*

*March 31, 2021*

This page is intentionally left blank.

# Table of Contents

<b>Table of Acronyms</b> .....	<b>ii</b>
<b>1 Background</b> .....	<b>1</b>
1.1 The Site C Clean Energy Project .....	1
1.2 Description of Site Preparation and Construction Activities during the Reporting Period .....	1
<b>2 Objective and Scope</b> .....	<b>2</b>
2.1 Objective of the Aboriginal Group Communication Plan .....	2
2.2 Scope and Reporting Period .....	2
2.3 COVID-19 .....	3
<b>3 Implementation of the Plan – April 2020 through March 2021</b> .....	<b>3</b>
3.1 Notices of Construction Activities .....	4
3.2 Biweekly Information Updates to Indigenous Groups .....	4
3.3 Consultation Meetings .....	12
3.3.1 Permitting Forums .....	12
3.3.2 Environmental Forums .....	13
3.3.3 Culture and Heritage Resources Committee .....	14
3.4 Saulteau First Nations Registered Trapline Holders.....	15
3.5 Ground Truthing and other Field Activities .....	15
3.6 Site C Information for Indigenous Groups SharePoint Site.....	15
3.7 External Project Website.....	16
3.8 Environment Programs .....	16

## Table of Acronyms

<b>BRFN</b>	Blueberry River First Nations
<b>DFN</b>	Duncan's First Nation
<b>DRFN</b>	Doig River First Nation
<b>DTFN</b>	Dene Tha' First Nation
<b>FNFN</b>	Fort Nelson First Nation
<b>HLFN</b>	Horse Lake First Nation
<b>HRFN</b>	Halfway River First Nation
<b>KLMSS</b>	Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society
<b>MLIB</b>	McLeod Lake Indian Band
<b>MNBC</b>	Métis Nation British Columbia
<b>PRFN</b>	Prophet River First Nation
<b>SFN</b>	Saulteau First Nations
<b>WMFN</b>	West Moberly First Nations

# 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 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 also includes 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

The list below is intended to provide a high-level summary of construction activities that took place during this reporting period; it is not a complete list of all activities undertaken:

- In October 2020, BC Hydro successfully diverted the Peace River through two diversion tunnels and this allows the dam to be built on dry land. This milestone was one of the most important in the construction of Site C and involved building two 750-metre-long tunnels into the north bank of the river, through which the entire Peace River is now flowing.
- The earthfill dam construction continued with two cofferdams, which seal off the main channel of the river, are almost complete. The main earthfill dam will be constructed between the two cofferdams.
- Work on the generating station and spillways work on the right bank of the Peace River continued. Generating station and spillways work on the right bank of the Peace River includes the Site C powerhouse, penstocks, spillways, turbines and generators.

- In the powerhouse, 75 per cent of the concrete and 80 per cent of steel have been placed.
- The six penstocks, which will channel the water from the reservoir into the turbines and generators, are more than 50 per cent complete. Penstocks are large steel pipes which are 10 metres wide and 80 metres long.
- Two of the six turbine runners have been transported to site from Brazil. The next two runners will be transported to site this summer, and the last two transported in 2022.
- The Site C substation was completed in October 2020 and is now energized.
- The first of two new 500kV, 75-km transmission lines was completed and energized in fall 2020.
- BC Hydro is partnering with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to realign six segments of Highway 29, which connects from Hudson's Hope to Fort St. John.
- Construction is underway for all 30 kilometres of the highway that needed to be realigned to accommodate the future reservoir.
- Clearing of the 87-kilometre-long reservoir area is about 75 per cent complete.

More detailed descriptions of construction activities that took place during the reporting period can be found in the quarterly Notices of Construction Activities<sup>1</sup>.

## 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 Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) conditions 27 and 72, and federal Decision Statement (FDS) condition 14.2.

The AGCP establishes a communications program for informing Indigenous groups and harvesters about construction activities related to 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 Indigenous groups through the implementation of the AGCP from April 2020 through March 2021. This is the fifth annual report of the AGCP.

