



# *Aboriginal Group Communication Plan 2016-2017 Annual Report*

Site C Clean Energy Project

Reporting period: June 2016 through June 2017

Date: October 31, 2017

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## Table of Acronyms

<b>BRFN</b>	Blueberry River First Nations
<b>DFN</b>	Duncan's First Nation
<b>DFO</b>	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
<b>DRFN</b>	Doig River First Nation
<b>DTFN</b>	Dene Tha' First Nation
<b>EAO</b>	BC Environmental Assessment Office
<b>FLNR</b>	BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development
<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>MOTI</b>	BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
<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 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 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 reporting period for this annual report coincides generally with the second year of project construction.

Below is a high-level summary of construction activities that took place during this period:

- the 1600-person worker accommodation facility was completed and is fully operational;
- early works / site preparation was completed on the dam site area's north bank;
- site preparation work was completed on the dam site area's south bank, with the exception of some clearing work in the lower reservoir;
- the main civil works contractor began physical works in the dam site area;
- construction of the temporary Moberly River construction bridge was completed;
- upgrades to public roads on the north bank were advanced;
- excavation and slope stabilization on the north bank;
- transmission line clearing and access road construction commenced and is ongoing;

- the turbines and generators contractor mobilized to site and commenced construction of facilities and works; and
- the south bank cofferdam and cut-off wall was completed.

More detailed descriptions of construction activities that took place during the reporting period can be found in the quarterly Notices of Construction Activities (described in section 3.2 of this report, below).

## **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 communities 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 Aboriginal groups through implementation of the AGCP from June 2016 through June 2017. This is the second annual report of the AGCP.

## **3 Implementation of the Plan – June 2016 through June 2017**

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 communication 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. For purposes of brevity, acronyms for the above Aboriginal groups are used in this annual report. A list of acronyms is provided at the beginning of this report.

### **3.1 Bi-weekly Information Updates to Aboriginal Groups**

Information updates are sent out to Aboriginal groups on a bi-weekly basis to provide regular information on construction activities and field work (including hyperlinks to the latest bi-weekly Construction Bulletin), new documents uploaded to the SharePoint site such as EPPs, monthly monitoring summary reports, interim and annual reports from Site C's heritage program and mitigation/monitoring programs, and reminders of upcoming consultation and engagement

activities. The bi-weekly update is also used to convey periodic/irregular information on the following topics, as available:

- regulatory/permitting updates;
- environmental management information;
- safety advisories;
- employment and training information, and;
- procurement updates.

The updates are sent out directly to each Aboriginal group's distribution list, and a generic copy is saved on the Aboriginal groups SharePoint site. Sign-in information to the SharePoint site is also provided in each bi-weekly update.

Dates of bi-weekly updates and a summary of the periodic/irregular information provided in the updates are presented below; to avoid repetition, the regular information that is included in each update (Construction Bulletins, new documents on SharePoint, etc.) is not summarized below.

- The **June 10, 2016** edition reminded readers of the upcoming Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting on June 14, 2016.
- The **June 24, 2016** edition reminded readers about the upcoming Regional Community Liaison Committee meeting scheduled for June 29, 2016, and mentioned that previous bi-weekly information updates were now available on the SharePoint site.
- The **July 8, 2016** edition notified Aboriginal groups that annual reports for the Aboriginal Group Communication Plan, Aboriginal Plant Use Mitigation Plan, Aboriginal Training and Inclusion Plan, and Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan for 2015-2016 were now available on the SharePoint site. Information on the Request for Proposals for Traffic Forecasting, Monitoring, Mitigation and Analysis was also provided along with a hyperlink to the BC Bid website.
- The **July 28, 2016** edition notified readers that on July 27, 2016, Transport Canada issued approvals and permits under the *Navigation Protection Act* for the Project's main civil works. Fisheries and Oceans Canada issued a Paragraph 35(2) (b) *Fisheries Act* Authorization for the construction and operations of the Project. BC Hydro received Leave to Commence Construction (LCC) No.2 for relocation of excavated materials and No.3 for construction of the Stage 1 cofferdam and was in the process of seeking LCC No.4 for clearing the eastern reservoir.
- The **August 12, 2016** edition update notified Aboriginal groups that the next Cultural Heritage and Resource Committee meeting would take place on August 25, 2016. Information was provided on the Northern Lights College Foundation which was accepting applications for the BC Hydro Trades and Skilled Training Aboriginal Award at that time.
- The **August 29, 2016** edition notified readers of a new heritage program interim report, and was the first edition to introduce standing information on employment and training opportunities and a summary of some other information available on the Project website. This standing information has been included in bi-weekly updates since the August 29, 2016 edition and is updated as required.
- The **September 16, 2016** edition reminded Aboriginal groups that a Notice of Construction Activities for the period of October through December, 2016 had been sent

