



# *Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan 2017-2018 Annual Report*

Site C Clean Energy Project

Reporting period: July 1, 2017 through March 31, 2018

Date: August 3, 2018

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# 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 BC. 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 kilometres; and
- construction of a berm at Hudson's Hope.

The Project will also include 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 third year of project construction.

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

- 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;
- The temporary on-site manufacturing facility was completed and manufacturing of steel structures for the turbines and generators began;
- The substation contractor began work on the south bank;
- Offices and infrastructure for the spillways civil works were set up on the north and south banks;
- Clearing occurred in the transmission line right-of-way and access roads continued to be upgraded;
- Work began to upgrade the Peace Canyon substation;

- Construction of access roads and clearing continued for the reservoir area; waste wood has been removed or disposed; and
- Geotechnical work and site investigations occurred for designs of the Highway 29 segments and Hudson's Hope shoreline protection project.

## **2 Objective and Scope**

### **2.1 Objective of the Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan**

The objective of the June 5, 2015 Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan (CRMP) is to fulfill the requirements of Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) condition 63. The CRMP outlines the approach to cultural resources mitigation initiatives for the Project, including forming a Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee (Committee) that will consider elements such as identification and naming of key cultural sites, documenting historical use of the area, commemoration of sites lost to inundation, cultural awareness and orientation of workforce training, and support for cultural camps through financial in-kind support. Other activities or initiatives may be considered as recommended by the Committee.

### **2.2 Scope and Reporting Period**

This annual report describes BC Hydro's engagement activities with Indigenous groups through implementation of the CRMP from June 2017 through March 2018. This is the third annual report of the CRMP.

## **3 Implementation of the Plan – June 2017 through March 2018**

This report summarizes the implementation of the mitigation initiatives described in section 5.0 of the CRMP.

### **3.1 Establish the Committee**

In accordance with EAC condition 63, BC Hydro is engaging Indigenous groups on the development and implementation of mitigation measures respecting the potential effects of the Project on Indigenous culture and heritage through the Committee.

On September 24, 2014, BC Hydro invited all Indigenous groups named in the EAC and federal Decision Statement<sup>1</sup> to participate in the Committee. The Committee considers mitigation measures, which could include identification, naming and commemoration of key cultural sites; documenting historical use of the area, including trails, sites and stories; cultural awareness and orientation of the workforce; and, support for cultural camps through financial in-kind support. BC Hydro offered to provide an honorarium and to cover costs associated with travel to attend Committee meetings.

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<sup>1</sup> 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

On October 17, 2014, BC Hydro provided the thirteen Indigenous groups noted above with the draft CRMP, which included the proposed terms of reference for the Committee, for review and comment. Comments received on the draft CRMP were considered in preparing the final CRMP. Additionally, the Terms of Reference have been reviewed by Committee members, including the proposed cultural resources mitigation initiatives detailed in the CRMP.

BC Hydro remains interested in participation from all thirteen Indigenous groups named in the EAC and federal Decision Statement and will continue to send invitations to all for future Committee meetings.

### **3.2 Frequency, Duration and Location of Meetings**

In the CRMP and Terms of Reference for the Committee, it was proposed the Committee meet on a quarterly basis for the first and second years of Project construction. Starting the third year of Project construction, it was proposed that sub-regional and broader Committee meetings are to be held on a quarterly basis. The frequency thereafter would be determined by the Committee.

The Committee held three meetings during this reporting period; two meetings in Fort St. John and one meeting in Hudson's Hope. Representatives from twelve of the thirteen Indigenous groups named in the EAC and federal Decision Statement attended at least one Committee meeting during the reporting period. Attendees include representatives from Doig River First Nation, Blueberry River First Nations, Halfway River First Nation, West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations (represented by the Nun wa dee Stewardship Society), Sauteau First Nations, Dene Tha' First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Métis Nation BC, and Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society.

### **3.3 Develop Cultural Resources Mitigation Initiatives in collaboration with the Committee**

The Committee continues to work collaboratively on cultural resources mitigation initiatives. This includes identifying measures to commemorate sites that will be lost to inundation, identification and naming of key cultural sites, documenting historical use of the area, including trails, sites, and stories, and discussing and developing an approach to Indigenous cultural awareness and orientation of the workforce.

In April 2017, BC Hydro secured a facilitator from Four Directions Management Services to support the Committee and the effectiveness of meetings. The addition of a facilitator has helped to keep the Committee's work moving forward.

