

Cultural Resources Mitigation Plan 2019-2020 Annual Report

Site C Clean Energy Project

Reporting period: April 2019 through March 2020

March 31, 2020

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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 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:

- the main civil works contractor continued excavation on south bank, work on the spillways roller-compacted concrete buttress and preparation for river diversion (specifically the completion of tunnel excavation and commencement of the tunnel lining process, as well as the construction of inlet and outlet gate structures);
- the generating station and spillways civil work contractor continued the placement of concrete in the powerhouse, and started the assembly and installation of penstocks and intakes;
- clearing continued in the transmission line right-of-way, along Highway 29, and in the future reservoir area; waste wood has been removed or disposed;
- work continued to upgrade the Peace Canyon substation, which was completed in July 2019 – making it the first official Site C asset in service;
- work continued on the construction of the Site C substation, which is now substantially complete;
- work continued on construction of several segments of the Highway 29 realignment;

- downstream fish habitat enhancements were completed;
- Golata Creek wetlands construction was completed;
- construction began on the temporary fish passage;
- work began on the installation of pile structures on the Moberly River (for debris management);
- construction of the temporary conveyor belt system was completed and commissioning began; and,
- assembly and installation of 500 kV steel lattice towers along the transmission line continued; transmission line stringing is underway.

More detailed descriptions of construction activities that took place during the reporting period can be found in the quarterly Notices of Construction Activities¹.

2 Objective and Scope

2.1 Objective and Scope 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.

The CRMP covers the Project Activity Zone (PAZ) as described in the EIS and as defined in the Federal Decision Statement (FDS) section 1.15.

2.2 Reporting Period

This annual report describes BC Hydro's engagement activities with Indigenous groups through the implementation of the CRMP from April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020. In some cases, consultation and engagement with Indigenous groups on measures described in the CRMP that took place prior to this reporting period are also summarized here for context.

This is the fifth annual report of the CRMP.

¹ 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>

3 Implementation of the Plan – April 2019 through March 2020

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 Statement² 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.

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

To date there have been two revisions to the CRMP:

- Revision 2 (Summer 2017) to include an additional process for (a) discussing, identifying and developing mitigation measures for cultural resources outside of the Committee and (b) incorporating mitigation measures for cultural resources into construction planning. Revision 2 of the CRMP was shared with Indigenous groups on July 25, 2017. The revised plan was presented and discussed at the Committee meeting on July 26, 2017.
- Revision 3 (November 2018) to include the following changes: Providing a definition of “cultural resources” (Section 2.2); Setting out roles and responsibilities for implementation of the CRMP (Section 2.3); Establishing a process for review and revision of the CRMP (Section 2.5); Clarification of the role and structure of the Cultural and Heritage Resources Committee (Section 5.1); Describing the process for developing mitigations measures for cultural resources in collaboration with individual Indigenous groups, including ground-truthing activities and the preparation of site specific mitigation plans (Section 5.3); and, Identifying potential management options for cultural resources, including avoidance, mitigation, and compliance verification as applicable (Sections

² Unless otherwise specified, the term Indigenous groups applies to the following “Aboriginal groups” as defined in the Environmental Assessment Certificate (EAC) and federal Decision Statement (FDS): 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.

6.0).The revisions were shared with the Environmental Assessment Office and Indigenous groups for review and input on October 10, 2018.

BC Hydro will continue to work with the Committee on the implementation of the CRMP and to respond to issues and concerns raised by Indigenous groups on the CRMP.

3.1.1 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. The frequency thereafter would be determined by the Committee members. Starting in the third year of Project Construction the Committee adopted a structure that incorporates a sub-regional approach within the broader Committee meetings.

The Committee held its first meeting on July 30, 2015. To date, representatives from twelve of the thirteen Indigenous groups named in the EAC and federal Decision Statement have attended at least one or more of the Committee meeting during the reporting period. Attendees include representatives from Doig River First Nation, Blueberry River First Nations, Halfway River First Nation, Prophet River First Nation, West Moberly First Nations, 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.

During this reporting period, the Committee has held 7 meetings, with 6 meetings being held in Fort St. John and one meeting was held by conference call due to extreme cold weather.

3.1.2 Development of 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. The Committee is supported in its work by a third party facilitator, through Four Directions Management Services. Initiatives underway include signage shelters at the Project's northbank viewpoint, a traveling exhibit that will travel to Indigenous groups to display the loss that will be experienced by the Project and celebrate the cultural heritage and stories for future generations, a future permanent exhibit at the Fort St. John Museum, a calendar of community events, commemoration videos on the impacts of the Project from the perspective of Indigenous groups, and exploring the feasibility of a cultural centre at or near the Project. The Committee has also allocated funding from the overall committee budget to support commemoration and cultural activities that will be implemented individually by each of the 13 Indigenous groups.

