



BC Hydro United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Implementation Plan

2024/25 Annual Report

BC Hydro acknowledges that our infrastructure is located on land where First Nations people have resided since time immemorial and hold Aboriginal rights, title, and treaty rights. We recognize that BC Hydro's system and operations have affected the land, and we share a responsibility to act as stewards for the land.

 **BC Hydro**
Power smart



Forward

As BC Hydro works to implement the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the UN Declaration), they need the wisdom, creativity, and insights of First Nations to make implementation meaningful. That’s why we’re pleased to introduce ourselves as the members of the company’s UN Declaration Advisory Committee.

This Committee was established, and members were nominated, by agreement between BC Hydro and the First Nations Energy and Mining Council and is guided by a shared commitment to uphold the human rights standards of the UN Declaration. Our goal is that the Advisory Committee plays a key role in supporting BC Hydro’s efforts to make progress on the UN Declaration Implementation Plan and ensuring that progress is informed by Indigenous perspectives and priorities.

The Committee also plays a role in guiding an annual meeting where all British Columbia First Nations are invited to come and dialogue with BC Hydro about the implementation of the UN Declaration. The inaugural meeting was held on May 14, 2025. We were there, and heard the ideas, and concerns, voiced by those who attended. Based on that feedback, we know there is work to do, and we will be collaborating with BC Hydro to address the issues raised at the meeting.

We invite First Nations across British Columbia to reach out to the UN Declaration Indigenous Advisory Committee with any questions, concerns, or suggestions related to BC Hydro’s implementation of the UN Declaration, as needed. Your voices are essential to this journey, and we are committed to listening, learning, and working together toward meaningful and lasting reconciliation.

The UN Declaration Advisory Committee.



Ken Cameron



Ernie George



Grand Chief
Ed John



Chris Lewis



Dr. Judith Sayers



Kathryn Teneese



BC Hydro is committed to advancing reconciliation by incorporating the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (the UN Declaration) into our business and acting on the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This report outlines our efforts to align our business practices with the human rights of Indigenous peoples articulated in the UN Declaration, reflecting our dedication to fostering respectful and collaborative relationships with First Nations and Indigenous people.

Our UN Declaration Implementation Plan is a comprehensive framework designed to guide our actions and decisions in a manner that respects the rights and traditions of Indigenous peoples. Developed together with First Nations, the plan identifies key areas where we can make meaningful progress, including respectful relations, social and cultural well-being, decision-making, land, water and environment, and economic relations.

We know we cannot undertake this important work alone. The actions in this plan represent steps we must take in partnership with First Nations and Indigenous people across the Province. We're also seeking guidance from our UN Declaration Advisory Committee. This Committee, made up of six Indigenous leaders from across B.C., will guide us as we operationalize and share progress on our UN Declaration implementation activities.

We also know that this work is nuanced and complex given our mandate as a public utility to safely provide reliable, affordable, and renewable electricity throughout B.C. We're prepared to work with Nations on creative solutions to the challenges that may come our way.

We are proud to present this report. It presents our ongoing journey to build stronger, more respectful relationships with First Nations and Indigenous people, ensuring that their voices are heard, and their rights are upheld in all aspects of our work. In this way, we hope to continue to move towards true and lasting reconciliation.

President and CEO, Charlotte Mitha

Introduction

BC Hydro began engaging First Nations on the development of a UN Declaration Implementation Plan (the Plan) in spring 2021. Our goal was to develop the Plan in collaboration with First Nations and Indigenous people. Our engagement approach was designed to make providing input on the Plan accessible to First Nations across the Province and support a particular focus on the Nations most impacted by our presence in their territories.

A plan incorporating all the First Nations' input we received over approximately three years of engagement was published in March 2024. The Plan is a living document that will be updated periodically to align with changes in law, the evolving context of Indigenous relations in B.C., and continued discussions with First Nations and Indigenous people on how BC Hydro can advance reconciliation.

This is our first annual report on our UN Declaration Implementation Plan. This report tracks progress made to advance actions in the Plan during 2024 and the first quarter of 2025. Some of the actions in the Plan lend themselves to annual metrics, while some actions lend themselves to example or case-study based reporting. Because true and meaningful reconciliation will take time, we may not report against every action in the Plan every year; our focus will be on actions where we've seen significant advances during the reporting period.

We look forward to continuing work on the actions in the Plan in collaboration with First Nations and Indigenous people in the coming years.



