

Aboriginal Group Communication Plan 2018-2019 Annual Report

Site C Clean Energy Project

Reporting period: April 2018 to March 2019

March 29, 2019

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Table of Acronyms

BRFN	Blueberry River First Nations
DFN	Duncan's First Nation
DFO	Fisheries and Oceans Canada
DRFN	Doig River First Nation
DTFN	Dene Tha' First Nation
EAO	BC Environmental Assessment Office
FLNR	BC Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations & Rural Development
FNFN	Fort Nelson First Nation
HLFN	Horse Lake First Nation
HRFN	Halfway River First Nation
KLMSS	Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society
MLIB	McLeod Lake Indian Band
MNBC	Métis Nation British Columbia
MOTI	BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
PRFN	Prophet River First Nation
SFN	Saulteau First Nations
WMFN	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 fourth year of project construction.

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

- the main civil works contractor continued excavation on the north and south banks, work on the powerhouse roller-compacted concrete buttress and preparation for river diversion;
- clearing continued in the transmission line right-of-way and access roads continued to be upgraded;
- work continued to upgrade the Peace Canyon substation;
- work continued on the construction of the Site C substation;
- began work on construction of the highway realignment at Cache Creek West;

- geotechnical investigations of the western segments of Highway 29 (Farrell Creek, Lynx Creek and Dry Creek);
- construction of access roads and clearing continued for the reservoir area and dam site; waste wood has been removed or disposed;
- focused work on the advancement of earthworks at the dam site and the excavation of the two diversion tunnels;
- construction of the temporary conveyor belt system began; and,
- assembly and erection of 500 kV steel lattice towers along the transmission line began

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 3.1 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 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 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 Indigenous groups through implementation of the AGCP from April 2018 through March 2019. This is the fourth annual report of the AGCP.

3 Implementation of the Plan – April 2018 through March 2019

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 communities, 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 are sent out to all Indigenous 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 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 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 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 7, 2018** BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of July through September, 2018.
- On **September 12, 2018** BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of October through December, 2018.
- On **December 3, 2018**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of January through March, 2019.
- On **March 8, 2019**, BC Hydro sent out the Notice of Construction Activities for the period of April through June, 2019.

The Notices of Construction Activities are 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

Emails are distributed 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 SharePoint site such as Environmental Protection Plans and Environmental Completion Reports, monthly monitoring summary reports, interim and annual reports from Site C'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 band. A copy is saved on the 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 5, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Site C annual progress report submitted to the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC);• Quarterly Progress Report No. 10 submitted to BCUC and available online; and,• Update on the request for amendment to the EAC for the Generating Station and Spillways. The final letter of request sent to EAO on March 9 and amendment request sent to EAO on March 29.
April 19, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on the request for amendment to the EAC for the Generating Station and Spillways was sent out on April 12.
April 27, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Update on the spring thaw at the dam site, and damage to the RSEM L3 stilling basin along with an announcement to implement a temporary water diversion route.

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

May 17, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BC Hydro has been ordered by the EAO to implement further measures to control water runoff and soil erosion at Portage Mountain Quarry by May 16, 2018; • Lower reservoir area wildfire extinguished as of May 9, 2018; • Notices of upcoming transmission line work were sent out via email; • Geotechnical investigation commence at Cache Creek on three proposed Highway 29 realignment options; and, • BC Hydro is partnering with BC Housing to build 50 housing units.
May 31, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AFDE Partnership to hold business networking sessions in Peace Region; • Environmental Support Services Request for Proposals posted; and, • Notification posted for the 'balance of plant' procurement.
June 14, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hydromechanical equipment contract awarded to ATB Riva Calzoni Hydro Canada Inc.; • Quarterly Notice of Construction Activities (July through September 2018) sent on June 7, 2018; • Reminder of upcoming business networking sessions in Fort St. John, Dawson Creek, Hudson's Hope and Chetwynd; and, • Update on the EAO Order related to sediment and erosion control at Portage Mountain Quarry.
June 29, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Site C Transmission Line contract awarded to Allteck Line Contractors Inc., a B.C. based company; • Feedback and input requested on the Site C Tributary Mitigation Opportunities Evaluation Program on locations for suitable habitat enhancement, approaches to habitat enhancement that should be considered, and what fish species should be prioritized; • North bank slope stabilization Information Sheet posted. Work is underway to remove unstable material and create stable slopes for dam construction; and, • The new Fish and Aquatic Program Brochure with information on mitigation and monitoring programs currently underway in the Peace River Region or planned over the next few years.
July 25, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A fossilized antler was found on site and the Site C heritage chance find protocol was initiated; • Preliminary evaluation results and request for feedback on Highway 29 realignment options at Cache Creek;

