

INFORMATION SHEET

BC HYDRO MANAGES TWO ENVIRONMENTAL EVENTS AT SITE C

Two environmental incidents occurred on the Site C project during the month of September 2018. Below are details on each event and the actions we're taking to address them.

First incident

The first event came as a result of 55 mm of rain falling at site between September 8th and 9th. This significant rainfall in such a short time period exceeded the treatment and holding capacity of our water management systems on the south bank.

In order to maintain the structural integrity of our treatment and holding ponds, our contractor was required to undertake a controlled release of about four million litres of partially treated water into the Peace River. This release took place over the course of about 26 hours.

The discharged water had become acidic because of contact with the weathered shale bedrock that has been exposed during excavations. This type of rock can be found throughout the Peace Region and is known to generate acid when exposed to the atmosphere.

As the water was immediately diluted upon entering the river, no fish or aquatic life impacts were detected. The discharge rate of the water was on average 34 litres per second into the Peace River, which was flowing at 1.2 million litres per second.

BC Hydro reported this event to its regulators – including the Water Comptroller's Office and Emergency Management B.C. – as required by the project's conditions of environmental approval.

We are working with our contractor to examine how water is managed at site and to address the emerging acid-rock issues. Measures could include reducing the potential for rain water to contact the weathered bedrock and improving the holding capacity of the collection ponds.

Second incident

The second event came as a result of a site-wide inspection by the B.C. Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) between September 11 and 13.

During the inspection, the EAO observed water being pumped into a vegetated area connected to a wetland at the western end of Septimus Siding (Area 30), located above the south bank of the dam site. BC Hydro holds a permit to eventually infill this area; however that work has not started.

The EAO determined the project was not compliant with its requirement to implement measures to control runoff water and sediment transport prior to starting operations in that specific area. The project received an order from the EAO to remedy the situation by September 28.

Our contractor took immediate action to stop pumping water and is updating and implementing its Care of Water plan to control runoff water and minimize sediment transport in the area.

BC Hydro takes orders from environmental regulators seriously and we will be fully compliant with this order by September 28.



The work on the south bank is in close proximity to the Peace River