

# *Aboriginal Training and Inclusion Plan 2020-2021 Annual Report*

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

*March 31, 2021*

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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 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 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. This work includes the Site C powerhouse, penstocks, spillways, turbines and generators.
- In the powerhouse, 75 percent of the concrete and 80 percent of steel have been placed.

- The six penstocks, which will funnel the water from the Forebay into the turbines and generators, are more than 50 percent 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. The second transmission line is more than half finished.
- BC Hydro is partnering with the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to realign six segments of Highway 29, between Hudson's Hope to Fort St. John.
- Construction is underway for all 30 kilometres of the highway that need to be realigned to accommodate the future reservoir.
- clearing of the 87-kilometre-long reservoir area is about 75 percent 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 Purpose of the Plan

The purpose of the June 5, 2015 Aboriginal Training and Inclusion Plan (ATIP) is to meet the requirement of Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) condition 54, by operationalizing the mitigation measures proposed in relevant sections (Section 17: Labour Market, Section 18: Regional Economic Development, and Section 28: Population and Demographics) of the Environmental Impact Statement with respect to Indigenous groups and their interests in employment and training opportunities. The ATIP outlines the approach and strategies for training and inclusion to be followed during the construction phase of the Project.

Please note, the term 'Indigenous' has replaced the ATIP's use of 'Aboriginal' throughout this report.

### 2.1 Reporting Period: April 2020 to March 2021

This report summarizes the implementation of the measures identified in the ATIP to fulfil EAC condition 54 from April 2020 through March 2021. This is the sixth annual report. In some cases, consultation and engagement with Indigenous groups on measures described in the ATIP that took place prior to this period are also summarized here for context.

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<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>

## **2.2 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 Communication of Potential Employment Opportunities to Indigenous Groups**

BC Hydro has taken a multi-pronged approach to communicating employment opportunities to Indigenous groups and individuals. This approach includes:

- BC Hydro communicates employment opportunities directly to Indigenous groups and individuals;
- BC Hydro requires its contractors to communicate employment opportunities related to the performance of their contracts to Indigenous groups and individuals, and to work with their unions;
- Advertising opportunities online; and,
- Hosting and attending information sessions, career fairs and meetings where training and employment opportunities are shared with Indigenous groups and individuals.

Examples of activities as part of this approach that occurred during this reporting period are described in the sections below.

### **3.1 Site C Indigenous Employment and Training Information Session**

During this reporting period, BC Hydro hosted the sixth Site C Indigenous Employment and Training virtual information session on February 24, 2021. Due to COVID 19, our in-person session planned for the summer of 2020 was postponed. The information session is intended to assist in building relationships between employment and training professionals from Indigenous communities and key Project contractors. Project contractors in attendance provided information on their current and upcoming employment opportunities, along with training requirements, their individual hiring processes and advice for job candidates. BC Hydro

provided an update on the project and provided the 2020 Indigenous employment stats on the project. Treaty 8 Nations (13) and local ASETS partner NENAS (Northeast Native Advancement Society) were invited to participate and share their community events and initiatives, and contractor Indigenous Opportunities Coordinators were able to answer any questions relating to employment on the Site C Project. Follow up documentation with contractor contact information, links for scholarship and bursary opportunities, and career information links were sent to the Indigenous Employment and training representatives via email.

### **3.2 Site C Employment Opportunities Information Sheet**

BC Hydro has developed an information sheet on Project employment opportunities for Indigenous candidates. The information sheet includes employment descriptions and contact information for Project contractors, and Frequently Asked Questions regarding project employment and site policies. The information sheet is distributed to all participants at the Indigenous Employment and Training Information Sessions and also to Indigenous candidates at career fairs.

### **3.3 Career Fairs**

*The following regional career fairs during the reporting period have been postponed until COVID restrictions have been lifted:*

- North East Native Advancing Society (NENAS) Career and Trades Forum and Recognition event;
- McLeod Lake Indian Band Career Fair; and
- Saúlteau First Nations Career Fair.

Members of BC Hydro's Project team attend these events to discuss employment and procurement opportunities on the Project and with BC Hydro in general. Project contractors also participate in these regional career fairs.