out via email on September 1, 2016 and had also been made available on SharePoint. A reminder that the next Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting would take place on October 20, 2016. A notification was provided that the Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Mitigation and Monitoring Plan 2015-2016 Annual Report was now available on the Project website along with all previously completed mitigation and monitoring plan annual reports.

- The **October 6, 2016** edition reminded readers that the Request for Proposals (RFP) for Supply of Lattice Towers for the Project was sent out via mail on October 5, 2016. On September 26, BC Hydro announced the four proponent teams that have been shortlisted for the generating station and spillways civil works contract for Site C. On September 21, 2016 BC Hydro sent out the draft Detailed Operations Plan for 85th Ave Industrial Lands to Aboriginal groups for review and comment. The draft plan was available on SharePoint. Notification of the next Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting on October 20, 2016 was also provided, as well as the next Communications Forum scheduled for November 16, 2016.
- The **October 14, 2016** edition reminded Aboriginal groups of the Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting on October 20 and the Communications Forum on November 16.
- The **October 28, 2016** edition notified Aboriginal groups that BC Hydro would be sending out an updated Notice of Construction Activities in the following week that would describe upcoming transmission works. A reminder of the November 16, 2016 Communications Forum was also provided, along with a reminder that responses to the Request for Qualifications for hydro-mechanical equipment supply (sent to Aboriginal groups directly on October 19, 2016) were due on November 15, 2016.
- The **November 2, 2016** addendum provided the updated Notice of Construction Activities on upcoming transmission works (mentioned in the October 28 update). Three new annual reports available on the Project website were also mentioned.
- The **November 10, 2016** edition notified readers that BC Hydro were in the process of seeking LCC No. 5 for Hudson's Hope Berm Geotechnical Works. A final reminder about the November 16, 2016 Communications Forum was provided along with a request for RSVPs.
- The **November 25, 2016** edition notified Aboriginal groups Transport Canada would be sending out referral packages to Aboriginal groups shortly related to *Navigation Protection Act* approvals for the Cache Creek Bridge replacement and Cache Creek boat launch replacement. A hyperlink to the final Detailed Operations Plan for 85th Ave. Industrial Lands was also provided.
- The **December 9, 2016** edition notified Aboriginal groups that BC Hydro was updating the schedule for the next Permitting Forums to be held in January and February, 2017 and would provide more information in the coming days. On December 2, 2016, Fisheries and Oceans Canada issued an extension to the Paragraph 35(2) (b) *Fisheries Act* Authorization (DFO File #: 15-HPAC-00170) that was originally issued for the Project's Site Preparation works and activities. This was requested by BC Hydro in order to complete the component 'South Bank Channel Infilling and Road Crossing'. On December 6, 2016 BC Hydro received Leave to Commence Construction (LCC) No. 4 for clearing the Eastern Reservoir.

