



**SIERRA
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January 18, 2021

Dear Premier Horgan,

We are writing this letter to you in our roles as Executive Director of the Sierra Club of British Columbia and as a Treaty 8 Elder and Sierra Club BC Board member. We are asking that you halt the construction of the Site C dam in light of the mounting cost overruns and growing evidence of geotechnical instability.

Sierra Club BC has long opposed the construction of the Site C dam due to the environmental dangers it poses, as well as the devastating impacts on the Aboriginal and Treaty rights of the Treaty 8 First Nations. Our concerns have intensified as we have learned more about increasing costs and risks posed by this project.

As a Cree and Dunneza Elder, former hunter and trapper, and active user of the land within the Treaty 8 boundary, Bud Napoleon has also spoken for many years against the construction of the dam and advocated for the protection of the Peace River.

He spent his childhood learning to hunt, trap, gather berries, and collect medicinal plants near the river, and believes that its protection, and that of the land, is crucial to be able to pass down knowledge to younger generations about the birds and animals and how to coexist with them.

He says:

“When you really enjoy wildlife, it stays in your heart. That’s why I went to be by the river so many times. To be able to sit outside and watch the river go by and the birds fly overhead. And to know that there is wildlife and an abundance of medicinal plants and berries.

“Now when I drive by there is so much destruction all along the river valley, and even where they diverted the water. The hurt inside me was so great when I saw it that I couldn’t drive too far without tears in my eyes. It hurt me so much.

“When I was younger, I saw that when the Elders talked about destruction sometimes they couldn’t talk anymore because it hurt so bad. I know now exactly what they were feeling. I will not drive along that road anymore to see the destruction. The hurt is too hard to bear.”



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Although much damage has already been done, this government still has an opportunity to halt the project and protect the land and water.

We call on you to do this now.

Sincerely,

Bud Napoleon and Hannah Askew

P.S. We have also enclosed an earlier letter to you from Bud Napoleon which was mailed to you in the spring of 2020. He did not receive a reply from you and so is unsure if it was received and is therefore enclosing it again.

Dear Premier Horgan,

I would like to introduce myself, I am an elder, a hunter, a trapper, and "active" user of the land within the Treaty 8 boundary. I am a firm believer of "conservation" and have survived off this land and what it has to offer. This means taking what I need at the moment and to utilize it and not waste anything and to always be mindful of the future, "conseration."

I have many elders, land users, Treaty 8 membership, as well as the Metis who stand behind me on this issue of Site C. There are many, many band members ^{from} for each reserve that do not want Site C to go through. Of all the First Nations BCUC Hearings I attended the voice of "No Site C: keeps being reiterated. Because of politics and BCH playing the divide & conquer tactic, they have divided many people.

As you may already know, our Treaty 8 has been put to the test once again in trying to stop the construction of this dam. Our rights are being eroded again by the Provincial's "owned corporation" and to this day has never shown any remorse of the possible damages. Once again my Treaty is being infringed upon.

As an active user, I find my berry & medicinal picking areas will be submerged because of this potential flooding. Our hunting and trapping areas will be affected towards the negative side. There are many areas of the Peace that I have used that will be gone, this is not counting many other band members of my reserve.

In 1969 NDP's position paper in "BC recognizes, that Indian title has never been extinguished and has to be mitigated". Do you still feel the same today? Is the NDP willing to take the same step to stop Site C? I would like to remind you that I voted for you because there was a positive side that you would put an end to BCH's Site C plan.

There are many trappers, hunters and land users, elders who've voted for you on this principle. What I am asking you is not to let them down. Many BCUC hearings all across BC, the people have said and continue to say, "No Site C, stop the dam".

In June 21st 1899-1999, there was a big meeting held at Grouard Alberta, this was the 100th anniversary of the signing of Treaty 8. The people, elders, Chiefs from BC were invited to be a

part of this historical event. Following I will quote some of the key speakers and make a personal comment after some of them.

Grand Chief Eddie Tallman – *“Our treaty carries a great significance to us all today! This sacredness of our Treaty is cherished through the understanding and meaning it holds. This meaning also recognizes that honor and integrity to be upheld by the Crown.”*

This sacredness of our Treaty is that you cannot or should not try to make changes to the treaty, and should not separate our beliefs in the Creator within our systems. There has always been prayer involved in our Treaty meetings and all ended in prayer. Our Treaty is a living document because the “pipe” was smoked after it was signed. “For as long as the river flows, the sun shines, and the grass grows”. The Caucasian Christians says that their Bible is the “Living Word”, and the Word of God. Our Treaty is no different.