---

<sup>1</sup> Also referred to as Construction Notification Letters, or Construction Notices. These are available on the project website along with the bi-weekly Construction Bulletins: <https://www.sitecproject.com/construction-activities/construction-bulletins>

## 2.3 COVID-19

BC Hydro's top priority is the health and safety of our employees, contractors, members of the public, and Indigenous groups. BC Hydro has been monitoring COVID-19 closely since January 2020 and has been taking appropriate action as the situation evolves. To minimize the risk of transmission, and continue to fulfil the requirements of Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) conditions 27 and 72, and federal Decision Statement (FDS) condition 14.2., BC Hydro has been required to adapt its engagement with Indigenous communities to mitigate the risk of a COVID-19 event occurring.

These include:

- Strictly following Ministry of Health guidelines and implemented a range of protocols to prevent the spread of COVID-19
- Scaled back, or transition to virtual platforms, for certain activities to reduce or eliminate the number of in-person meetings, site visits, training sessions, and community gatherings;
- Restrictions on non-essential travel for BC Hydro employees and consulting service providers; and
- Postponing all non-essential work

## 3 Implementation of the Plan – April 2020 through March 2021

This report summarizes the implementation of the communication and consultation initiatives specific to Indigenous groups that are described in [section 5.0 of the AGCP](#).

The bulleted list of communication activities shown at the beginning of section 5.0 is not specific to Indigenous groups, but these materials are publicly available and it is expected that they are utilized by members of Indigenous communities. These activities are described in [section 3.2 of the Construction Communication Plan](#) (CCP) with more information available in the annual reports for the CCP, found on the Project website in the Site C Project Reports section of the [Environmental Management document library](#).

Communications specific to Indigenous groups that were undertaken in the reporting period are described below.

Unless otherwise indicated, the communications summarized below were sent out to all Indigenous groups named in the EAC and FDS: Saulteau 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. For purposes of brevity, acronyms for the above Indigenous groups are used in this annual report. A list of acronyms is provided at the beginning of this report.

### 3.1 Notices of Construction Activities

These quarterly notices to Indigenous groups address EAC condition 27 and FDS condition 14.2 requiring BC Hydro to provide information to Indigenous harvesters about construction activities that may affect their harvesting opportunities; they serve as the “Indigenous Harvesters Information Sheet” described in the AGCP.

The notices are in the form of a letter describing construction-related activities that are expected to commence, continue or be completed in the three-month period covered by the letter and are accompanied by a map (or maps) showing the location of the activities described in the letter. The notices also include information about other ways to find out more information about Project construction.

The current schedule seeks to send out the construction notices roughly 15-30 days prior to the start of the notification period. As required, updates to the notices are sent out to provide more information on construction works that are of particular interest to Indigenous communities or within closer proximity to Indigenous communities.

- On **June 02, 2020**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of July through September, 2019.
- On **September 09, 2020**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of October through December, 2019.
- On **December 02, 2020**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of January through March, 2020.
- On **March 25, 2021**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of April through June, 2020.

The Notices of Construction Activities are sent to Indigenous groups by email and are also posted for Indigenous groups on the *Site C Information for Indigenous Groups* SharePoint site (see section 3.6). A public version of the notice with confidential information removed (such as SharePoint log-in information or other sensitive material) is posted along with construction bulletins on the Project’s public website at the following address: <https://www.sitecproject.com/construction-activities/construction-bulletins>

### 3.2 Biweekly Information Updates to Indigenous Groups

Biweekly information updates are distributed by email to provide regular updates on construction activities and field work.

The updates provide information on the following topics as they become available:

- news updates;
- regulatory and permitting updates;
- environmental management information;
- safety advisories;
- reminders of upcoming consultation and engagement activities;
- employment and training information; and,



- procurement updates.

The emails also provide notice of new documents uploaded to the *Site C Information for Indigenous Groups* SharePoint site such as Environmental Protection Plans and Environmental Completion Reports, monthly monitoring summary reports, interim and annual reports from the Project's Heritage Program, and other Project mitigation and monitoring programs.