### **3.4 Advertising Employment Opportunities**

Job opportunities are posted on the Project, WorkBC and Employment Connections websites. During engagement with Indigenous groups and when responding to specific job related inquiries, BC Hydro directs job seekers to the Project website and encourages Indigenous job seekers to reach out to contractors directly for employment opportunities.

BC Hydro also uses email and other means to communicate with Indigenous candidates, and Indigenous training and employment specialists about job opportunities. This includes the Project's Bi-Weekly Information Updates to Indigenous groups that often include training and employment information, and relevant links.

Employment opportunities are also communicated through the Contractor's Indigenous Labour sub-committee.

### 3.5 Individual Candidate Engagement

BC Hydro provides coaching and mentoring for Indigenous candidates who are seeking work with BC Hydro or with Project contractors. This support includes, but is not limited to:

- Sharing job opportunities;
- Providing one-on-one employment coaching;
- Resume support and submission as required; and interview preparation; and
- Career exploration.

The level of support provided by BC Hydro depends on what is required by the candidate, which is often related to how much support the candidate receives from an Indigenous training and employment specialist in their community. In many cases, BC Hydro is the direct link between the candidate and employment with Project contractors.

## 4 Site C Contractor Hiring and Training of Indigenous People

Contracts awarded by BC Hydro for the Project may contain Indigenous participation and reporting requirements. Project contractors may be required to provide business, employment and/or training and apprenticeship opportunities for Indigenous people and to report regularly on Indigenous participation in the performance of their work.

During the reporting period, the following number of people working on the Project self-identified as Indigenous<sup>2</sup>. As with any construction project, the number of workers will vary month-to-month and reflects the seasonal nature of construction work.

Month	Number of Indigenous people working on the Project
April 2020	158
May 2020	189
June 2020	305
July 2020	349
August 2020	336
September 2020	359
October 2020	412
November 2020	400
December 2020	347

<sup>2</sup> The number of Indigenous people was provided by on-site construction and non-construction contractors that have a contractual requirement to report on Indigenous participation in their workforce. Workers voluntarily self-declare their Indigenous status to their employer.

<b>Month</b>	<b>Number of Indigenous people working on the Project</b>
January 2021	281

To date, and where applicable to their role, there has been 1636 training occurrences provided to Indigenous workers on the Project. Project contractors have reported the following training and apprenticeship opportunities for Indigenous people on the Project during the reporting period:

<b>Site C Indigenous Training</b>	
<b>Safety</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Aerial/Elevated Work Platform Boom Lifts</li> <li>▪ BC Construction Safety Alliance Leadership for Safety Excellence (BCCSA LSE)</li> <li>▪ Confined Space</li> <li>▪ Fall Protection and Rescue</li> <li>▪ First Aid (Standard and Occupational 3)</li> <li>▪ Health, Safety Environment Toolbox</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lock Out Tag Out</li> <li>▪ Power System Safety Protection (PSSP)</li> <li>▪ Basic Fire Suppression</li> <li>▪ Transportation Endorsement</li> <li>▪ Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS)</li> <li>▪ Wilderness / Bear Awareness</li> <li>▪ Workplace Violence</li> </ul>
<b>Operational</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Kitchen and Housekeeping Skills</li> <li>▪ Customer Service</li> <li>▪ Electrical Ground and Bonding</li> <li>▪ Engineering Intern</li> <li>▪ Equipment Operating</li> <li>▪ Foreman</li> <li>▪ Gate B Operations</li> <li>▪ Helicopter Longline</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Independent Lab Testing Certification</li> <li>▪ Leadership and Teambuilding</li> <li>▪ RCMP Drug Recognition</li> <li>▪ Respectful Workplace</li> <li>▪ Security</li> <li>▪ Security Workforce Management Software</li> <li>▪ Rough Terrain Forklift</li> </ul>
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pre-Apprentice Job Shadowing</li> <li>▪ Heavy Duty Mechanic (2<sup>nd</sup> Year)</li> <li>▪ Power Line Technician (2)</li> <li>▪ Carpentry (1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> Year)</li> <li>▪ Scaffolding (1<sup>st</sup> Year)</li> </ul>	

## **5 Site C Contractors' Indigenous Labour Sub-Committee**

In fall 2017, the Site C Contractors' Labour Committee established the Site C Contractors' Indigenous Labour Sub-Committee. During this reporting period the sub-committee met on the following dates: Aug. 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020; Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

The purpose of the sub-committee is to support Indigenous training, labour and employment on the Project, through communication, consultation, coordination and cooperation among contractors on the Project. This sub-committee was formed in response to requests from Indigenous groups to increase communication and to build and maintain relationships between Indigenous groups and Project contractors regarding labour, training and employment initiatives that are specific to Indigenous groups.

