

SITE C REPORT

StopSiteC.org



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CLUB
BC



SAVE THE PEACE RIVER VALLEY STOP THE SITE C DAM



DON HOFFMANN

Despite widespread opposition from farmers, ranchers, First Nations and conservationists, Site C is back on the table.

The B.C. government is poised to proceed with the highly controversial Site C dam mega-project in the Peace River Valley. The dam would flood prime farmland, destroy critical habitat for at-risk species, and cost B.C. taxpayers at least \$8 billion.

Site C has been pushed as a “clean energy” project, but in fact the construction of the dam and the decay of the flooded boreal forest would increase annual greenhouse gas emissions in British Columbia by almost 150,000 tonnes – equivalent to putting another 27,000 cars on the roads each year.

Site C is not a “green” energy project either. The dam will flood 107 kilometres of valley bottoms and destroy wetlands that support migratory bird flocks. When combined with the rapidly growing industrial footprint in the

Peace region, Site C will contribute to the loss of more than half the habitat for at-risk species such as grizzly bear, wolverine and caribou. It will threaten the globally-significant Yellowstone-to-Yukon wildlife corridor, the world’s last remaining intact mountain ecosystem.

The proposal was already rejected, after public opposition and a detailed

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environmental review by the B.C. Utilities Commission. One B.C. Hydro report says Site C would fall into the “high” or “very high” consequence category as defined by the Canadian Dam Association.

Site C’s power is not needed to power B.C. households and businesses. Residential and commercial customers in B.C. have actually reduced their power consumption since 2008. Any future

need beyond current generation is strictly industrial, specifically the proposed liquefied natural gas (LNG) plants. Yet B.C. taxpayers will end up footing the \$8 billion bill at a time when B.C. Hydro is already deeply in debt.

Public opposition helped stop the Site C project in the past, and we can do so again. The Yellowstone to Yukon

Conservation Initiative, Sierra Club BC and the Peace Valley Environment Organization are working together to draw public attention to the many threats and unacceptably high cost of the proposed Site C dam.

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VOICES from the Peace



TREATY8.BC.CA

LIZ LOGAN, TRIBAL CHIEF OF TREATY 8 TRIBAL ASSOCIATION

"Four First Nations in north-eastern B.C. are very concerned about what the proposed Site C dam would mean to their people and their stories and legends. The stories and legends are attached to the land. If there is no place for people to go to tell their children about the things they did as children, or their parents did as children, how can we continue with our traditions and culture?"



SIERRA CLUB BC

KEN AND ARLENE BOON, THIRD-GENERATION FARMERS IN THE PEACE VALLEY

"If the Site C dam goes ahead, we will lose our land – we would basically be forced off. There's 83 kms of valley, just in the Peace River, that's going to be flooded, plus the other side valleys. Most of it's river bottom farmland, so there's a lot of farmland affected, and a handful of other farm and ranch homes that will be lost. BC Hydro will pass this debt onto our grandchildren through deferral accounting as they've done before. They can't even demonstrate that they need the power, and they want to flood the only Class 1 farmland north of Quesnel!"



TREATY8.BC.CA

CHIEF ROLAND WILLSON OF WEST MOBERLY FIRST NATIONS

"Site C dam is going to be a catastrophe for B.C. It's going to be a continuation of existing impacts of the Williston Reservoir and the Peace Canyon Reservoir. The fish in the Williston Reservoir have been contaminated with mercury. We did a study this summer and took a look at a tributary that is 60 kms away. We took samples of bull trout and Dolly Varden trout. We found that samples were heavily laden with mercury. We were quite surprised because BC Hydro has been telling us that the mercury levels are diminishing, but they are not – they are increasing in certain areas."



LEIGH SUMMERS

LEIGH SUMMERS – THIRD GENERATION RANCHER IN THE PEACE RIVER VALLEY

"I have a lot of issues with Site C. The dam isn't needed. We don't need the power. BC Hydro should be diversifying, not building more of the same. It would be ludicrous to flood this valley. If they go ahead it's going to be an environmental disaster. The valley will no longer exist. The focus for people here – it's really a heritage issue. If Site C is built, that heritage will be lost and there will be no Peace River left in B.C."

When Gordon Campbell came to announce Site C in 2010, I went to the meeting to talk to him. I wanted to tell him why so many people don't support Site C. The meeting was in a public building and it was about a very important issue that affects all of us. But I was not allowed into the meeting. I was respectful but determined to speak my mind. I ended up being arrested that day, just as my father had been many years earlier – also because of dams in the Peace."



GRAHAM OSBORNE

Treaty 8 Tribal Association and PVEA organize an annual July "Paddle for the Peace".

FIRST NATIONS

We Get Our Power from the Land and Water

By Tribal Chief Liz Logan, Treaty 8 Tribal Association

The Peace River is the lifeline for numerous First Nations – a critical pathway for their food security, cultural survival, and spiritual identity. The Peace River Valley is a vital point of reference for the people to connect to their ancestors and to who they are; this is where leaders and Prophets are buried, where ceremonies and gatherings are held, and where the Drummers sing their Dreamers’ songs.