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary closure of Site C viewpoint for two weeks; and, • Feedback requested on temporary fish passage facility design, the Lynx Creek replacement boat launch location, and the proposed treatment of invasive plant species in 2018.
August 14, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement of the recipients of the GO Fund, involving the donation of \$70,000 to seven Peace Region non-profit organizations. Award recipients provided community services and programs in support of literacy, community outreach and accessibility, seniors' health, and arts and culture; and, • New drone video of construction posted showing progress on the north and south banks of the dam site.
August 30, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advised boaters and river users that the navigation channel in the main stem of the Peace River that passes under the temporary Site C construction bridge was shifted closer to the north bank on Sunday, August 19; • Request for Proposals posted for Supply of Generator Circuit Breakers posted; • Lower reservoir wildfires have been classified as extinguished and BC Wildfire Services have demobilized; and, • Update on the EAC amendment requests for the Halfway River bridge design and use of West Pine Quarry materials was sent to Indigenous groups on July 31, 2018.
September 11, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The preferred realignment for Highway 29 at Cache Creek/Bear Flat has been selected following extensive consultation with Indigenous groups and local property owners; • Notification that the Northern Development Initiative Trust was named Peace Agricultural Compensation Fund financial administrator. The \$20 million fund will support agricultural priorities in the Peace Region; • Updated Traffic and Pavement Monitoring Report (Year 2) posted on the project website; • Reminder of the burning advisory sent out to Indigenous groups on September 7, 2018, and that a public advisory was also posted on the Project website; • Amendments to two Heritage Conservation Act permits. (HCA Site Alteration Permit 2015-0193 Amendment #9 & HCA Investigation Permit 2016-0235 Amendment #3); and, • RFP for equipment supplies for DC Station services.

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

September 28, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of the start of construction on Highway 29 realignment at Cache Creek West anticipated to start in the following month; • Geotechnical investigations at the potential boat launch replacement site at Watson Spring starting the first week of October; • Reminder of fall burning advisory with links to more information on the project website; • The Site C viewpoint was reopened on September 10; and, • Notification of two environmental incidents on the right bank.
October 18, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction on Highway 29 realignment at Cache Creek West has started with link to a construction information sheet on the project website; • Reminder of vegetation clearing debris burning to take place in the lower reservoir; • Notification of the updated Site C cannabis policy; • Advised safety and reminded of work around Old Hope Road; and, • Advised safety for hunters and trappers around active work sites.
October 30, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety reminder for boaters, hunters and trappers around active work sites; • Continued reminder of issued burning advisory; and, • Notification that the 2017-2018 Aboriginal Training and Inclusion Plan report was issued and is available on the project website.
November 20, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of availability of new photos and drone footage of Site C on the project website; • Notification that Revision 3 of the Heritage Resources Management Plan (HRMP) and Cultural Resource Management Plan (CRMP) have been posted on the project website; • Reminder that Environmental Assessment Certificate Amendment Request #4 on riparian zone clearing methods had been shared with Indigenous groups for feedback and comment; and, • Update on environmental incidents on the right bank related to a significant rain event in early September.
December 5, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safety reminder not to hunt or shoot around active work areas; • We posted a new brochure on the wildlife program that is now available on the project website. It provides updated information on the project's wildlife mitigation and monitoring programs;

