



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

Abbotsford Workshop # 1 – June 19, 2009

Ramada Inn
36035 North Parallel Road,
Abbotsford, B.C.

Attendees	
Chawathil First Nation	Skwah First Nation
Samahquam Nation	Soowahlie First Nation
Scowlitz First Nation	Sto:lo Tribal Council
Seabird Island Band	

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
Rhea Halfnight LeFlufy	BC Hydro, Aboriginal Relations Coordinator	Coordinator/Records
Jane Newlands	BC Transmission Corporation	Presenter
David Ince	BC Hydro, Energy Planning	Presenter



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

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

Early Engagement

Participants acknowledged that they were being engaged early and appreciated the opportunity to provide feedback. They thanked both BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation for all the information that the two corporations have provided them with in the past and would like this sharing of information to continue. Participants wanted to be kept up to speed on what is going in their territories.

Participants indicated that they wanted to collect the information to take back to their respective Chiefs and Councils. They acknowledged that this was a new process, there was a lot to learn and that there would be many questions about how the Long-Term Electricity Transmission Inquiry relates to other initiatives (i.e. treaty process).

One participant confirmed that she would be involved in both the BC Transmission Corporation and BC Hydro First Nation process and the BC Utilities Commission Inquiry process.



Historical Grievances

Participants indicated that there is a desire by the Elders to have historical grievances addressed and to leave a positive legacy - creating careers in their communities and providing long-term economic value and opportunities for their young people. They requested that BC Transmission Corporation consider relocation of existing facilities off reserve when undertaking new projects (e.g. they could have relocated existing lines off reserve as part of Interior to Lower Mainland (ILM) Transmission Project). Participants noted that these types of actions go a long way in showing respect for their communities.

Consultation & Accommodation

Participants indicated that in order for this to be consultation there needs to be accommodation. It was noted that consultation must take place at the community level with Chief and Council, and there is an underlying expectation that communities should be met with individually.

One participant asked what role First Nations are expected to play in this process and expressed concern that even though a lot of information is shared, they are always sitting on the outside looking in.

Jobs/Economic Development

Participants expressed a strong interest in job opportunities. They recognized that BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation are making efforts to create training opportunities and employ First Nations. They appreciate the opportunities for training but would like to see them lead to long-term jobs and careers in First Nations' territories.

Participants also indicated that they wanted to see people from their communities employed by BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation. A couple of participants indicated that they have had a long history working with BC Hydro on projects, but this has been seasonal or temporary work.

A participant observed that there are Elders in the communities who have stories about what happened when big projects came through in the past.

Participants expressed a desire for "partnerships at the highest level" and a desire for a "share of the profits". They noted that they could see the growth going on around them and want to know where there are opportunities for partnerships. It was asked why they would want to allow projects in their areas if they don't see the benefit for their communities.

One participant spoke about the treaty process, and land claims noting that they have existing transmission lines which are being further developed. The participant noted they need power



and are not opposed to development, but they want to be kept informed and believed that First Nations should benefit from the use of their lands.

Capacity & Access to Information

A participant indicated there was a need to build a better understanding of BC Hydro's and BC Transmission Corporation's corporate structures and requested a contact list. Participants stated more transparency is needed but that they see this as starting to happen. Some participants indicated that they continue to struggle with capacity to review information and participate in sessions. They stated that it was hard to make decisions based on information given the complexity of the issues.

It was suggested that BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation have a designated liaison in each band to deal with energy issues because currently, a lot still "falls through the cracks". Participants stated that First Nation communities do not have the capacity to deal with all of the referrals. They stated that it was also a challenge to consistently attend process meetings (e.g. have the same person attend each time), and that First Nations struggle with tight deadlines.

There was a lot of interest in the energy industry, and participants want more information and research to support projects (e.g. biomass). Participants requested a list of IPP projects from BC Hydro and interconnection studies from BC Transmission Corporation. There was also interest in attending a workshop on scenario modeling and getting more information on what BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation are planning over the next 5 years, 10 years, etc. Participants said that money would be needed to set up committees and develop the capacity to review the information. Participants wanted more opportunities for on-going open communication and dialogue.

One participant indicated that in rounds one and two of the meetings there will be issues regarding capacity. This participant said "We are firefighters in our community, but there are always deadlines to be met; we cannot be deadline driven." The example used was a traditional use study for the ILM where it was inappropriate to ask Elders to hurry up in order to meet project timelines.

Electromagnetic Field (EMFs)

Participants expressed concern about the health impacts of EMFs and a desire to partner on studies. One participant indicated that they currently have a study underway. A question was raised about whether there is research being done on harnessing the radiation under the right-of-way so that land can be used.

Another participant indicated that they are concerned about EMFs and that they cannot harvest medicinal plants because of the effects of EMFs.



Participants were told that most of the EMF research focused on health impacts. The limits are associated with electrical induction. There was interest in understanding EMFs and High Voltage Direct Current (HVDC).

Land Use Planning & Inappropriate Areas for Development

Participants demonstrated a strong interest in providing information on First Nation Land Use Plans into the Inquiry process, particularly land use concerns and issues. There was recognition that First Nations are at different stages in the land use planning and mapping process. It was suggested that this will be a longer term endeavour (e.g. get the information available for this Inquiry but continue to work with First Nations over the next 5 years to complete a database of information).

One participant recommended that capacity funding be provided to undertake GIS mapping for the next Long-Term Transmission Inquiry so that their First Nation does not get left behind. The participants indicated that this would be a good way to build capacity for the next round.