All major Project contractors are invited to participate in this sub-committee which meets quarterly, or on an as needed basis.

To date the sub-committee has:

- Established a protocol for distribution of Indigenous candidate resumes;
- Developed and implemented the Site C Indigenous Employment and Training Information Sessions;
- Reviewed and assisted contractors in contractual reporting requirements;
- Discussed communication of site wide policies;
- Shared regional cultural events with project contractors;
- Shared BC Hydro employment and training initiatives;
- Reviewed contractors best practices;
- Shared success stories to assist in generating opportunities;
- Reviewed project status and upcoming labour requirements for Project contractors and how to meet labour demands; and
- Initiated employment and training initiatives such as the pilot pre-carpentry program; pre-heavy equipment operator training; Kitchen and Housekeeping Skills; and a Fish Monitoring Program.

## **6 Inclusion of Evaluation Criteria for Hiring and Training Indigenous People**

BC Hydro has included Indigenous participation in the evaluation criteria for the major Project contracts, including:

- Worker Accommodation;
- Main Civil Works;
- Generating Station and Spillways Civil Works;
- Transmission Line Construction;
- Substation Construction;
- Balance of Plant;
- Generating Station and Spillways Powerhouse Bridge and Gantry Cranes;

- Hydro-Mechanical Equipment Supply;
- Peace Canyon 500kV GIS Expansion; and
- Turbines and Generators.

BC Hydro required proponents bidding on these contracts to provide a proposed plan to meet the contract requirements for Indigenous participation through the provision of business, employment, training and apprenticeship opportunities. BC Hydro's evaluation process included a review of proponents' proposed plans for Indigenous participation.

Following award of the contract, BC Hydro works with the contractor to develop and finalize their plan for the fulfilment of their Indigenous participation requirements. Contractors are required to report regularly on the fulfilment of the Indigenous participation requirements under their contracts.

### **6.1 Strategies for Capacity Building, Education and Training Associated with Indigenous Participation in the Labour Market**

BC Hydro has implemented capacity building initiatives that have supported essential skills training, pre-trades and trades training, or increased business capacity in Indigenous businesses. BC Hydro will continue to consider proposals from Indigenous groups and training organizations for potential capacity building, education and training opportunities throughout the construction phase of the Project.

As with employment opportunities, BC Hydro's strategy includes multiple approaches to support capacity building, education and training. BC Hydro provides opportunities directly to Indigenous groups, as well as working with Project contractors to increase their capacity building opportunities.

Further information and updates on specific capacity building initiatives is provided in Training Programs 6.3.

### **6.2 Training and Employment Working Groups**

BC Hydro has created Training and Employment Working Groups and meets regularly and individually with training and employment professionals from Indigenous groups to learn about their community's capacity needs, career interests and potential issues. BC Hydro then works to align employment and training initiatives with the interests and needs of the Indigenous groups. BC Hydro also shares information related to Project employment opportunities, creates linkages for Indigenous candidates to BC Hydro or to contractors, and builds Training and Employment Plans that meet the interests of both BC Hydro and Indigenous groups.

During the reporting period BC Hydro met with the following Indigenous groups and discussed training and employment related to the Project:

- McLeod Lake Indian Band;
- Saulteau First Nations;
- Doig River First Nations;
- Halfway River First Nation.

In addition, ad hoc meetings to discuss training and employment opportunities continue to be hosted by BC Hydro. Approximately 9 meetings have been held with regional groups to discuss Indigenous employment and training interests. These groups include Northern Lights College and NENAS.

### 6.3 Training Programs

In addition to the programs that have been delivered in previous years, which included the ATCO Kitchen Skills Program, Moberly Academic Program and an electrofishing program, BC Hydro has delivered the following new programs and updates to existing programs for Indigenous groups.