- The **December 23, 2016** edition notified readers that new Construction Information Sheet on reservoir clearing and the fish habitat enhancement project were available on the Project website. A reminder that the next Permitting Forum would be held on January 26, 2017 was provided.
- The **January 6, 2017** edition reminded Aboriginal groups that the next Permitting Forum would be held on January 26, 2017.
- The **January 23, 2017** edition provided the Notice of Construction Activities for Highway 29 realignment at Cache Creek / Bear Flat as well as a Construction Information Sheet on the Cache Creek / Bear Flat route selection. Also attached was the Notice of Construction Activities on the 85th Avenue Industrial Lands and conveyor belt corridor. A link to the 2017 Field Work Notice provided. An update on BC Hydro and the District of Hudson's Hope having reached a Partnering Relationship Agreement was provided along with a link to more information. A reminder of the January 26 Permitting Forum was also provided.
- The **February 3, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal group that within the next two weeks, construction was anticipated to commence on the debris boom across the Moberly River. Notification was provided of the draft Agricultural Mitigation and Compensation Plan's availability for review and comment, as well as the posting of the final Outdoor Recreation Mitigation Plan.
- The **February 17, 2017** edition notified readers on February 8, 2017 BC Hydro announced the four proponent teams that were shortlisted for the hydro-mechanical equipment contract for Site C on the Project website. An update to the employment and training information informed readers that hiring for Site C construction was being done directly by the companies awarded the contracts for the Project, and job-seekers were encouraged to apply directly to the companies working on the Project.
- The **March 7, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal groups that on March 3, 2017 the BC EAO had issued an Order to BC Hydro under the *BC Environmental Assessment Act* regarding erosion and sediment control at the Site C dam site. A hyperlink to information on the north bank tension crack available on the Project website was provided. Aboriginal groups were reminded that a Notice of Construction Activities for the period of April through March, 2017 had been sent out via email on March 1, 2017 and had also been made available on SharePoint. A reminder that the next Permitting Forum would be held on March 29, 2017. Readers were informed that monthly Site C Employment Statistics began to report on the number of Aboriginal employees working for construction and non-construction contractors on Site C, starting with the December 2016 monthly report.
- The **March 17, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal groups that an update on remediation of the tension crack on the north bank had been posted to the Project website on March 10, 2017. A reminder that the next Permitting Forum would be held on March 29, 2017 was provided.
- The **March 31, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal groups that on March 22, 2017 the BC EAO had issued an Order to BC Hydro under the *BC Environmental Assessment Act* regarding control of invasive plant species at the Site C dam site. A notification that the *Mines Act* Permit for Area A had been removed was also provided. An update on the *Navigation Protection Act* application for the Cache Creek Bridge Replacement and Reservoir Boat Launch that was submitted by BC Hydro to Transport Canada on November 4, 2016 was provided.

- The **April 21, 2017** edition notified readers that on April 5, 2017 the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency had issued a Notice of Intent to Issue an Order to BC Hydro regarding erosion and sediment control in the dam site area. An update on remediation of the tension crack on the north bank was also provided. The update also provided a reminder that Geotechnical investigations associated with Hudson's Hope shoreline protection would commence in late April.
- The **May 4, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal groups that BC MOTI would be issuing a Tender Call through BC Bid in May, 2017 for the paving and grading contract for the Cache Creek / Bear Flat section of Highway 29 realignment. Also, MOTI would be issuing a Tender Call through BC Bid in June, 2017 for the construction of the Cache Creek Bridge as part of Highway 29 realignment. Notice that an updated Information Sheet on fish habitat enhancement works in the dam site area had been released on the Project website was provided. A reminder that the next Permitting Forum would be held on May 24, 2017 was provided, as well as notification that BC Hydro had received Leaves to Commence Construction (LCC) No.5 and No.7. Notice was also provided that the Monthly Environmental Monitoring Summary Report for January 2017 had been issued and was available on the SharePoint site.
- The **May 17, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal groups that an Information Sheet on Erosion and Sediment Control was provided on the Project website. A reminder that the next Permitting Forum would be held on May 24, 2017 was also provided. Notice was also provided that the Monthly Environmental Monitoring Summary Report for February 2017 had been issued and was available on the SharePoint site.
- The **June 5, 2017** edition provided a safety advisory that boaters should use caution when passing through Site C dam site due to naturally occurring woody debris under the Peace River construction bridge. Notice was also provided that the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEAA) had issued an Order related to sediment and erosion control at the Site C dam site, which took effect on May 25, 2017. An updated was provided that on May 16, 2017 BC Hydro received Leave to Commence Construction (LCC) No. 6.
- The **June 20, 2017** edition notified Aboriginal groups that BC Hydro had issued a Request for Proposals for forestry consulting services for Middle Reservoir clearing and provided hyperlinks to the BC Bid website. Notice that BC MOTI had issued a Tender Call for the paving and grading contract for the Cache Creek / Bear Flat section of Highway 29 realignment was also provided, along with a hyperlink to the BC Bid website. Aboriginal groups were reminded that a Notice of Construction Activities for the period of July through September, 2017 had been sent out via email on June 15, 2017 and had also been made available on SharePoint. An update to the safety advisory provided in the June 5 edition was provided, noting that the majority of wood debris had been cleared from the main stem of the Peace River and the main marked navigation channel was open. Boaters were advised to continue to use caution when navigating the Peace River near the dam site. A reminder that the next Permitting Forum would be held in mid-late July, 2017, based on feedback received from First Nations regarding the most suitable/preferred date.

