



## Consultation on BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation's Long-Term Electricity Transmission Inquiry Evidence and Information

### Prince George Workshop # 1 – July 10, 2009

Coast Inn of the North  
Nachako Room,  
Prince George, B.C.

Attendees	
Alexis Creek Indian Band	McLeod Lake
Carrier Sekani Tribal Council	Nee Tahi Buhn
Kwadacha First Nation	Red Bluff Indian Band (Lhtako Dene)
Nak'azdli Band Council	Tl'azt'en Nation
Nazko Band Council	Ulkatcho First Nation
First Nations Energy Mining Council (FNEMC)	

### BC Hydro/BC Transmission Corporation Representatives

Name	Organization	Responsibility
Suromitra Sanatani	BC Hydro, First Nation Consultation Project Manager Long-Term Electricity Transmission Inquiry	Project Manager, First Nation Consultation Long-Term Electricity Transmission Inquiry
Vesta Filipchuk	BC Hydro, Senior Aboriginal Relations Coordinator	Coordinator/Records
Jane Newlands	BC Transmission Corporation	Presenter



Nan Dai	BC Hydro, Energy Planning	Presenter
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### Neutral Facilitator

Name	Organization	Responsibility
Dan George	Four Directions Management Services	Neutral Facilitator

### Welcome and Introductory Remarks Dan George

Dan George opened the session and acknowledged the meeting was being held in the traditional territory of participating First Nations. Participants were welcomed to the Long-Term Electricity Transmission Inquiry – First Nation Consultation, which will involve three rounds of workshops. The participants held a moment of silence and then introduced themselves and their organization.

Dan George reviewed the agenda and explained that his role is to keep discussions on topic and make sure input is recorded accurately. He asked the participants to: listen generously to one another; build on the ideas of others and ensure that we challenge ideas and not people; and look for solutions. He encouraged the participants to provide their views as the process is only as strong as the input they provide.

### Comments and Discussion All

#### Electricity Supply/Transmission

A participant expressed their community's interest in becoming connected to the provincial electricity system. Their community is located at the north end of the Williston Lake Reservoir, which provides water to the largest dam in the province. Since there are no transmission lines to the community, they have to rely on diesel generators that are very noisy and pollute the surrounding environment. They want to be connected to the grid, because their community is growing and the demand for electricity is increasing. Diesel generation is expensive and sometimes not very reliable. BC Hydro has committed to providing long-term electricity to the community, and they cannot understand why there is a mine just to the north of them which has access to transmission and they do not.

#### Consultation & Accommodation

Participants raised concerns about the term "consultation" and questioned whether this is an information sharing exercise rather than consultation. If it is consultation, accommodation needs to be discussed. It was clarified by BC Transmission Corporation and BC Hydro that the



Inquiry process was strategic and at a high level, and that consultation and accommodation usually occur at the project specific level.

The representative for the First Nations Energy and Mining Council (FNEMC) indicated that FNEMC is raising the issue of “duty to consult” in the BC Utilities Commission (Commission) process and that there is going to be a session on August 18 and 19 where this will be specifically discussed. Participants reminded BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation they do have the duty to consult as does the Commission.

A question was asked about the status of BC Transmission Corporation’s 10-year capital plan. It was clarified that BC Transmission Corporation’s 10-Year Capital Plan (updated every two years) is currently before the Commission and the discussions today are not consultation on the 10-year plan but rather what might be needed in terms of transmission over the next 30 years. It was also noted that this Inquiry process is the first time BC Transmission Corporation and BC Hydro have taken such a long-term view on transmission planning.

### **Communications**

Participants noted that there should be more communication as there were a number of bands missing from the process. Absence from the meeting should not reflect a lack of interest. It was stated that there is a need for more involvement to ensure an understanding of the long-term transmission inquiry. The process should also acknowledge language barriers and the complexity of the information First Nations are expected to review and provide meaningful input into.