Decision-Making Role

One participant wanted to know what role First Nations will play in decision-making going forward. First Nations need knowledge to make informed decisions. It was explained that this issue has been raised in a First Nation Energy Mining Council's (FNEMC) submission to the BC Utilities Commission. Participants stressed that they are seeking shared decision-making.

Research & Development

Participants had a strong interest in research on alternative energies and stressed that if there is research being undertaken by BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation it would be helpful for First Nations to receive that information.

A participant asked specifically about geothermal generation and whether or not that was being pursued by the Province. It was explained that there is geothermal potential in the province but that it has not been commercially viable in the past because it is equipment intensive. It was explained that this may change in the future.

Power Acquisition

A participant asked if there is an interest in acquiring carbon neutral energy supply and what is the level of support for biomass energy. Their community is trying to pursue a biomass project and has received a lot of resistance from the local government.

It was explained that BC Hydro has calls for energy when electricity supply is required. One of BC Hydro's calls is specifically for biomass projects. BC Hydro acknowledged that it is sometimes



hard to get biomass projects approved because it requires the support of the communities and the local regional governments.

Vegetation Management

Participants indicated that they would like more information on pesticide and vegetation management that is undertaken on the transmission rights-of-way. Participants also want to be kept up to date on when and how vegetation management will be done and information on the rights-of-way compatible use guidelines.

Sustainability and Environmental Impact

Participants expressed concern regarding sustainability, healthy communities, habitat, wildlife, and cumulative environmental impacts of Independent Power Producers (IPPs) and multiple transmission lines. They indicated there is a need for planning for IPP development on a regional scale, with clusters and integrated transmission plans to minimize impact. The participants stressed they want a healthy and sustainable environment for the future.

One participant indicated that they have a lot of land under power lines and wondered if there is research being done on what this land could be used for. It was explained that there is research being done on minimizing the land impacts of transmission lines. Also, BC Transmission Corporation has a book on compatible land uses under transmission lines which can be made available to interested participants.

Independent Power Producers (IPPs)

Participants indicated they have IPPs interested and/or working in their territories. One First Nation said they currently have 60 referrals coming into their offices and stressed the need for funding to assess the impacts of IPP development. Some of these referrals have “fallen through the cracks” because there is not enough capacity. Another participant noted that their community has set up a committee to review the IPP referrals. It was suggested that there needs to be flexibility in the timelines for responses to referrals on IPPs.

A participant asked how interconnections studies are done for IPPs. It was explained that there are two levels: a preliminary study is done as the project is being defined; and the second study is done in association with BC Hydro’s calls for power. BC Transmission Corporation will be looking at IPP clusters as part of their next capital plan.

Energy Planning

It was asked if BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation have consulted with First Nations on the recent Long-Term Acquisition Plan (LTAP). It was explained that the LTAP was an update of the 2006 Integrated Electricity Plan, and it was confirmed some First Nations participated in that process.



Participants asked if BC Transmission Corporation funds research on resource options such as Ocean. It was explained that research is done on interconnecting new technologies but not on studying the new technologies.

In the last LTAP, BC Hydro looked at near commercial technologies, including what kind of technologies, their location, the time of year they produce power, among other issues.

One participant asked where most of the electricity is produced in the province. The participants were informed that there are four facilities that produce 70% of the province's electricity – GM Shrum and Peace Canyon on the Peace River and Mica and Revelstoke, on the Columbia River. BC Hydro noted that these facilities were built in the 1960s, '70s and the last one, Revelstoke, came into operation in 1984. It has been some time since BC Hydro has built major generating facilities.

Another participant asked about Site C and the status of the project. BC Hydro noted that it has requested funding approval from the BC Utilities Commission to investigate the viability of the 900 MW facility Site C project. The project needs government approval, and would take several years to go through the environmental assessment process. BC Hydro noted that any large-scale capital project requires a number of approvals and that it takes a long time to get these approvals and bring a project into operation.

Revenue Sharing

Participants indicated they are looking at opportunities to benefit from having transmission lines within their traditional territory. Ideas that were presented included: free electricity and no more billing; increase local taxes; and profit sharing because BC Hydro and BC Transmission Corporation are making lots of money.

Scenario Planning

Participants asked what types of information will be included in the development of transmission scenarios. Participants were informed that scenarios are built around objectives and/or desired outcomes (i.e. technology push, economic boom, green future etc). Participants noted that the following factors should be included in the development of scenarios: economic opportunities, decreased impact on land base, title and rights, shared ownership, resource and revenue sharing, and shared decision-making.

Communication Contact

Participants agreed it would be valuable to have a specific contact within each First Nation to receive information and be kept informed of new developments and opportunities to provide input.



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 are as follows:

- Develop an assessment process and provide funding to assess impacts of IPP development.
- Capacity funding for a referral committee, for leadership to participate, and to undertake research.
- Open communication and dialogue between First Nations and other organizations, including municipalities. Suggested having a designated liaison in each band.
- Information about what is going on in First Nation territories and on the rights-of-way (i.e. the application of pesticides and vegetation management).
- Field managers need to check on work being done to clear bush from the transmission lines. Seems like the workers use reserve lands to hide out and do nothing.
- Up-to-date contact list for BCTC and BC Hydro.
- Increased information on employment opportunities.
- A workshop on how scenario modeling is being done. What are the assumptions? What format does information need to be submitting in, so it can be included in the modeling exercise?
- Sample plans in order to understand the planning process.
- List of IPP projects from BC Hydro.
- Interconnection studies from BC Transmission Corporation.
- Research on alternative energies.



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.