First Nations are still reeling from the impacts of the two existing dams on the Peace River and their reservoirs. The W.A.C. Bennett Dam and Williston Reservoir eliminated important waterways and trails that the people and animals used, resulting in broken trade networks and kinship connections amongst various First Nation groups. Key food sources, like the caribou, mountain sheep, and Arctic grayling, have nearly disappeared, and the fish poisoned with mercury. Downstream into Alberta and as far as the Northwest Territories, there have been noticeable decreases in water levels and ice formations that supply water to wetlands. Reduced access to their territory has drastically affected harvesters’ and trappers’ abilities to secure food and income.

Many are fearful that the proposed Site C dam will hold the same fate for other animals, such as moose, and fish in the system and that the negative effects of the first two dams will multiply.

Over many decades, the land has become heavily industrialized. Life is now filled with anxiety because of separation from nature and from each other. The Peace River Valley is one of the only remaining sacred places acting as a foundation for the people, especially today’s youth and future generations, to become aware of their environment so they can live as they were promised in the Treaty agreements which were signed with the Crown along the banks of the Peace River.



Dane-zaa drummers teaching youth.

TREATY 8 TRIBAL ASSOCIATION

A THREAT TO FOOD SECURITY

If the Site C dam is approved, the Peace River Valley stands to lose 16,000 acres of agricultural land – an area 13 times the size of Stanley Park. In a time when global warming is destroying traditional food-producing lands around the world, agricultural land is becoming ever more valuable.

The productive value of agricultural property in the Peace Region is well recognized by other countries which

have, in fact, started to purchase land in the area. Yet, the government of British Columbia is willing to allow these rich soils to be washed down the river so that power can be provided to the gas industry.

The Peace Valley has the only Class 1 soil north of Quesnel. The unique microclimate, combined with longer daylight hours during the growing season, make this some of the best agricultural land in B.C. It is capable of producing a variety of crops including tomatoes, corn and

melons. Retaining this land and maximizing its productive capacity would allow the people of northern B.C. to enjoy the benefits of a 100-mile diet, reducing their dependency on the transportation

of produce and the associated financial and environmental costs.



DON HOFFMANN



WHERE WOULD THE SITE C POWER GO?

Site C's power is not needed for domestic consumption. B.C. Premier Christy Clark has said every single megawatt of the electricity generated by Site C could go to power energy giant Shell's planned liquefied natural gas (LNG) plant in Kitimat. B.C. taxpayers will end up footing the \$8 billion Site C bill and the subsidized power will go to a highly profitable multinational energy corporation.

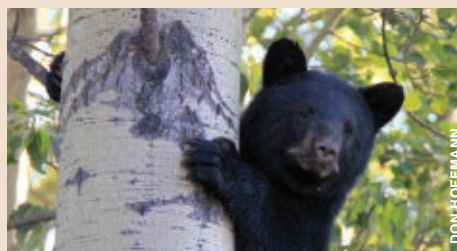
Shell's LNG plant is one of five plants Clark has announced for B.C. About 50 per cent of B.C.'s natural gas production currently comes from the controversial practice of hydraulic fracturing, or fracking. Fracking is a relatively new method of releasing gas trapped in shale deposits, by drilling horizontally and blasting the rock with a combination of water, sand, and proprietary chemicals. According to Ben Parfitt, an analyst at the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, close to 100 per cent of the gas for the five proposed new LNG plants will come from fracking.

The Peace region, in addition to facing the potentially devastating impacts of the Site C dam, is also Ground Zero for Canada's fracking industry, which is in the throes of a major expansion. B.C. law grants oil and gas companies sub-surface rights to private land, and ranchers in B.C.'s northeast have seen their land turned into unwanted fracking wells and their properties gated by multinational players in the fracking industry. Serious concerns about the human health impacts of fracking, coupled with the industry's prodigal use of fresh water, have led environmental groups to call for a moratorium on fracking until the B.C. government consults and involves First Nations and impacted communities, and conducts a comprehensive, science-based public inquiry into fracking impacts.

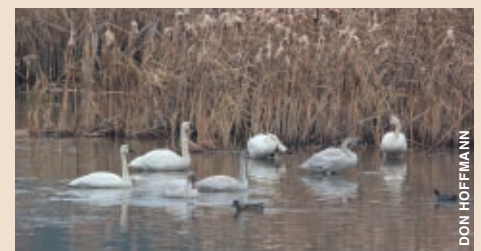


YELLOWSTONE TO YUKON CONSERVATION INITIATIVE (Y2Y)

is a joint Canada-US not-for-profit organization whose mission is to protect and connect habitat from Yellowstone National Park to the Yukon Territory so that people and nature can thrive. Y2Y takes a scientific approach to conservation and is recognized as one of the planet's leading large landscape conservation initiatives. Learn more at www.y2y.net.



SIERRA CLUB BC is a non-profit environmental organization whose mission is to protect and conserve British Columbia's wilderness, species and ecosystems, within the urgent context of global warming impacts. We advocate the responsible use of B.C.'s natural resources while promoting a modern, equitable economy that sustains our planet in every way. www.sierraclub.bc.ca.



THE PEACE VALLEY ENVIRONMENT ASSOCIATION (PVEA)

was formed 38 years ago to counter the proposal by BC Hydro to build the Site C dam on the Peace River. Its mission is to stop the proposed Site C dam, remove the flood reserve and facilitate the development of a sustainable land use plan for the Valley. The group is based in Fort St. John, B.C. and is supported by members from all over the province. www.peacevalley.ca