Respectful relations



Respectful relations

BC Hydro's relationships with First Nations and Indigenous people must be based on respect for and recognition of their exercise of Aboriginal title and rights and treaty rights, self-determination, and self-governance. This requires us to understand and acknowledge the disadvantages and discrimination that Indigenous people have endured and continue to endure and work together to make things better. Key actions we have taken during the reporting period, together with First Nations and Indigenous people, include:

Action 1.1

Creating introductory and advanced level training programs for employees and contractors that build greater awareness of Indigenous peoples' history in Canada, knowledge of the UN Declaration and the TRC Calls to Action, and the context of BC Hydro's work with, and impact on, First Nations. Target having 80% of BC Hydro employees complete the introductory and/or advanced level training by the end of fiscal year 2026.

↳ PROGRESS TO DATE

BC Hydro offers both an introductory and advanced level Indigenous cultural awareness training for our employees and contractors, both of which were developed in collaboration with Indigenous peoples. Our introductory course is an e-learning module which provides an overview of BC Hydro's approach to Indigenous relations, the historical context of our operations, and our impact upon Indigenous communities. Our advanced level course is a four hour in-person or virtual interactive team session led by an Indigenous facilitator which covers the history of Indigenous relations in Canada and B.C., BC Hydro's history with First Nations, and our approach to advancing relationships. There is a focus on uncovering what each employee can do to advance reconciliation through their work.

At the end of the reporting period 89% of BC Hydro's work force had taken one or both of these courses. The introductory level course is now mandatory for all new BC Hydro employees.

Indigenous awareness training isn't the only place you'll find information about respectful interaction with Indigenous peoples—it's embedded in our overall corporate policies too. In 2024, our internal employee Indigenous Advisory Council provided Indigenous-specific content for our company-wide Respectful Workplace Policy, including specific guidance on respect for Indigenous identity in our workplace. The BC Hydro Ethics Office has committed to involving the Indigenous Advisory Council on the continued evolution of our Respectful Workplace Policy.

Action 1.2

Increasing understanding and awareness of BC Hydro's employees and contractors working in an individual First Nations' territory through Nation-specific and Nation-led training and awareness initiatives.

↳ PROGRESS TO DATE:

In 2024, BC Hydro launched a new training program for all of our people leaders which will be delivered over the new few years. There are two streams of training, one for people leaders in business functions and one for frontline leaders. Training sessions are based in different regions throughout the province, and the business leaders training starts with an experience led by a First Nation designed to strengthen understanding of local Indigenous cultures and BC Hydro's commitment to advancing reconciliation. So far, 18% of BC Hydro's people leaders have taken this training.

In addition, BC Hydro employees regularly attend Nation-specific, Nation-led training hosted by the Nations they work with. Examples of training sessions attended during the reporting period include:

- **February 2024:** A Heiltsuk First Nation member led an all-day cultural awareness training session on February 2, 2024 for BC Hydro employees whose work is focused on supporting remote communities. This training deepened awareness of the colonial history and impacts to Indigenous people with a particular focus on Heiltsuk's culture and experiences. BC Hydro is currently planning for a second training session for Spring 2025 and intends to organize this annually going forward.
- **April 2024:** Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs hosted Wet'suwet'en 101 and 201 courses for BC Hydro Executive and staff to learn about Wet'suwet'en history, governance and culture.
- **May 2024:** McLeod Lake Indian Band hosted a 'Walking in the Footsteps of Our Ancestors' session.
- **May 2024:** Doig River First Nation hosted a 'Loveback conference' that BC Hydro employees attended as an industry partner, which explored how trauma presents in our lives while offering historic and scientific context for the origins of trauma and response strategies.
- **October 2024:** Saulteau First Nations hosted a 'Healing the Land' session where Nation members and elders shared stories and wisdom about traditional plant use in their culture and community, including a discussion about their ethnobotany book which was created with BC Hydro support.
- **February 2025:** Doig River First Nation hosted a consultation referral system training for BC Hydro employees.

Action 1.3

Acknowledge the First Nations and their lands and territories on which we operate.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