### 3.2 Notices of Construction Activities (also known as Construction Notices)

These quarterly notices to Aboriginal groups 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 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 30 days prior to the start of the notification period; e.g., the Notice of Construction Activities for April through June, 2017 was sent out on March 1, 2017. As required, updates to the notices are sent out to provide more information on construction works that are of particular interest to Aboriginal communities or within closer proximity to Aboriginal communities.

- On **June 1, 2016**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of July through September, 2016.
- On **September 1, 2016** BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of October through December, 2016. The notice also provided an updated information sheet on transmission line construction works and design progression of the transmission towers.
- On **November 2, 2016** BC Hydro sent out an updated Notice of Construction Activities on Upcoming Transmission Works for the Site C Project along with a November 2016 updated Information Sheet on Transmission Works. The notice was sent as an addendum to the October 28, 2016 bi-weekly update,
- On **December 1, 2016** BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of January through March, 2017.
- On **March 1, 2017**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of April through June, 2017.
- On **June 15, 2017**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of July through September, 2017.

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

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

### 3.3 Saulneau First Nations registered trapline holders

BC Hydro remains engaged with Sauleau registered trapline holders whose tenure areas are affected by project construction and operations. BC Hydro contacts registered trapline holders in advance of any ground disturbance work planned to take place within their respective trapline areas, BC Hydro also shares the quarterly Notices of Construction Activities with registered

trapline holders and advises it is available to meet to discuss any questions regarding the activities in the notice.

### **3.4 Site C Information for Aboriginal Groups SharePoint Site**

In addition to the Project's public website, BC Hydro is using a SharePoint site for purposes of sharing information about the Project with Aboriginal groups as construction proceeds (the SharePoint site). BC Hydro maintains a document library of consultation materials and other information 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 Information Updates
- Communications Forum Materials
- Notices of Construction Activities (or Construction Notices)
- Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee materials
- Environmental Protection Plans (EPPs)
- Environmental Reporting, including monitoring summary reports
- Heritage reports from BC Hydro's heritage program consultants
- Permit and authorization application information related to federal and provincial applications. Federal and provincial permits issued for project construction are available on the Project website.
- Draft Mitigation and Monitoring Plans as they are shared for review and comment
- Permitting Forum materials such as application information packages, meeting materials, and follow-up materials

The SharePoint site is accessible to Aboriginal groups with a login and a password in order to restrict sharing of sensitive or other cultural information with the public.

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.

More information on the consultation processes mentioned above is provided in section 3.5, below.

### **3.5 Consultation Meetings**

#### **3.5.1 Communications Forum**

*Land Act* licences issued for the Project require that BC Hydro hold bi-annual consultation meetings with Aboriginal groups to discuss the following:

- Updates to the 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

In November 2015, BC Hydro held the first Communications Forum in Fort St. John, with a second held in April 2016. Information on these Communications Forums can be found in the previous Aboriginal Group Communications Plan annual report.