Elder Alphonse Auger – *“My grandfather said they agreed to share the land, that is why today we are saying our ancestors never gave away our land, they only agreed to share with people from the other world that came in. And they (our ancestors) were people to stand on their promises and they stand by that promise today.”*

We have shared our land and it’s resources over the past 100 years or so but still haven’t received any royalties coming from our resources. It has been a one way street for both governments and industry. During all of this sharing we never once gave up any parts of our land especially for lands that will be flooded by any dam(s).

Vice Grand Chief Elder John Dokie – *“We are Indian people who signed the Treaty one hundred years ago. I don’t see why every time some outside, the government come along and said, ‘What do Indians want now?’ It’s really backward.”*

I don’t know why we have to meet over and over again about our land, we will never give it up, we see logging, oil, they should settle with Indians before they move in; they should get permits from Indians, not government, because it’s (Indian) land. Maybe Indians should control their own permits, and who they are going to give it to – everything is backwards here.”

There has to be a better system for acknowledging First Nations rights to the land and it’s waters as well, this same thing goes for BCH, they are not immune. They have been far too long

let loose to do a lot of damage to the land without ever paying the price for it, but yet, they continue to make profit at our expense.

Elder Paulis Metchooyeah – *“Why the treaty was signed. They were wondering if they would be tricked or not, so they had arguments and they waited for five days to sign the Treaty. And when they were told the people would be free to do what they wanted to do on the land, and would not close down hunting, trapping and usage of the land, then we signed the Treaty.”*

With all the raping, exploitation of our land, the government makes billions of billions of dollars along with the shareholders. Indians do not get a dime, our rights are being exploited by industry and corporations. BCH is no difference, the first dam, the Whacky Bennitt Dam was a prime example, many graves were under the ground forever, many important sites are under water, the Indians did not get anything for compensation from all this loss....yet, BCH thinks it's okay, but it's not okay.

I cannot see any benefits to First Nations from this dam in a long term basis, but flooding the Peace River Valley will be forever. A lot of the moose wintering grounds, calving areas, will be flooded out and where will the moose go? With all the logging that is happening the shelter for the wildlife is disappearing, it will be more so if this dam is permitted to go ahead. What considerations have been made for the small fur bearing animals, the mink, the otter, the muskrat and the beaver? They will be greatly impacted and what safety precautions are there for their safety and is conservation even thought of?

The fish is another matter that should not be overlooked. In the first dam, the Williston Lake Reservoir created so much mercury that the First Nations cannot even fish there anymore, and fish is another food source for us, this should not be taken lightly. The Halfway River Band, and the two Moberly Bands live along side of their rivers, they will be affected from their trapping and other means of living.

We have some burial sites that will be flooded out and should not be overlooked. I was told that there are many unmarked graves on both sides of our ancestors, why not let them rest in peace.

If you have any idea of what the Peace means to many individuals, you'll be totally surprised. Many times when I drive from Hudson Hope to Ft. St. John on Highway 29, I am in awe of such

beauty it holds, there is so much serenity and peace that it gives me. You cannot compensate monetary value for it has no price tag and compensation is out of order.

I hope you can take it to heart for you to say "No" to this project and do what is right for the people, not the corporations, just remember it was the people who voted you in, not the corporations. My wish for now is to completely stop this dam called Site C once and for all. I'd like to thank you for reading this letter and I pray that you listen to the little people, the ones who are totally opposed to this project.

Sincerely Yours – Buddy Napoleon

Treaty 8 Steward

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COLONIZATION

INDIGENOUS

LEADING TO...

or

can lead to....

Colonial System

"First Nations Ways"

Today, Now... Not
a thought of future
unless there is money
involved

No thought of animals,
the land, the ecosystem
or even the waters

Past (where our stories
come from); Present;
Future - conservation
of "all species" including
the aquatic (plants in
the water & land)

Treaty 8
For as long as the grass
grows, the sun shines
and the rivers flows

Compensation
usually in dollars
and cents

No such thing as
compensation, you
cannot compensate
a way of life; you
cannot compensate
a monetary value

Treaty - "A Way of life"
"must" be left alone
you cannot alter this
Treaty Nor force us
to change our ways