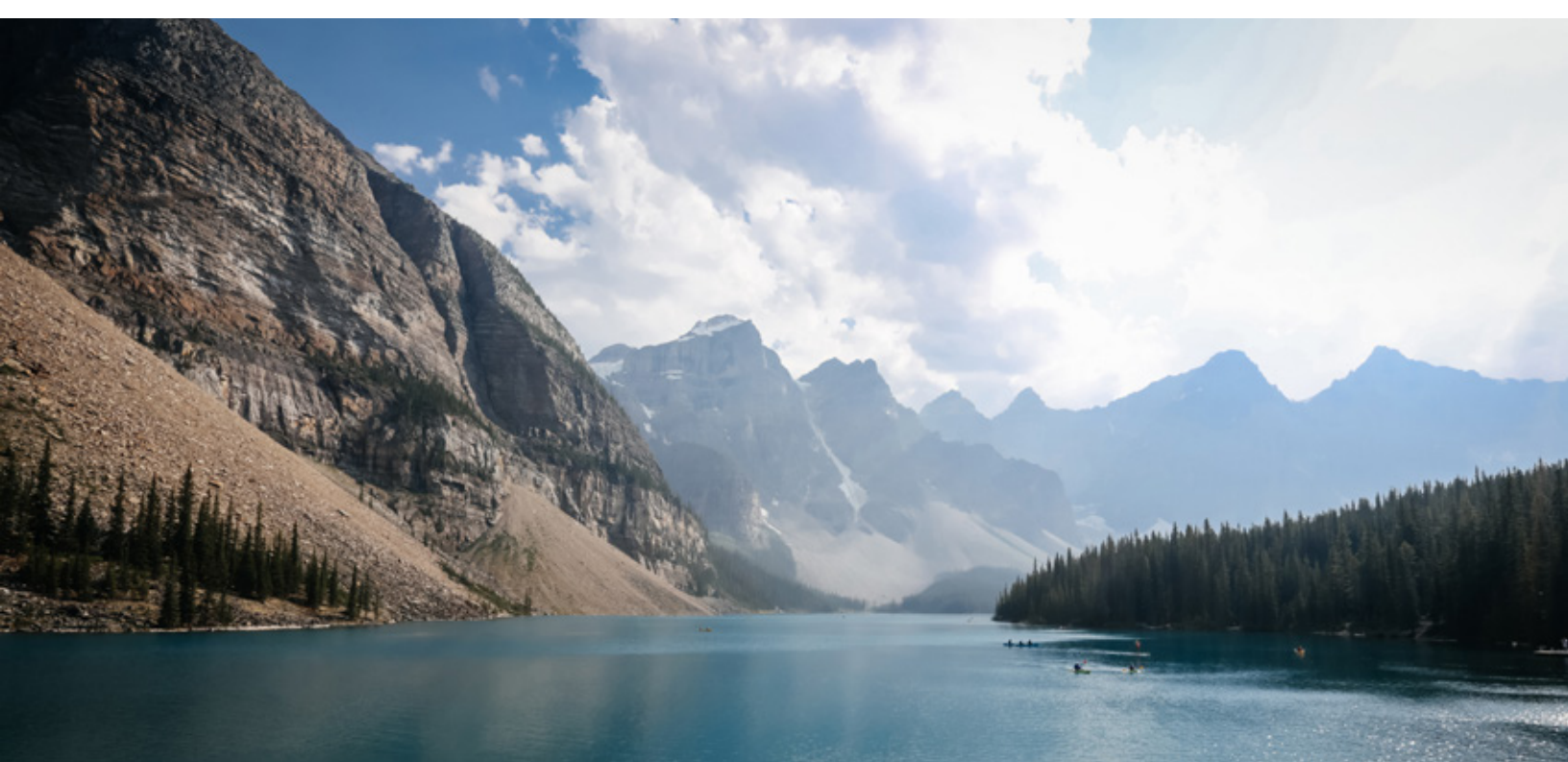
- It is important that BC Hydro employees understand that our operations all take place on First Nations' lands and territories. We now display territorial acknowledgements in the lobbies of our Edmonds and Dunsmuir offices. We also maintain a library of resources for employees to help them perform territorial acknowledgements, and language guides to make sure the words we use in our communications at BC Hydro reflect our values.
- We're changing how we do business in order to better advance our reconciliation goals. BC Hydro's Properties group is responsible for all of the company's building development and building improvement projects. During the reporting period, we updated our delivery practice for building development and building improvement projects to include consideration of opportunities for cultural recognition—whether that's through Indigenous art, signage, or other means.

Action 1.4

Co-develop long-term Relationship Agreements that advance reconciliation with the First Nations who are most impacted by our infrastructure.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

BC Hydro seeks deeper relationships with First Nations who are most impacted by our existing infrastructure and upcoming projects. We may formalize these enhanced relationships through Relationship Agreements with these Nations to facilitate a higher volume of engagement and deeper collaboration on our shared interests. As of the end of the reporting period, we have 16 Relationship Agreements covering 25 First Nations across BC in place.