On **November 16, 2016**, Communications Forum #3 was held in Fort St. John. Representatives from the following Aboriginal groups and organizations took part in the forum: DTFN, DFN, HRFN, HLFN, KLMSS, MLIB, FLNR, and BC Hydro. BC Hydro provided a project and regulatory overview, a review of construction activities held in the previous six months and a look-ahead at the upcoming six months of construction, an overview of permitting and authorizations required for the activities, and mitigation and monitoring related to the Project (including environmental incidents). The summary of discussions and responses to action items stemming from the November 16 meeting are available to Aboriginal groups on the SharePoint site. This information is also available to FLNR, Transport Canada, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The next meeting of the **Aboriginal Group Communication Forum** is being postponed pending results of the BCUC review. Summaries of previous meetings' discussions and follow-up on action items are posted on the SharePoint site. We will follow up with Aboriginal groups in late fall once we have confirmed timing for the next Forum.

### 3.5.2 Permitting Forums

Permitting Forums were established in response to First Nations requests made during 2015/2016 permitting consultation undertaken by the Province and federal agencies. A pre-application process was requested whereby representatives from Treaty 8 First Nations, FLNR, federal agencies, and BC Hydro could meet to share information on upcoming permit applications. Further discussion on the topic at the April 21, 2016 Communications Forum led to BC Hydro's proposal of a "Permitting Forum", described in BC Hydro's responses to requests for follow-up made at the Communications Forum (shared with Aboriginal groups on the SharePoint site).

The purpose, objectives, and outcomes of Permitting Forums were developed by participants at the first Permitting Forum in July 2016. The purpose of the forums is to share draft permit application information, provide an opportunity for early engagement with First Nations, and to address potential questions and requests for clarification before permit applications are finalized and referred by permitting agencies to the nations for consultation and review.

Invitations to the forums are sent out to First Nations that the Province currently consults with during the review of Site C permit applications, including West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations. Federal applications out for consultation are also discussed at the Permitting Forums. Collaboration with the Métis Nation British Columbia and Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society on federal applications takes place in direct meetings and not at the Permitting Forums.

Permitting Forum meetings during the reporting period are described below.

- The first Permitting Forum was held on **July 27, 2016** and was attended by representatives from BRFN, DTFN, DRFN, HRFN, HLFN, MLIB, BC Hydro, and FLNR.

FLNR presented their permitting and consultation process. BC Hydro presented the overall construction schedule and anticipated permits needed to undertake the work. DRFN and MLIB provided an overview of their approach to review of permit applications and examples of questions that typically come up during permit review. The group then discusses objectives and scheduling considerations for the Permitting Forum process.