The emails are sent directly to members of each Indigenous group's distribution list which often includes Chief and Council as well as other contacts requested by the Indigenous group. A copy of each biweekly information update is saved on the *Site C Information for Indigenous Groups* SharePoint site.

A summary of the notifications or information shared in these updates is listed below. Recurring updates such as new Construction Bulletins, reminders of upcoming meetings, Indigenous employment statistics, new documents added to SharePoint, etc. are not described below to avoid repetition.

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared	
April 16, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C;</li> <li>• Construction update: Notified of the decision to scale back work activities at the dam site and focus only on essential work and critical milestones;</li> <li>• Shared Ecofor 2019 Annual Summary Report for Heritage Investigation Permit 2016-0235; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #9 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #24 held on May 5 &amp; 6, 2020.</li> </ul>
May 1, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19: Shared information on the Emergency Management BC update, Northern Health update and Site C Project update, including Public Health Order for industrial camps and worker transport home by car protocols teleconference call with Treaty 8 First Nation Chiefs and Health Administrators;</li> <li>• Shared a construction notice to advise of the closure of the Peace River at the dam site and promote the portage program;</li> <li>• Notified of the Site C Annual Reports from Fish and Aquatic Habitat Monitoring and Follow up Program posted on the Project Website and in SharePoint; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #9 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #24 held on May 5 &amp; 6, 2020.</li> </ul>
May 15, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced that BC Hydro to gradually resume paused construction work at Site C in a phased approach based on the provincial health guidelines;</li> </ul>

## Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced that as of June 15, 2020, the Peace and Moberly River will be closed to allow BC Hydro to build the earthfill dam on dry land, and a portage program will launch to move non-motorized boats around the construction site;</li> <li>• Shared a public advisory that boaters should use caution when passing through Site C dam site as BC Hydro is performing in-river work on both banks of the Peace River at the dam site to prepare for river diversion;</li> <li>• Notified that outside of Site C, BC Hydro is taking steps to protect customers by stopping disconnections due to non-payment, closing recreation sites and limiting planned outages. Shared information on the COVID-19 Relief Fund to provide financial support to customers until June 30, 2020;</li> <li>• Shared information on the commencement of work at Portage Mountain Quarry. Notified that seasonal blasting at Portage Mountain Quarry will start on May 15, 2020 and continue through to September 15, 2020, and can expect noise and vibration from blasting and other works in the quarries;</li> <li>• Feedback and input requested on the Site C Halfway River boat launch replacement potential site locations; and</li> <li>• Notified that the CNWA permit application will be submitted by BC Hydro to Transport Canada for the closure of the Halfway River beginning September 1, 2020 until May 1, 2021, for the construction of six temporary causeways across the river to facilitate the reservoir clearing at the mouth of the Halfway River.</li> </ul>
June 1, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Indigenous scholarship and bursary program: invitation for interested Indigenous Grade 12 students planning to pursue a post-secondary program to apply for scholarships and bursaries;</li> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C;</li> <li>• Information shared on BC Hydro's recreation area reopening plan;</li> <li>• Information shared on BC Hydro's major milestone that the Peace River diversion tunnels, including four gate structures located at the upstream and downstream entrances of both tunnels have been completed; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #10 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #25 held on June 9 &amp; 10, 2020.</li> </ul>
June 16, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reminder that the Quarterly Notice of Construction Activities (July through September 2020) was sent on June 2, 2020;</li> <li>• Diversion prep: shared information on the delay of the installation of</li> </ul>

## Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

	<p>the debris booms across the Peace and Moberly rivers because of high water levels, and the potential to see minor headponding starting as early as October 15, 2020 as the first (lower) section of the upstream cofferdam is completed and discharge from Peace Canyon increases;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared April 2020 Site C employment statistics;</li> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C;</li> <li>• Reminder that a public advisory was posted on the Project website of the Peace River closure beginning June 15, 2020;</li> <li>• Information shared on the completed Archaeological Impact Assessment of the Dam Site, Highway 29, the Transmission Line, and the full Reservoir and associated access roads;</li> <li>• Feedback and input requested on the Site C Halfway River boat launch replacement potential site locations; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #11 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #26 held on July 7 &amp; 8, 2020.</li> </ul>
June 30, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information shared on the completed Bat Condo as part of the Wildlife Habitat Structures Program;</li> <li>• Shared a public advisory that one debris boom on the Peace River was installed, and two more debris booms will be installed soon;</li> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C;</li> <li>• Feedback and input requested on the Site C Halfway River boat launch replacement potential site locations; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #11 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #26 held on July 7 &amp; 8, 2020.</li> </ul>
July 14, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information shared on the potential spilling at Peace Region dams due to the significant rainfall in the Peace Region leading to higher than average water levels in the Williston Reservoir;</li> <li>• Shared a public advisory that boaters should use caution on the Peace River due to heavy rainfall loosening woody debris;</li> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C;</li> <li>• Shared May 2020 Site C employment statistics;</li> <li>• Construction update: notified of penstock deliveries resuming, resulting in occasional night-time traffic delays on Old Fort Road;</li> </ul>

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared	
	<p>and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feedback requested on the draft provincial permit applications: EAO Request for Amendment to Schedule A – Material Sources, Highway 29 Farrell Creek East – WSA Section 10, and Highway 29 Lynx and Dry Creek – WSA Section 10.</li> </ul>
July 30, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified of first positive COVID-19 case at Site C;</li> <li>• Shared an infographic on Site C river diversion – upstream and downstream cofferdam construction; and</li> <li>• Notified of Site C Agriculture Monitoring and Follow-up Program Annual Report posted on the Project website and on SharePoint.</li> </ul>
August 14, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared a public advisory that a two-kilometre section of the Halfway River will be closed to boaters from September 1, 2020 – April 30, 2021, as BC Hydro clears vegetation to prepare for the Site C reservoir;</li> <li>• Notified that Prophet River First Nation, BC Hydro and Province reach agreements, settle litigation;</li> <li>• Information shared on Site C annual and quarterly report filing with the BC Utilities Commission; and</li> <li>• Shared June 2020 Site C employment statistics.</li> </ul>
August 28, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified of the latest 2019-2020 Business Participation Plan and Construction Communication Plan for the Site C Project posted on the Project website and on SharePoint;</li> <li>• Construction update: notified of river diversion and navigational changes, dam site area, Highway 29, Reservoir area clearing, and Transmission works construction activities; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to attend Environmental Forum #12 held on September 22 &amp; 23, 2020 in Fort St. John. Notified that an in-person field tour for the Forum will be conducted starting in Fort St. John and travelling to Hudson's Hope.</li> </ul>
September 15, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared an info sheet on the downstream effects on the Peace River;</li> <li>• Reminder that the Quarterly Notice of Construction Activities (October through December 2020) was sent on September 8, 2020;</li> <li>• Shared July 2020 Site C employment statistics;</li> <li>• Notified of completed Construction Environmental Management Plan Revision 7;</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to attend Environmental Forum #12 held on September 22 &amp; 23, 2020 in Fort St. John. Notified that an</li> </ul>

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared	
	<p>in-person field tour for the Forum will be conducted starting in Fort St. John and travelling to Hudson's Hope.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #27 held on October 15, 2020.</li> </ul>
October 9, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared a public advisory that Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure released traffic advisory for Highway 29 – Dry Creek;</li> <li>• Shared a public advisory issued for hunting or discharging firearms in Project areas;</li> <li>• Shared 2019 Water Withdrawal Records from the Peace River and tributaries during construction of the Project;</li> <li>• Hudson's Hope shoreline protection berm construction update provided; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #13 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #27 held on October 14 &amp; 15, 2020.</li> </ul>
October 26, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C;</li> <li>• Shared a public advisory that wood debris burning to resume at Site C;</li> <li>• Notified that construction began on a 2.6-kilometre-long berm along the shore of Hudson's Hope;</li> <li>• Construction update: preparations for in-stream works will begin, including diverting approximately 100 metres of Cache Creek to build the piers for the new bridge. Tree clearing and vegetation removal will begin at Farrell Creek; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to host CHRC Travelling Exhibit in their communities.</li> </ul>
November 9, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information shared on large eagle nests relocated near Site C project;</li> <li>• Shared July 2020 Site C employment statistics;</li> <li>• Notified of application made to the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development for a Power Line Relocation tenure situated on Provincial Crown land located near Halfway River, Peace River District;</li> <li>• Reminder that a standalone virtual Permitting Forum has been scheduled for November 19, 2020; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to virtually attend Environmental Forum #14 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting</li> </ul>

