

Peace River Site C Hydro Project

Stage 2 - Socio-economic Studies

Study Outline: Socio-economic Baseline and Gap Analysis Study Working Draft for Consultation

Introduction

The potential Site C project, should it proceed, would create both positive and negative effects for the people, economy and communities of the Peace River region. Different project components, such as creation of the reservoir, a seven-year construction period and labour requirements, re-alignment of Highway 29, and operations, would have different socio-economic effects.

Recent Studies

The socio-economic profile of Peace River region communities and the provincial context have changed significantly since the late 1970s and early 1980s when Site C was first proposed, and when most previous socio-economic studies were done. Past study topics included land use and resources (agriculture, forestry, and recreation), social / community effects, fishing and hunting, and the regional economy. Updates to reflect changes to the region's socio-economic profile are now required. As well the approach for assessing the interaction of socio-economic and community variables with the potential project has changed and these will be considered in the identification of new studies or data gaps.

Study Objectives

Stage 2 socio-economic studies will:

- To collect baseline data for socio-economic variables using existing information sources;
- To characterise current community, economic, and land and resource use patterns in the area of the potential Site C project;
- To identify potential socio-economic project issues considering input from the public, First Nations and government agencies and municipalities.
- Collect the data required in preparation for assessment should the project proceed to Stage 3, Regulatory-Environmental Assessment, in order to determine whether the information available would be adequate for Stage 3 analysis, and any potential new information needs

The baseline data collected will seek existing information about:

- General description of communities, housing, community services, health services, economic development, recent community trends and outlook
- Population and demographics, current trends and forecasts

- Labour market and employment, regional income description
- Transportation, roads, highways, air, marine
- Land use
- Resource sector profiles (forestry, agriculture, oil and gas, mining, tourism, recreation, hunting, fishing)

Scope of Work

The socio-economic studies will cover the potential reservoir area and perimeter, the existing transmission line right-of-way between the site of the potential Site C Dam and the Peace Canyon Dam, and the communities surrounding these areas.

Reporting

A socio-economic study working draft report will be completed at the end of Stage 2. If the project proceeds, BC Hydro will use the working draft report to consult further with government agencies on these topics.