- A follow-up call was held on **September 1, 2016** to report out on progress on action items from the meeting, and to establish date(s) for the next Permitting Forum. September 26, 2016 was set for the next Forum.
- The **September 26, 2016** Permitting Forum was attended by DTFN, HLFN, MLIB, BC Hydro, and FLNR. On the agenda were permit applications under the *Land Act*, *Forest Act*, and *Water Sustainability Act* for construction of the Cache Creek Highway 29 realignment. BC Hydro reviewed the purpose, outcomes, and outputs of the Permitting Forum. BC Hydro provided an overview of Highway 29 realignment investigations and construction, with a focus on the Cache Creek realignment section, and information on the archaeological program and heritage considerations at Cache Creek. A summary of discussion and responses to requests for follow-up was prepared after the meeting and shared with Permitting Forum participants as well as Aboriginal groups in general through the SharePoint site.
- The **January 26, 2017** Permitting Forum was attended by BRFN, DRFN, DFN, HRFN, DTFN, HLFN, SFN, BC Hydro, Transport Canada, and FLNR. On the agenda were permit applications under the *Water Sustainability Act* for water withdrawal in the dam site area, applications related to the Peace River fish habitat enhancement (a.k.a. “downstream contouring”) in the dam site area (*Land Act*, *Forest Act*, *Water Sustainability Act*, and the federal *Navigation Protection Act*), and *Navigation Protection Act* applications related to the Cache Creek realignment bridge and boat launch, Eastern Reservoir clearing bridges, temporary upstream dam site debris boom, and transmission line crossing of the Peace River. A summary of discussion and responses to requests for follow-up was prepared after the meeting and shared with Permitting Forum participants as well as Aboriginal groups in general through the SharePoint site.
- The **March 29, 2017** Permitting Forum was attended by BRFN, DRFN, DFN, DTFN, HRFN, MLIB, SFN, BC Hydro, and FLNR. On the agenda were permit applications for transmission line access road crossings of wetlands under the *Water Sustainability Act*, Highway 29 Cache Creek applications under the *Water Sustainability Act* for culvert crossings and the *Land Act* and *Mines Act* for the Peaceview Borrow Area construction materials source, Scientific Fish Collection Permit applications for programs under the Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Monitoring and Follow-Up Plan, and an overview of permitting decisions by FLNR. A summary of discussion and responses to requests for follow-up was prepared after the meeting and shared with Permitting Forum participants as well as Aboriginal groups in general through the SharePoint site.
- The **May 24, 2017** Permitting Forum was attended by BRFN, DRFN, HRFN, MLIB, SFN, DFN, DTFN, BC Hydro, and FLNR. On the agenda were permit applications for the Peace River main channel bar excavation and fish habitat enhancement under the *Land Act* and *Water Sustainability Act*, and *Land Act* and *Forest Act* applications for clearing in the Cache Creek drainage of the Eastern Reservoir. A summary of discussion and responses to requests for follow-up was prepared after the meeting and shared with Permitting Forum participants as well as Aboriginal groups in general through the SharePoint site.

BC Hydro uses the Aboriginal groups SharePoint site described above (see section 3.4) to share meeting presentations, application info packages, meeting summaries, and responses to requests for follow-up that arise during the meetings.

### **3.5.3 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:

- June 21- 22, 2016; McLeod lake Indian Band | Technical site visit to support consultation with MLIB and accommodation discussions. The group visited Site C as well as the WAC Bennett Dam.
- October 6, 2016; Blueberry River First Nations | Site visit to the dam site and worker accommodation facility with BRFN consultant and business manager.
- December 8, 2016; Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee members | Site visit with the CHRC<sup>1</sup> to the dam site viewpoint.
- February 8, 2017; Halfway River First Nation | Site visit to archaeological site near Cache Creek with HRFN representatives and their environmental consultant.
- February 28 and March 1, 2017; Halfway River First Nation | Site visit to the Cache Creek area, including Watson Slough with HRFN's land manager, elders, and other representatives.
- March 7, 2017; Halfway River First Nation | Site visit to the Cache Creek area with HRFN's Lands department and archaeological consultant.
- March 16, 2017; Students from Doig River First Nation, Halfway River First Nation and Blueberry River First Nations | Site visit and tour of the dam site area and Two Rivers Lodge and the north bank construction area with BC Hydro staff and approximately 36 students from DRFN, HRFN, and BRFN.
- March 24, 2017; Doig River First Nation | Site visit to Halfway River and Cache Creek with a DRFN Elder, project consultant, and archaeologist.

### **3.5.4 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.

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information on this site visit can be found in the 2016-2017 Cultural Resource Mitigation Plan Annual Report, available at <https://www.sitecproject.com/document-library/environmental-management> under "Site C Project Reports".

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
- Saulneau 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. Follow-up invitations were sent to the above First Nations on June 6, 2016. The invitation to the remaining four First Nations remains open.

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, available on the Project website (<https://www.sitecproject.com/document-library/environmental-management>) in the “*Site C Project Reports*” section of the document library.

### **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. Annual reports of the individual monitoring programs that comprise the FAHMFP will be made available to Aboriginal groups on the SharePoint site, and BC Hydro will work with interested Aboriginal groups to coordinate community meetings to discuss the programs and findings with community members. No annual reports from individual programs were finalized in the reporting period.