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared	
	(CHRC) #28 on November 17 & 18, 2020.
November 23, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified of four positive COVID-19 cases on the Site C Project;</li> <li>• Shared Site C Construction Schedule for November 14-27, 2020; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to host CHRC Travelling Exhibit in their communities when it's safe to do so.</li> </ul>
December 8, 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced that BC Hydro is planning to launch a quarterly newsletter next year to provide information on the work that the Cultural Monitors are doing to represent their Nations on the ground, observing project construction and monitoring activities, and the mitigation programs;</li> <li>• Notified that the Fort St. John visitor center will be hosting the completed Travelling Exhibit for the public from December 11 until January 2021; and</li> <li>• Shared October 2020 Site C employment statistics.</li> </ul>
January 11, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified that the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure has released a traffic advisory on the transportation of oversized cargo between Prince Rupert and Chetwynd from January 10-14, 2021;</li> <li>• Announced that BC Hydro contributed \$6,800 to the Northern Helpers Society through the Site C Project's Generate Opportunities (GO) Fund to help fund a weekly lunch program for individuals and families in Fort St. John who are suffering from addiction or living with those suffering from addiction;</li> <li>• Shared November 2020 Site C employment statistics;</li> <li>• Information shared and a link provided on BC Hydro's August and September 2020 Monthly Environmental Monitoring Reports for the Site C Clean Energy Project;</li> <li>• Notified that the next Environmental Forum #15 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #29 will be held virtually on January 18 &amp; 19, 2021.</li> </ul>
January 25, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified that BC Hydro submitted the Site C – Traffic and Pavement Monitoring Report 2020 – Year 5 to regulators and government and shared a link to a copy of the report; and</li> <li>• COVID-19: shared an update on BC Hydro's response to COVID-19 at Site C.</li> </ul>
February 9, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced that crews installed the last of 205 foundations on the second 500 kV 75-kilometre transmission line, with a link provided to a construction information sheet on the Project website;</li> </ul>

## Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Cache Creek East</i> construction update: installing test piles for bridge foundations, constructing a bridge pier mock-up in the Peaceview Borrow Pit, constructing a temporary detour and bridge beside the existing Cache Creek bridge, and distribution vegetation brushing work is underway as part of the preparation work for the temporary distribution line installation along the detour route; and</li> <li>• Notified that the next Environmental Forum #16 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #30 will be held virtually on March 9 &amp; 10, 2021.</li> </ul>
February 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared a public advisory issued for wood debris removal and burning in Site C areas;</li> <li>• Construction update: constructing a temporary detour and bridge beside the existing Cache Creek bridge, which will be used in the unlikely event that the existing bridge is impacted by the diversion head pond. Distribution lines and Telus work are underway and will continue until April. The line will also be used in the unlikely event that the existing line is impacted by the diversion head pond;</li> <li>• Shared information on environmental programs, with a link provided to the Project website to learn more;</li> <li>• Notified that the next Environmental Forum #16 and Culture and Heritage Resource Committee Meeting (CHRC) #30 will be held virtually on March 9 &amp; 10, 2021; and</li> <li>• Invitation to Indigenous groups to host CHRC Travelling Exhibit in their communities when it's safe to do so.</li> </ul>
March 8, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announced that on February 26, the Province announced it will proceed with the Site C project;</li> <li>• Notified that BC Hydro is applying for an EAC amendment to allow trucks to haul materials from the 85<sup>th</sup> Avenue Industrial Lands to the dam site when the conveyor is being repaired;</li> <li>• Shared a public advisory issued for burning debris in Site C project areas;</li> <li>• Shared information on two final documents regarding the temporary upstream fish passage facility with Indigenous groups and provided a link to the reports; and</li> <li>• Notified that a regulatory and permitting update will be provided at the 9 March 2021 Environmental Forum #16.</li> </ul>
March 22, 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notified that the burning of waste wood material would be happening on the north side of the Peace River, between 70km and 71km west of Fort St. John;</li> <li>• Shared that the March 19, 2021 Construction Bulletin is now</li> </ul>

