

Site C Project Construction

Watson Slough Clearing

AUGUST 2022

As part of the Site C environmental management program, we're committed to avoiding or reducing project effects to wetlands. Where effects cannot be avoided, we will replace lost wetland habitats by improving existing wetlands, creating new wetlands with similar functions to those lost, and purchasing lands with wetlands and protecting them.

We are continuing to partner with Ducks Unlimited to identify additional opportunities to secure, enhance and manage wetland sites, looking first within one kilometre of the project area, followed by sites within the Peace region, and finally looking at other wetland opportunities outside the region.

Cache Creek/Bear Flat Clearing

Clearing work in the Cache Creek/Bear Flat area took place in 2017 in order to complete the realignment of Highway 29. This area includes the Watson Slough, a wetland area that will be lost when the Site C reservoir is filled, as early as fall 2023.

In February 2017, the Peace River Regional District (PRRD) requested that we delay clearing Watson Slough until reservoir filling. In response to this request, we reviewed our clearing plans and determined that we could reduce the number of trees to be cleared at the time. As a result, approximately 10 per cent of the trees were cleared at Watson Slough in 2017, leaving approximately 90 per cent of the trees in place until the winter prior to reservoir filling.

Our revised clearing plan for Watson Slough has retained the wetland and its use by wildlife for a longer period of time.

To meet our projected in-service date of 2025, Site C reservoir filling could begin as early as fall 2023, making it time to begin clearing the remaining trees from Watson Slough. We need to remove as many trees as is feasible from the reservoir area, so they do not create a hazard to boats when the reservoir is filled.

We currently anticipate the following schedule of activities:

September 2022: lowering of the water levels in Watson Slough

October 2022 – late March 2023: clearing the remaining trees in Watson Slough.



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WETLAND COMPENSATION

Wetlands like Watson Slough are important components of ecosystems, providing productive habitats for a wide range of plants and animals, including species at risk. We've partnered with Ducks Unlimited, which has extensive expertise in building and restoring wetlands, to identify more than 500 hectares of wetland compensation opportunities in the Peace Region. A 50-hectare Golata Creek wetland has already been completed and 175 hectares of wetland area are being saved in 2022 by conserving three wetlands that would have been lost had we not intervened.