- **Site C Fish Monitoring Program:** was successfully completed in July 2020. The program was re-designed for virtual and in-person training. The 11 day program allowed the all Indigenous cohort to gain 8 certifications including Swiftwater Rescue, Boat Safety, Electrofishing required for employment with our environmental contractors on the fish monitoring program at Site C. This program also included BC Hydro's Career Energizer (description below).
- **Re-furbished laptops:** 10 laptops were disbursed to local Indigenous communities to share with community members for virtual learning.

Due to COVID 19, the following programs were postponed until further notice:

- **Driver Training:** Indigenous groups have identified that one of the barriers to employment is lack of drivers' license. To respond to this fundamental need, BC Hydro has supported or designed and delivered five driver training programs with Indigenous groups.
- **ATCO Kitchen Skills and House Keeping Program:** in May 2019, BC Hydro and ATCO partnered for a third time to deliver a Kitchen Skills and housekeeping program at the Project worker accommodation. Eighteen Indigenous candidates were selected to participate in the 10-day program to learn employment readiness skills, communication, team work, workforce training certifications (Foodsafe, CSTS 09), and job shadow with ATCO's Red Seal Chef. A fourth program is planned for 2021.
- **Try-a-Trade:** during the reporting period, the development of an 8-week Try-a-Trade program launched, and the program was piloted in January 2019 throughout B.C., with one location at BC Hydro's existing W.A.C. Bennett Dam, near Hudson's Hope. Eight Indigenous candidates were recruited and selected three of eleven trades that were offered. Candidates were fully supported by BC Hydro to participate in the program, which has been designed to provide hands on experience in their choice of trades. A second Try-a-Trade cohort has been planned for spring 2020. Between the two cohorts a total of five Indigenous candidates have been from northeast B.C.
- **Youth Hires Program:** Indigenous youth are hired to work for 8 weeks over the summer to gain work experience and knowledge of careers at BC Hydro.

- **Career Energizers with BC Hydro:** BC Hydro piloted this program in August 2018 at McLeod Lake Indian Band and with the ATCO Kitchen Skills program in September 2018. Since then, all of BC Hydro’s training programs for this Project are planned with Career Energizers. These 3-day to 10-day courses offer candidates an opportunity to polish a resume, learn employment readiness skills, participate in confidence building activities, skills identification, interview skills, create email addresses, and interact with BC Hydro contractors to learn firsthand about employment opportunities and how to submit resumes.
- **BC Hydro & Northern Lights College Pre-Carpentry Skills Pilot Program:** BC Hydro, Northern Lights College and several partners including NENAS, CMAW (carpenter union), ATCO, AFDE GP, PRHP<sup>3</sup> participated in the development of a Pre-Carpentry Skills program that features essential skills for carpentry, a Northern Lights College job shadow component with the Project contractors, and a carpentry project for students to demonstrate skills learned. The first cohort of eight Indigenous candidates from northeast B.C. completed the 14-day program in April 2019.
- **BC Hydro and Northern Lights College Pre Heavy Equipment Operator Program:** BC Hydro, Northern Lights College, PRHP, CLAC and NENAS participated in the design and delivery of a pre-heavy equipment operator program. The 14-day program will provide participants with the opportunity to experience life at the Project’s worker accommodation while gaining technical and job readiness skills. The intention is to refresh essential skills and power skills while also providing industry specific worksite experiences with focus on the fundamentals of heavy equipment operating.

## 7 Resources and Funding Arrangements to Support Training, Industry, and Indigenous Partnership Opportunities in the Region

BC Hydro continues to recognize the importance of supporting training opportunities for skills development, trades training and job readiness. From 2015 to present, BC Hydro has provided the funding and resources to support local training and partnerships. During this reporting period BC Hydro has continued to support training, industry and Indigenous partnerships in the region, included the following:

### 7.1 Scholarships and Bursaries

BC Hydro has provided \$1 million in funding to the Northern Lights College Foundation (NLCF) over a five-year period to support the development of skilled workers in northeast B.C., which aims to assist students who may not otherwise have access to post-secondary education. Fifty percent of the funding for bursaries is dedicated to Indigenous students.