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared	
	<p>available on the Site C website;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informed Nations that a virtual <i>Environmental Forum – Information Session</i> would be happening on April 14, 2021; and</li> <li>• Shared January 2021 Site C employment statistics.</li> </ul>

### 3.3 Consultation Meetings

#### 3.3.1 Permitting Forums

These meetings allow for sharing and reviewing upcoming permit applications with Treaty 8 First Nations. Representatives from First Nations, the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development (MFLNRORD), federal agencies and BC Hydro meet to discuss draft permit applications and to address potential questions and requests for clarification before permit applications are finalized and referred to First Nations by permitting agencies for consultation and review.

BC Hydro initiated this process in 2016 in response to requests from First Nations for additional opportunities to consult on Project permits. BC Hydro held seven Permitting Forums between July 2016 and January 2018. In late January 2018, the Province and BC Hydro implemented an updated coordinated consultation process in an effort to enhance Project permit consultation opportunities, find efficiencies, reduce the overall workload for First Nations, and better manage the consultation schedule.

Permitting Forums were incorporated into the coordinated consultation process, and are a central component of the “pre-application” consultation on draft permit applications before they are finalized and submitted to MFLNRORD. The First Nations invited to attend the Permitting Forum are the same First Nations that the MFLNRORD consults with on provincial permit applications.

An overall reduction in the number of new permits requiring consultation for the current reporting period, and looking for efficiencies, BC Hydro has incorporated the Permitting Forum into the Environment Forum when required. As a standing agenda item at each Environment Forum, the Permitting Discussion continues to provide a venue to meet and discuss permitting and regulatory items.

Summary of Permitting Forums, and Permitting Discussions at Environment Forums, held during the reporting period are described below.

- Permitting Discussion at Environmental Forums #9 was held on May 6, 2020 and was attended by representatives from BRFN, DFN, HRFN, SFN, DTFN, DRFN, MLIB and BC Hydro. BC Hydro provided an update on the Beaver Telemetry Study.
- Permitting Discussion at Environmental Forums #10 was held on June 10, 2020 and was attended by representatives from BRFN, DFN, HRFN, HLFN, SFN, DTFN, DRFN, MLIB, KLMSS and BC Hydro. BC Hydro provided an update on Portage Mountain Quarry permit amendment.



- Permitting Discussion at Environmental Forums #11 was held on July 07, 2020 and was attended by representatives from BRFN, DFN, HRFN, HLFN, SFN, DTFN, DRFN, MLIB, KLMSS, BC Hydro and MFLNRORD. BC Hydro provided an update on Highway 29 Realignment Lynx Creek West/Dry Creek, *Water Sustainability Act* and Farrell East *Water Sustainability Act*.
- Permitting Forum #19 was held on November 19, 2020 and was attended by representatives from BRFN, HRFN, HLFN, MLIB, DFN, PRFN, BC Hydro and MFLNRORD. BC Hydro provided an update on Portage Mountain Quarry and Hudson's Hope; discussed permits issued for Portage Mountain Quarry and Hudson's Hope Berm; provided an update on Lynx Creek West Wetland Impacts.
- Permitting Discussion at Environmental Forums #15 was held on January 18, 2021 and was attended by representatives from BRFN, DRFN, DFN, HRFN, HLFN, MLIB, SFN and BC Hydro. BC Hydro provided an update on Portage Mountain Quarry follow up & *Water Sustainability Act* Sec. 10 Short Term Use of Water for GSS Dam Site.
- Permitting Discussion at Environmental Forums #16 was held on March 9, 2021 and was attended by representatives from BRFN, DRFN, DFN, HRFN, HLFN, MNBC, PRFN, SFN and BC Hydro. BC Hydro provided an update on *Land Act*, Transmission Line Relocation at Halfway River (1L364).