The Committee is working on other projects within their regional sub-groups that will identify measures to commemorate, identify and name key cultural sites, document historical use of the area and provide cultural awareness and orientation of the workforce.

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

- On **April 4, 2019**, (meeting #17) the Committee met and discussed environmental concerns including: climate change; fish & fish habitat/enhancement; low water levels downstream; wildlife patterns, mitigation, habitat; trusted data to base informed decisions on; berry picking, traditional medicine sites; hunting; environmental monitoring; cumulative and residual effects; and accountability for finding solutions. The Committee broke out into regional sub-groups and discussed potential projects that could be achieved during this reporting period. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Dene Tha' First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Métis Nation British Columbia and Sauleau First Nations
- On **May 29, 2019**, (meeting #18) the Committee met and discussed Committee projects for this reporting period including: a calendar of community events; a committee boat tour; north bank viewpoint signage; a travelling exhibit; and the development of a video. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Doig River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society and Métis Nation British Columbia.
- On **July 9, 2019**, (meeting #19) discussions continued on the different Committee projects proposed for this reporting period including: the calendar of community events; northbank viewpoint signage; themes for the travelling exhibit; the video project and a committee boat tour. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Doig River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation and McLeod Lake Indian Band.
- On **October 1, 2019**, (meeting #20) the Committee met, discussed and provided updates on the following topics: northbank viewpoint signage; the video project; the structure and budget of the Committee including funding to support individual community commemoration and cultural activities; the travelling exhibit; the paleontology collection. The Committee was also given an update and presentation from Doig River First Nation. 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, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, McLeod Lake Indian Band and Sauleau First Nations.
- On **November 26, 2019**, (meeting #21) the Committee met, discussed and provided updates on the following topics: northbank viewpoint signage, the potential for building a permanent cultural centre, the travelling exhibit, the Committee budget; the video project. The Committee also discussed different ways on how to improve Committee members' ability to share information with their leadership and members. 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, Halfway River First Nation, Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, McLeod Lake Indian Band and Métis Nation British Columbia.

- On **January 15, 2020**, (meeting #22) the Committee met, discussed and provided updates over teleconference on the following topics: northbank viewpoint signage; and the travelling exhibit. The Committee specifically discussed the objective of the travelling exhibit, the physical design and community collaboration workshops to develop the content for the exhibit. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Doig River First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Métis Nation British Columbia and McLeod Lake Indian Band.
- On **March 11, 2020**, (meeting #23) the Committee met, discussed and provided updates on the following topics: the calendar of community events; northbank viewpoint signage; cultural awareness training; National Indigenous Peoples' Day events; the travelling exhibit; the potential permanent cultural centre; and a recent archaeological find. The Committee also watched a draft compilation of the video project featuring videos taken in the summer/fall of 2019. The Committee meeting was attended by BC Hydro and representatives from Blueberry River First Nations, Dene Tha' First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Horse Lake First Nation, Métis Nation British Columbia, McLeod Lake Indian Band, and Sauteau First Nations.

3.1.3 Information Sharing

Committee meeting minutes are shared with participants and leadership of the represented Indigenous groups for review and comment prior to being finalized. Meeting minutes are sent by email following the meeting dates. 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.

3.2 Development of Mitigation Measures in Collaboration with Individual Indigenous Groups

3.2.1 Identifying and Mapping the Locations of Cultural Resources within Planned Construction Areas

The Project continued to consult with individual Indigenous groups regarding construction plans, and offered opportunities for site visits, boat tours on the Peace River, and ground truthing³ of traditional land use areas within the PAZ prior to construction.

³ "Ground truthing" activities with Indigenous groups, including Indigenous registered trapline holders, is intended to provide 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.

BC Hydro remains open to ground truthing additional areas of interest related to cultural resources⁴ with Indigenous groups where ground truthing has not already occurred. As such, on June 12, 2019 and August 30, 2019, BC Hydro sent letters to Indigenous groups with updates on upcoming construction activities and invitations to conduct ground truthing.

During this reporting period, BC Hydro followed up with interested Indigenous groups to coordinate ground truthing activities with BC Hydro field support, facilitate independent ground truthing activities, offer site visits, and organize boat tours of the Peace River. Ground truthing and other field activities such as site visits and boat tours, undertaken during the reporting period are summarized Table 1, organized by Indigenous group. For the purposes of this report, these activities relate to cultural resources.