### **Partnerships & Collaboration**

One participant indicated that BC First Nations are open for business and wanted to be partners in future developments. They are interested in collaboration, including relationships with municipalities.

### **Capacity Building**

Participants stressed that the need for capacity building within First Nation communities is central as they are the future.

### **Existing Plans (e.g. BC Hydro’s Long-Term Acquisition Plan & BC Transmission Corporation’s Capital Plan)**

Participants expressed interest in seeing BC Transmission Corporation’s and BC Hydro’s existing long-term plans and raised questions about the level of consultation done during the preparation of these planning documents. Participants were informed that BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation’s planning documents are public documents and are available for review on the Commission’s website.



### **Vegetation Management**

There were questions about how vegetation management is undertaken and whether BC Transmission Corporation and BC Hydro use manual clearing or whether pesticides are used on transmission line rights-of-way. It was confirmed that both methods are used and that pesticide use is approved as part of Pest Management Planning process.

### **Fire Management & Emergency Planning**

A participant expressed concerns about forest fire hazards in their territory and asked how well prepared BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation are to manage major forest fires. Participants were told that BC Transmission Corporation works closely with the Ministry of Forest and Emergency response to respond to fire risks. Following the 2003 fires, plans were updated and preventative measures such as reducing fuel loading (waste wood) on rights-of-way and using fire retardant on wood poles were initiated. BC Transmission Corporation noted that they could provide more information.

### **Inquiry Process & First Nation Input**

One participant indicated that in order to be in the “helicopter” for planning purposes, First Nations need the “operating manual”. They said that there needed to be more of an opportunity to collect and review information, and this means that capacity funding is needed to get the proper technical support. There was an assumption that First Nations had read the 10-Year Plan, but in fact they would need to go away and read this in order to provide constructive input. A similar comment was made about the LTAP. Participants agreed that more information was required and that because not all First Nation communities have Internet access, there is a requirement to provide information in CD format.

### **Demand/Supply & Self-Sufficiency**

Questions were raised about the change (bump) in the demand/supply balance. It was explained that this anomaly will occur in 2016, when the province is supposed to reach energy self-sufficiency. A participant asked for clarification on the definition of self-sufficiency – does it mean BC Hydro or the province as a whole? It was explained that energy self-sufficiency means that the province can generate enough energy to meet its domestic demand for energy without relying on imports from other jurisdictions

### **First Nations Values & Sustainability**

Participants noted the importance of considering First Nations’ values in the planning process. They stated that there is a need to incorporate traditional ecological knowledge, and at the time work is underway with the Elders in developing Guiding Principles. First Nations also want to ensure the protection of habitat, watersheds and traditional plants. In their view, it is important to understand the impacts of proposals but also the cumulative effects. They stressed the importance of protecting archaeological and sacred sites, and the need to ensure balance when one takes energy from the land, recognizing systems impacts.



## Additional Information Needs

Dan George

The facilitator asked participants what additional information they need to be involved in this process. The information needs they identified were:

- The BC Transmission Corporation's 10 year capital plan and BC Hydro's 20 year LTAP from BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation.
- Past agreements BC Hydro has with other First Nations.
- Information about the Inquiry process. First Nations want to have input throughout the process.
- Communication that accommodates language barriers and recognizes the complexity of information First Nations are expected to review. Since not all communities have Internet access, information should be available in CD format.
- Fire management information from BC Transmission Corporation.
- Capacity funding for the review of materials.

## Summary and Wrap-up

Dan George/Suromitra Sanatani

The Facilitator reviewed his notes and confirmed they would be incorporated into the meeting notes. He thanked participants for attending the workshop and asked them to fill in the workbook and feedback forms.

Suromitra Sanatani also thanked participants for coming to the workshop and welcomed them to contact her if they had any questions about the consultation process. She indicated that meeting notes would be posted on a website and that a letter will be sent to participants notifying them when the notes are posted.