BC Hydro uses the *Site C Information for Indigenous Groups* SharePoint site described in section 3.6 to share meeting presentations, permit applications and spatial data, and summaries of discussion and requests for follow-up from the meetings.

### 3.3.2 Environmental Forums

The Environmental Forum enables BC Hydro and Indigenous groups to collaborate, share information, and seek input and participation opportunities related to key interests identified by Indigenous groups related to the Project's environmental mitigation plans and monitoring programs. Topics addressed by the Environmental Forum relate to fish and fish habitat, wildlife, vegetation and heritage, and may be linked to conditions of the EAC, FDS, and permits or authorizations. A key initiative for the Environmental Forum membership is the rollout of the Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF), an \$8M fund to mitigate the impacts of the Project on the current use of land and resources for traditional purposes by Indigenous groups.

Environmental Forums held during the reporting period are described below.

- Environmental Forum #9 was held on **May 6, 2020**. During the virtual meeting the following topics were discussed: wildlife mitigation during diversion, including beaver study scope of work; Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF) update; methylmercury follow-up actions; and Environmental Forum Annual Plan for 2020/2021.
- Environmental Forum #10 was held on **June 10, 2020**. During the virtual meeting the following topics were discussed: Site C Project update regarding COVID-19; overview of Peace River valley changes and reminder of environmental mitigation activities; . long term approach to the Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF); Portage Mountain Quarry amendment permit and reminder of involvement opportunities for environmental programs.

- Environmental Forum #11 was held on **July 7, 2020**. During the virtual meeting the following topics were discussed: finalizing the Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF) Terms of Reference, viewed and discussed the river diversion/head pond video; Halfway River First Nation's ITUF project and collaboration opportunities; update on Eagle Nest Program and permitting items.
- Environmental Forum #12 was held on **September 22 and 23, 2020**. This Forum was a two-day field tour. The following off-site locations were visited/discussed on the first day: Site C public viewpoint, Halfway River View Point: Saulteau First Nation's ITUF Project ('Moberly Watershed Baseline Mercury Study'); Gates Island: Halfway River First Nation's ITUF project ('Site C Reservoir: Ungulate Crossing Study and Habitat Enhancement Program'); Peace River Population Indexing Program; Eagle nest platform site and snake den site. Additional topics including beaver movement study update; wetland restoration program; fish stranding monitoring program. The onsite field tour on September 23<sup>rd</sup> including the: Site C diversion lookout; the temporary fish passage facility; a fish telemetry station; Peace River side channel enhancement site (108R), and Area A (future reclamation site).
- Environmental Forum #13 was held on **October 14, 2020**. During the meeting the following topics were discussed: overview of September field tour and a river diversion update; Fisheries Program update and discussion including operations of temporary fish passage and fish release approach; and introduction to Peace River operations.
- Environmental Forum representatives conducted an onsite tour on **November 4 and 5, 2020**. The sites and topics discussed included: river diversion lookout area, Temporary Fish Passage Facility, Stage 2 Cofferdam lookout and the Water Treatment Plant tour.
- Environment Forum #14 was held on **November 14, 2020**. During the meeting the following topics were discussed: Environment Forum Terms of Reference annual check-in; Wildlife mitigation during diversion discussion; McLeod Lake Indian Band's Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF) project ('Safe Food Foraging Program') and an introduction to reclamation at Site C.
- Environment Forum #15 was held on **January 18, 2021**. During the meeting the following topics were discussed: Reclamation follow-up and direction regarding sub-committee; Rare Plant Translocation Programs; Temporary fish passage facility operations; methylmercury update and activities of sub-committee; permitting items and ITUF year 2 implementation discussion.
- Environment Forum #16 was held on **March 9, 2021**. During the meeting the following topics were discussed: Provincial announcements around Site C, Reclamation Sub-committee Terms of Reference, updates to environmental webpage, Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF) Year 1 roundtable; Year 2 rollout and multi-nation projects, Peace River operations – spring 2021; and a permitting item.