Below is a summary of the meetings held by the Committee within the reporting period of this annual report:

- On **July 26, 2017**, the Committee met and discussed a range of topics including: the introduction of a facilitator to Committee meetings; proposed amendments to the CRMP and Heritage Resources Management Plan; and the updated Terms of Reference. Nun wa dee Stewardship Society, representing West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations presented an overview of the proposed Highway 29 realignment at Cache Creek and the significance of cultural resources in the area, and the group visited the First Nations Gallery at the Bennett Dam Visitor Centre. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Doig

River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Métis Nation BC and Nun wa dee Stewardship Society on behalf of Prophet River First Nation and West Moberly First Nations.

- On **October 30, 2017**, the Committee reviewed the Terms of Reference, discussed the North Bank Viewpoint Interpretive Sign and discussed ideas for potential future projects. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Dene Tha' First Nation, Doig River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Kelly Lake Metis Settlement Society and McLeod Lake Indian Band.
- On **December 11, 2017**, the Committee met and discussions commenced with concerns raised regarding territorial acknowledgement. The facilitator clarified that the Committee is apolitical and politics needed to be kept out of the Committee's work in order for the group to move forward and be successful. The Committee discussed options for artifacts found in the Peace Region as well as specifications for the North Bank View Point Interpretive Sign. The group reviewed the Process Flow Chart, the Draft Work Plan and the Draft Terms of Reference. The meeting was attended in part by representatives from Blueberry River First Nations and Doig River First Nation and in full by BC Hydro and representatives from Dene Tha' First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Kelly Lake Metis Settlement Society and McLeod Lake Indian Band.

### **3.4 Information Sharing**

Committee meeting minutes are shared with participants and leadership of their represented Indigenous communities for review and comment prior to being finalized. Meeting minutes are posted to the Site C Information for Indigenous Groups SharePoint. Additional information exchanged during meetings, such as presentations, photos and follow-up responses, are also made available on the Site C Information for Indigenous Groups SharePoint site, and can be accessed with a login and password.

This annual report will be shared with Indigenous groups at the same time as it is submitted to regulators.

### **3.5 Other Cultural Resources Mitigation Initiatives**

#### **3.5.1 Invitations and Participation in Ground Truthing Activities**

In addition to work with the Committee, the project continued to consult with Indigenous groups regarding construction plans, and supported Indigenous groups in ground truthing<sup>2</sup> of traditional land use areas within the Project activity zone prior to construction. BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with Indigenous groups in the interest of receiving site-specific information with sufficient time to consider and adapt project plans to avoid or mitigate impacts to these sites wherever possible.

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<sup>2</sup> "Ground truthing" activities with Indigenous groups, including Indigenous registered trapline holders, provides BC Hydro with the information needed to verify and accurately site Indigenous land use sites or areas, and to identify concerns related to specific features, or sites that may be affected by the Project. In particular, BC Hydro is seeking to verify features such as plant harvesting areas (specifically medicinal and food plants), the location of burial sites, and the location of structures including when and how they are accessed by Indigenous groups.

During this reporting period, BC Hydro followed up with interested Indigenous groups to either plan ground truthing activities to be carried out with BC Hydro field support, or to facilitate independent ground truthing activities. Invitations were communicated during meetings and correspondence with individual Aboriginal groups, as well as through discussions at the Permitting Forum.

Ground truthing activities undertaken in the reporting period are summarized in Table 1, organized by Aboriginal Group.

For the purposes of this report, the ground truthing activities described relate to potential burial or other cultural sites.

**Table 1: Ground Truthing Activities Undertaken**

<b>Aboriginal Group</b>	<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
Blueberry River First Nations (BRFN)	Reservoir Highway 29 Dam Site	Ground truthing activities took place from June 22 to 30, 2017 at Cache Creek, Halfway River, Lynx Creek, Dry Creek, Farrell Creek, the Dam Site and Moberly Lake.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with BRFN.
Doig River First Nations (DRFN)	Reservoir Transmission Line Highway 29	Ground truthing activities took place on June 19 and 20 <sup>th</sup> , 2017 at Cache Creek and the Halfway River. Additional activities took place on July 6 to 7 at Cache Creek and from Taylor to Halfway River.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with DRFN.
Halfway River First Nation (HRFN)	Reservoir Highway 29	Ground truthing activities took place between August 21–to 23, 2017, at the confluence of the Peace and Halfway Rivers. On September 18 to 19, and 25 to 26, 2017, the following areas were surveyed to record areas of cultural significance: the Halfway/Peace confluence; the Cache Creek Valley; and the Peace River, west of the Halfway/Peace confluence to points west of Farrell Creek.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with HRFN.
McLeod Lake Indian Band (MLIB)	Transmission Line	Ground truthing activities took place along the transmission line on June 27 and 28, 2017.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with MLIB.