Table 1: Site Visits, Boat Tours of the Peace River, and Ground Truthing Activities Undertaken

Indigenous Group	Project Component	Results
Blueberry River First Nations	Dam Site, Highway 29, Reservoir	Boat tours occurred on June 17, August 20, and August 21, 2019. A tour of Highway 29 took place on August 29, 2019.
Doig River First Nation	Dam Site, Highway 29, Reservoir	A boat tour occurred on August 8, 2019. Site visits took place at the Dam Site and along Highway 29 on June 25 and August 9, 2019.
Halfway River First Nation	Dam Site, Highway 29, Reservoir	Ground truthing also occurred along Highway 29 on June 6, 2019. Ground truthing activities took place on June 5 and September 20, 2019 at various locations along the Peace River within the future reservoir. A tour of Highway 29 took place on July 3, 2019 and a boat tour occurred on August 30, 2019.
Horse Lake First Nation	Dam Site, Reservoir	A boat tour occurred on August 28, 2019.
McLeod Lake Indian Band	Dam Site, Highway 29, Reservoir	A boat tour occurred on July 31, 2019. Site visits took place at the Dam Site and along Highway 29 on June 13 and October, 2019. MLIB also visited BC Hydro's archives to review historic information on May 14, 2019.
Métis Nation British Columbia	Dam Site	A site visit took place at the Dam Site on October 8, 2019.
Saulteau First Nations	Dam Site, Reservoir	Boat tours occurred on July 30 and August 29, 2019. A site visit to the Dam Site occurred on October 8, 2019.

⁴ Cultural resources are defined in Section 2.2 of the CRMP to be a site, location or feature of cultural importance to an Aboriginal Group and identified as such by an Aboriginal Group. Cultural resources may include, but are not limited to: prayer flags, trails, camps (including sites for cultural gatherings), habitation sites, and spiritual sites, including sweat lodges, and reported but unconfirmed burials.

Indigenous Group	Project Component	Results
The Committee	Dam Site, Reservoir	Members of the Committee went on a boat tour on July 23, 2019.

For an update on ground truthing and other field activities that occurred in relation to plant harvesting areas (specifically medicinal and food plants), please refer to the Aboriginal Plant Use Mitigation Plan 2019-2020 Annual Report⁵.

BC Hydro has reviewed existing information submitted by Indigenous groups describing cultural resources which may be adversely affected by Project construction, including traditional land use studies, community baselines profiles, and existing ground truthing reports or investigative study reports. BC Hydro remains open to Indigenous groups providing further information, which could include identifying the location of the cultural resources(s) with greater specificity or providing further details in respect of the cultural resources.

3.2.2 Identification of Feasible Avoidance or Mitigation Measures for Cultural Resources

As per Section 5.3 of the CRMP, BC Hydro will seek input from Indigenous groups and with applicable contractors as appropriate, to identify feasible avoidance or mitigation measures, including monitoring where appropriate, for cultural resources identified to BC Hydro that will be adversely affected by Project activities. An example of this occurred in the previous reporting period with the relocation of the Highway 29 realignment at Cache Creek/Bear Flat. In response to concerns about potential impacts to cultural resources, BC Hydro and the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure worked with Indigenous groups and others to redesign the Highway 29 realignment to reduce the effects on cultural resources. The selected realignment option moved the realignment further north from the sites of cultural importance.

3.2.3 Preparation of Site Specific Mitigation Plans

For cultural resources identified to BC Hydro that may be adversely affected by Project activities, BC Hydro will prepare Site Specific Mitigation Plans identifying proposed avoidance or mitigation measures. Where appropriate and subject to protecting the confidentiality of information provided by Indigenous groups, copies of the Site Specific Mitigation Plans will be appended to the annual reports.

3.2.4 Addendum to Chance Find Procedures

An addendum to the Project's Chance Find Procedures was developed outlining a revised procedure to be followed in the event of a chance find of human remains. The purpose of the addendum is to ensure that the procedures in place for responding to chance finds of human remains are culturally appropriate and sensitive, include appropriate communication protocols respecting Indigenous groups' interests, and provide for effective protection and management measures to be implemented given the associated cultural and spiritual implications. In

⁵ Annual reports of activities conducted under mitigation and monitoring plans are available under the heading Site C Project Reports in the [Environmental Management document library](#).

February 2018, the draft addendum was sent to Indigenous groups seeking their input. Input received since that date has been incorporated.

3.3 Cultural Monitoring

As per section 7.0 of the CRMP, BC Hydro is employing mitigation measures to mitigate or reduce adverse effects on cultural resources. This includes cultural monitoring of construction activities by Indigenous groups to ensure culturally appropriate management and protection of cultural resources. The cultural monitoring program is intended to: contribute towards construction work planning and compliance verification, provide additional opportunities for Indigenous groups to engage in conservation, and site protection measures, and build community capacity through communications, education, and the intergenerational transfer of culture.

During this reporting period, cultural monitors were on-site monitoring various pre-construction and construction activities at the dam site, Highway 29 realignment segment areas, along the transmission line, and within the future reservoir areas. As of March 2020, members from 7 of the Indigenous groups have been participating in cultural monitoring, and more than 800 person-days of cultural monitoring have been undertaken since the program began.

BC Hydro continues to work with Indigenous groups on the on-going development of the cultural monitoring program.

3.4 Schedule

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