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite to Indigenous artists to join the ATCO Two Rivers Holiday Market; • Advised safety and reminded of work around Old Hope Road. • Continued reminder of issued burning advisory; • Advised there was a request for proposal (11639) for supply of large valves; • Advised there was a request for proposal (10714) for agricultural monitoring; and, • Forecasted the launch of the new Site C SharePoint site for Indigenous groups.
December 19, 2018	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advised safety and reminded of work around Old Hope Road; and, • Advised safety and notified of lower reservoir burning west of the dam site.
January 10, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announced shortlist for Site C balance of plant contract; • The 2019 Field Work Summary with information on Site C environment and engineering field work planned for the year were made available; and, • Advised safety and notified of an updated burning advisory issued on January 9, 2019. Included dialogue of the winter clearing activities in the Cache Creek basin.
January 28, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notified that construction started on 85th Avenue Industrial Lands and the conveyor belt corridor; • Notified of the planning of the mitigation of two non-Indigenous, unregistered burial sites associated with early homesteading families that were affected by Site C construction; • Reminder of an advisory to use caution along Highway 29 at Halfway River and Cache Creek where work was taking place; and, • Continued reminder of issued burning advisory.
February 15, 2019 (addendum sent February 19, 2019)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided update on the heritage chance find on the transmission line. It was determined that there was no dinosaur footprint and that the impressions are natural and the result of surface weathering exfoliation and fracture patterns in the rock; • Notified of consultation work for Environmental Assessment Certificate Amendment Request #5 - Highway 29 Cache Creek realignment; and, • Addendum sent on February 19, 2019 providing new date for the Culture and Heritage Resources Committee meeting # 17.

Summary of Notifications and Information Shared	
February 28, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notified that the first of more than 400 towers that will support our two new 500kV transmission lines leading from Site C to Peace Canyon; • Notification of the right bank drainage tunnel breakthrough achievement and that the 1-km-long right bank drainage tunnel was completed; • Notified that the new Indigenous Relations North SharePoint site was launched; • Advised the 2019 Continuation of Geotechnical Investigations in Highway 29 Western Segments; and, • Continued reminder of issued burning advisory.
March 15, 2019	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Notification of a public advisory issued for night-time log hauling; • BC Hydro's submission of the annual and quarterly reports to the BC Utilities Commission; • Notification of debris burning on the Peace River; and, • Reminder that the annual notification letter regarding the proposed treatments of invasive vegetation species was sent out with a request for feedback.

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 Site C 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 consultation process in an effort to enhance Site C permit consultation opportunities, find efficiencies, reduce the overall workload for First nations, and better manage the consultation schedule.

Permitting Forums were incorporated into the BC-BC Hydro 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 forum are the same nations that the MFLNRORD consults with on provincial permit applications.

Permitting Forums held during the reporting period are described below.

- Permitting Forum #9 was held on **May 8, 2018** and was attended by representatives from DFN, SFN, BRFN, DTFN, DRFN, HRFN, HLFN, MLIB, BC Hydro, and MFLNRO. The meeting included a review and discussion of BC Hydro's request for amendment to the Environmental Assessment Certificate (#1) and applications associated with Lower and Middle Reservoir clearing.
- Permitting Forum #10 was held on **September 11, 2018** and was attended by representatives of BRFN, DTFN, DRFN, DFN, HRFN, SFN, HLFN, BC Hydro, Transport Canada and MFLNRO. BC Hydro reviewed requests for amendment of the Environmental Assessment Certificate (requests #2 and #3), Land and Forest Act applications related to Highway 29 realignment at Halfway River, and the dam site area Water Licence application.
- A follow-up meeting was held on **November 5, 2018** and was attended by representatives of BRFN, DTFN, DRFN, DFN, HRFN, SFN, HLFN, BC Hydro, BC Oil and Gas Commission, BC Comptroller of Water Rights, Transport Canada and MFLNRO. The Province shared information with First Nations on Peace Region water authorizations, and BC Hydro provided additional information on the dam site area Water Licence.
- Permitting Forum #11 was held on **February 14, 2018** and was attended by representatives of SFN, BRFN, HRFN, DFN, DTFN, HLFN, DRFN, MLIB BC Hydro, Transport Canada, and MFLNRORD. Information on vegetation clearing in the Middle and Western Reservoir was reviewed and discussed with First Nations participants