Some Aboriginal Groups identified areas of interest for ground truthing but were unable to schedule or conduct ground truthing during the reporting period. BC Hydro will continue to work with these groups, and remains open to scheduling ground truthing in these areas of interest.

Ground truthing activities that BC Hydro was working to coordinate and schedule but were not conducted during the reporting period are described in Table 2.

**Table 2: Ground Truthing Activities Coordinated but Not Undertaken**

<b>Aboriginal Group</b>	<b>Project Component</b>	<b>Results</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
Dene Tha' First Nation (DTFN)	Transmission Line	DTFN expressed interest in ground truthing the transmission line during permit consultation meetings with FLNR. BC Hydro followed up, however no ground truthing activities took place during the reporting period.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing areas of interest along the transmission line with DTFN.
Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society (KLMSS)	Reservoir Transmission Line Highway 29	BC Hydro and KLMSS made efforts to coordinate ground truthing activities for summer 2017. Due to scheduling conflicts and availability, no ground truthing activities took place during the reporting period.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with KLMSS.
McLeod Lake	Cache Creek Highway 29	While BC Hydro and MLIB ground truthed areas along Highway 29, Cache Creek and the Halfway River, Marl Fen and Watson Slough, BC Hydro is open to further ground truthing activities in areas of Cache Creek and along Highway 29 that MLIB have not ground-truthed before.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest with MLIB.
Prophet River First Nation (PRFN)	Reservoir Transmission Line Highway 29	No ground truthing activities took place during the reporting period.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing areas of interest with PRFN.
Saulteau First Nations (SFN)	Reservoir Transmission Line Highway 29	SFN expressed interest in ground truthing, but were unable to do so in 2017.	BC Hydro will continue to work with SFN to identify and coordinate ground truthing of other areas of importance to SFN in 2018.
West Moberly First Nations (WMFN)	Reservoir Transmission Line Highway 29	No ground truthing activities took place during the reporting period.	BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing areas of interest with WMFN.

For an update on ground truthing activities that occurred in relation to plant harvesting areas (specifically medicinal and food plants), please refer to the [Aboriginal Plant Use Mitigation Plan 2017-2018 Annual Report](#).

For an update on heritage program activities related to heritage resources, including palaeontological, archaeological and historic resources, please refer to the [Heritage Resources Management Plan 2017 Annual Report](#).

### **3.5.2 Ground Truthing Reports**

Results of ground truthing activities conducted jointly by Aboriginal groups with BC Hydro participation are summarized in individual reports prepared by BC Hydro's traditional land use consultant (Traditions Consulting Ltd.) and shared with the ground truthing participants for review and comment prior to finalization.

In this reporting period, BCH worked with MLIB to finalize the June 2017 ground truthing report.

With respect to ground truthing activities completed independently by Indigenous groups, reports were received DRFN in September 2017, and an interim report was received from HRFN in December 2017. At the end of this reporting period, BC Hydro was expecting reports from independent ground truthing activities conducted in 2017 from BRFN.

Finalised ground truthing reports are shared with relevant members of the Site C team (e.g., Environment, Transmission Line Design, Roads, Properties, Construction Management) to identify potential measures to avoid or mitigate effects of the project on specific Aboriginal sites or features identified during ground truthing activities. BC Hydro will follow up with the respective Aboriginal groups to share how their information has been considered and incorporated in the Project design and/or mitigation measures developed.

Due to the sensitive nature of the cultural information gained during ground truthing, BC Hydro is not able to provide site-specific details in publicly available reports such as this one.

### **3.6 Inspection by the Environmental Assessment Office**

In April 2017, the Environmental Assessment Office initiated an inspection in response to a complaint from West Moberly First Nations and Prophet River First Nation regarding the effects of the Highway 29 realignment on cultural and heritage resources in the area of Bear Flats (near the confluence of Cache Creek and the Peace River). Proposed amendments to the CRMP and Heritage Resources Management Plan were shared during the July 26, 2017 CHRC meeting. The EAO sent their final inspection report on August 30, 2017 regarding compliance with EAC 63, and based on the EAO's comments and recommendations BC Hydro is making further revisions to the CRMP and HRMP the revisions will be shared with the Environmental Assessment Office and Indigenous groups for review and input.

## **4 Schedule**

BC Hydro will continue to work with the Committee to plan and carry out activities described in the CRMP, as appropriate, on an ongoing basis through the construction phase of the Project.