### 3.3.3 Culture and Heritage Resources Committee

The Culture and Heritage Resources Committee (Committee) has been established with Indigenous groups to advise BC Hydro on the management of Project effects on cultural resources. The Committee initially met on July 30, 2015 and meets as determined by the

Committee members. The Committee provides opportunities for discussion and information exchange, as well as the development of mitigation measures related to cultural and heritage resources.

More information on the Committee can be found in the [Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan \(CRMP\)](#), available on the Project website in the [Environmental Management document library](#). The CRMP 2020-2021 Annual Report detailing activities undertaken during this reporting period is available in the *Site C Project Reports* section of this document library.

### **3.4 Saulteau First Nations Registered Trapline Holders**

BC Hydro remains engaged with SFN registered trapline holders whose tenure areas are affected by project construction and operations. BC Hydro contacts registered trapline holders in advance of any project investigations or construction activities planned to take place within their respective trapline areas.

### **3.5 Ground Truthing and other Field Activities**

BC Hydro maintains a standing invitation to Indigenous groups to meet and discuss issues or concerns regarding the Project as construction proceeds. This may include other field activities like site visits in the project activity zone with interested groups and boat tours of the Peace River. BC Hydro has hosted ground truthing and other field activities in the dam site area, Highway 29 realignment segments, along the transmission line, and within the future reservoir.

The [Aboriginal Plant Use Mitigation Plan \(APUMP\)](#) and the [CRMP](#) describe ground truthing as it pertains to plants of traditional Indigenous value and cultural resources, respectively. Ground truthing and other field activities conducted by or with Indigenous groups are described in annual reports for these plans that are available on the Project website in the Site C Project Reports section of the [Environmental Management document library](#).

### **3.6 Site C Information for Indigenous Groups SharePoint Site**

The *Site C Information for Indigenous Groups* SharePoint site is a central repository for documents and information shared with Indigenous groups. It is password protected and not accessible to the public.

On February 22, 2019 BC Hydro launched a new and improved SharePoint site based on Indigenous groups' feedback. The new and improved layout is designed to make it easier to find information on the Project. Project page categories include:

- *Project Construction* information such as Biweekly Updates and the quarterly Notices of Construction Activities;
- *Spatial files* related to project designs, archaeological sites, cadastral data, maps and environmental features;
- *Environment* documents such as Environmental Protection Plans, Environmental Completion Reports, and Monthly Environmental Monitoring Summary Reports, Geotechnical Investigations and Fish, aquatics, vegetation and wildlife;

- *Heritage Reports* such as interim and annual reports from the heritage program;
- *Regulatory and Compliance* information such as draft mitigation and monitoring plans and select annual reports, federal approval applications, Water Licence Leaves to Commence Construction, and environmental assessment documents; and,
- *Meeting materials* from forums and other meetings.

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

### **3.7 External Project Website**

The Site C Clean Energy Project website ([sitecproject.com](http://sitecproject.com)) provides additional information including:

- Mitigation and Monitoring Plans and Annual Reports
- Employment and business opportunities
- Federal authorizations and provincial permits
- Construction activities
- Indigenous relations
- Environmental Management Plans and Reports
- Permits and Authorizations
- Environmental Assessment Reports
- Project Planning and Evaluation Reports
- Consultation and Engagement Reports
- Environment and Socio-Economic Reports
- Engineering and Technical Reports
- Historical Site C Reports
- Quarterly Progress Reports to the BCUC
- Employment Statistics
- Construction Contracts

### **3.8 Environment Programs**

BC Hydro's goal is to protect the environment and reduce the environmental impacts of Site C. The programs focus on monitoring to see what effects (if any) the project has on wildlife, fish, vegetation, air, water, the aquatic environment, as well as heritage and archaeology and how well our mitigation is working to protect these features. For each program results are shared through the Site C Project website in the [Document Library](#). Annual reports are made available on the project website as they are finalized. A brief overview of the programs can be found on recently updated project website, [sitecproject.com/environmental-programs](http://sitecproject.com/environmental-programs).