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<sup>3</sup> AFDE-Aecon-Flatiron-Dragados-EBC Partnership; PRHP-Peace River Hydro Partners

In August 2013, Northern Lights College Foundation started distributing the BC Hydro Trades and Skilled Training Bursary Awards. As of December 2020, a total of 274 students had received bursaries, including 122 Indigenous students who have benefitted from the bursary in programs such as electrical, welding, millwright, cooking, social work, and many others. BC Hydro has worked with the Northern Lights College Foundation to extend the bursary timeline and reserve a portion of bursary amounts for trades programs directly needed for Project work. Part of this agreement was to set aside funds for the BC Hydro and Northern Lights College pre-carpentry skills pilot program for Site C as well as other joint pre-skills programs.

## 7.2 Information Gathering

BC Hydro continues to engage with Indigenous groups and local Indigenous businesses to better understand their capacity and interest in participating in work on the Project.

## 7.3 Engagement with Local Indigenous Business Community

BC Hydro continues to engage the local Indigenous Business community through the following initiatives:

- **Site C Business Directory:** BC Hydro continues to encourage businesses to register themselves on the Site C Business Directory. In doing so, any business, including Indigenous businesses, will receive information about upcoming Project procurements and or other events.
- **Business to Business Networking Sessions:** BC Hydro has previously hosted Business to Business Networking Sessions in the Peace region. The sessions provide an opportunity for proponent teams or contractors to meet with local, regional and Indigenous companies in an organized forum with the objective of forming partnerships and creating business opportunities. BC Hydro and Site C contractors previously participated in business networking sessions in the following First Nation communities:
  - Blueberry River First Nations;
  - Doig River First Nation;
  - McLeod Lake Indian Band;
  - Halfway River First Nation; and
  - Saulneau First Nations.

No Business to Business Networking Sessions took place during this reporting period.

- **Business Development:** Indigenous businesses have been awarded work on the Project in the following areas:
  - Clearing;
  - Civil construction;
  - Highway construction;
  - Grass seed supply;
  - Environmental monitoring;
  - Erosion and sediment control;

- Fish habitat enhancement;
- Project health clinic;
- Quarry development;
- Rip rap production.
- Roads and bridges;
- Safety and security;
- Safety buoys;
- Site preparation;
- Substation work;
- Warehouse construction;
- Wetland mitigation; and
- Wildlife shelter construction, installation, and monitoring.

- **Procurement Process Support:** BC Hydro's Project team are available to discuss procurement processes and ways to stay informed about upcoming procurements. BC Hydro works closely with Indigenous groups and businesses to understand their capacity and interest with respect to the Project and identify potential contracting opportunities.
- **BC Hydro's Indigenous Procurement Policy:** Working together to build relationships that respect Indigenous peoples' interests is important to BC Hydro. One way BC Hydro is supporting the long-term economic interests of Indigenous peoples in British Columbia is by committing to directed procurement opportunities for the benefit of Indigenous communities in support of relationship agreements, impact benefit agreements and other arrangements with Indigenous groups. Under BC Hydro's Indigenous Contract and Procurement Policy, BC Hydro has awarded over \$539 million in contracts to qualified Designated Businesses designated by local Indigenous groups with whom BC Hydro has agreements. The work carried out under these contracts includes:

- Clearing;
- Civil construction;
- Highway construction;
- Grass seed supply;
- Environmental monitoring;
- Erosion and sediment control;
- Fish habitat enhancement;
- Project health clinic;
- Quarry development;
- Rip rap production.
- Roads and bridges;
- Safety and security;
- Safety buoys;
- Site preparation;
- Substation work;
- Warehouse construction; and
- Wetland mitigation; and
- Wildlife shelter construction, installation, and monitoring.

## **8 Environmental Monitoring Programs- Indigenous Involvement in Site C Field Programs**

Indigenous involvement in field studies for the Site C heritage program has been ongoing since 2010. Indigenous groups that have participated as heritage or cultural monitors during this reporting period include:

- Blueberry River First Nations;
- Doig River First Nation;
- Halfway River First Nation;
- Prophet River First Nation;
- Sauteau First Nations; and
- West Moberly First Nations.

BC Hydro has also facilitated Indigenous involvement in the Project's environmental programs, where possible. Indigenous groups that have participated in ecological field surveys, fish and aquatic studies and environmental monitoring programs during this reporting period include:

- Blueberry River First Nations;
- Doig River;
- Halfway River First Nation;
- McLeod Lake Indian Band;
- Sauteau First Nations; and
- West Moberly First Nations.