BC Hydro uses the Indigenous groups SharePoint sites 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

Site C Indigenous Relations has established an Environmental Forum in collaboration with the project's Environment team. The Forum is a place for BC Hydro and Indigenous groups to collaborate and share information, input and participation opportunities related to key interests identified by Indigenous groups related to Site C's environmental mitigation plans and monitoring programs. The general topics for the Environmental Forum include fish and fish habitat, wildlife, vegetation and heritage and may be linked to conditions of the Environmental Assessment Certificate, Federal Decision Statements, permits or authorizations.

Environmental Forums held during the reporting period are described below.

- Environmental Forum #1 was held on **May 4, 2018**. The meeting provided an overview of Site C's fish and aquatic habitat mitigation and monitoring programs including fish & fish habitat, fish monitoring program, fish habitat enhancements and fish passage management;

- Environmental Forum #2 was held on **November 13, 2018**. The meeting provided information on Site C's wetland mitigation and compensation program, rare plant mitigation, and plants of traditional indigenous value and plans for the incorporation of these into the project's re-vegetation and reclamation program; and,
- Environmental Forum #3 was held on **January 23, 2019**. The meeting was styled as a "heritage workshop" and included samples of findings and artifacts that have been found during heritage investigations and excavations for the Site C project, and a review of heritage program work that has taken place as well as upcoming work.

3.3.3 Culture and Heritage Resources Committee

This 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 Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee can be found in the [Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan](#) (CRMP), available on the Project website in the [Environmental Management document library](#); annual reports detailing activities undertaken during the reporting period are available in the *Site C Project Reports* section of this document library.

For more information on the Committee and a summary of its activities, please refer to the Project website's Regional Community Liaison Committee page (<https://www.sitecproject.com/in-the-community/regional-community-liaison-committee>).

3.4 Saulneau First Nations Registered Trapline Holders

BC Hydro remains engaged with Saulneau 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 Site Visits and Ground Truthing

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 site visits in the project activity zone with interested groups. Site C's Indigenous Relations staff has hosted site visits and ground truthing activities in the dam site area, Highway 29 realignment segments, along the transmission line, and on the Peace River between Halfway River and Taylor.

The [Aboriginal Plant Use Mitigation Plan](#) (APUMP) and the [Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan](#) (CRMP) describe ground truthing as it pertains to plants of traditional Indigenous value and cultural resources, respectively. Ground truthing 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

This 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 we launched a new and improved SharePoint site based on Indigenous groups' feedback. The new, improved layout is designed to make it easier to find information on Site C as well as BC Hydro's other northeast projects. Some highlights include project pages with all the information of each project on the same page, and the site also includes a new resource section with information on other areas of interest like energy conservation, employment and power outages. Site C 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, and environmental features;
- *Environment* documents such as Environmental Protection Plans, Environmental Completion Reports, and Monthly Environmental Monitoring Summary Reports;
- *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 and 3.3 of this report.

3.7 External Project Website

The Site C Clean Energy Project website provides additional information including:

- Mitigation and Monitoring Plans and Annual Reports
- Employment and business opportunities
- Federal authorizations and provincial permits
- Construction activities
- 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 Fish Monitoring Program

BC Hydro will communicate the results of the Fisheries and Aquatic Habitat Monitoring and Follow-up Program to Indigenous groups through the annual report for the FAHMFP, found on the Project website in the Site C Project Reports section of the [Environmental Management document library](#). Annual reports of the individual monitoring programs that comprise the FAHMFP will be made available to Indigenous groups on the Project website and/or the SharePoint site as they are finalized. Annual reports from the 2017-2018 programs were shared with Indigenous groups in August 2018 on the SharePoint site, and are also available on the project website. Future reports will continue to be shared with Indigenous groups when they are finalized.

BC Hydro will work with interested Indigenous groups to coordinate community meetings to discuss the programs and findings with community members.