**Social and cultural
well-being**



Social and cultural well-being

BC Hydro utilizes water to generate electricity for our customers and develops projects on the land for the transmission and distribution of that electricity. Given the ties between water, land and the environment and First Nations rights, title, and cultural practices, BC Hydro's operations have had a deep impact on First Nations' social and cultural well-being. We are therefore taking action to support rights to develop, practice and protect the First Nations cultural heritage. Highlights from the reporting period include:

Action 2.1

Renewing cultural heritage protection practices through co-management with First Nations of heritage resources and ancestral remains sites affected by BC Hydro projects and operations.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

- In the Columbia reservoirs, BC Hydro is working together with First Nations to deliver the Reservoir Archaeology Program, which is intended ensure reservoir operations comply with the Heritage Conservation Act. Currently the reservoirs require archaeology management plans to outline scopes and methods for further archaeological assessment with the reservoir drawdown zones. First Nations in the region are working collaboratively to develop a more broadly focused version of the archaeology management plans, called cultural stewardship plans, to help us better protect cultural resources. The cultural stewardship plans will provide guidance and information on how to manage cultural heritage within the reservoir drawdown zones and more broadly in the watershed. BC Hydro is proud to fund the development of these plans and looks forward to working with First Nations in the Columbia region to implement them.
- The Tsleil-Waututh was approved as an official artifact repository in 2023, and they have already started the repatriation of belongings from historic Tsleil-Waututh village sites and archaeological sites. BC Hydro was proud to back this work in 2024, providing funding to support the Nation in the repatriation of their ancestral belongings and artifacts.

Action 2.2

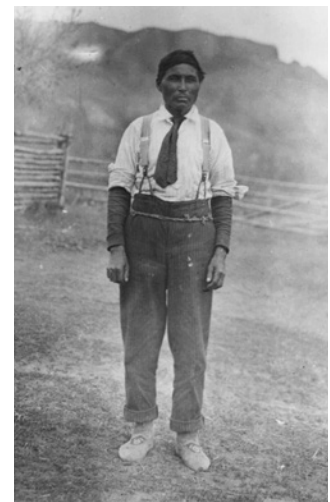
Collaborating on the development, maintenance, and usage of First Nations languages in joint communications materials and at BC Hydro facilities.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

We are proud to have partnered with the Doig River First Nation and Attachie family to install a memorial honouring Chief Attachie at Halfway River. Chief Attachie was one of the Tsáá? ɣhé ne dane signatories to Treaty 8—a historical agreement concluded by the federal government and Treaty 8 First Nations spanning northeastern B.C. and parts of Alberta, Saskatchewan and the Northwest Territories. The Attachie family led the historical research, recreated and mapped out Chief Attachie's historical use of the area, and developed the content for the sign. Once the content of the memorial was finalized, our Creative Services team worked with the family to visually present the information in the sign. The sign is bilingual, in Dane-zaa and English. The Chief Attachie memorial is one of a number of signs and markers being planned and constructed along Highway 29—from Hudson's Hope to Fort St. John—that feature Indigenous storytelling and form an interpretive cultural journey.



The memorial in place at Halfway River.



Chief Attachie. Source: Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research (TARR).

Action 2.3

Co-developing methodologies to evaluate community and cultural well-being in cumulative effects assessments and project impact studies.

Action 2.4

Co-developing codes of conduct for BC Hydro sites to mitigate impacts to surrounding First Nations communities.

Action 2.5

Supporting initiatives related to the practice and revitalization of First Nations cultures through social investments.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

On the outskirts of Vancouver’s Pacific Spirit Regional Park, Camosun Substation supplies power to the growing population in the University of British Columbia area. A capital project to increase load capacity at this site presented an opportunity for our teams to collaborate with Musqueam, on whose traditional territory this infrastructure lies. To protect one of the new transformers installed as part of the project, a large concrete wall was constructed, which presented a perfect canvas to feature an art installation to be appreciated by, and educate, the local community and users of the trail.

Working with the Vancouver Mural Fest, we engaged Musqueam Nation to select an artist to design a mural that would honour the unceded and traditional Coast Salish territories where the Camosun Substation is located. From the submissions, a panel of Musqueam representatives selected Kitty Guerin, a self-taught, multi-disciplinary artist from Musqueam to design the mural.

Featured prominently in the Camosun mural is a large snake with two heads, which is important in traditional Musqueam stories. It is said that the two-headed serpent (sʔi:ʔqəy) originated in a small lake, where Camosun Bog lies. The two-headed snake was so massive that it carved a large creek into the land, which flows through Musqueam territory to connect Camosun Bog to the Fraser River. The creature left droppings in its path, which grew into məθkʷəy, a flowering plant that once grew abundantly along the waters of this land. The name Musqueam (xʷməθkʷəy̓əm) directly translates to “place of the məθkʷəy.” We’ll continue to look for opportunities for cultural investments, recognition, and collaboration as part of our capital projects.



The finished mural includes culturally significant elements such as river grass, water and a two-headed serpent.

BC Hydro is working to mitigate the impacts of the Site C project and help preserve land and resources for traditional use through our Indigenous Traditional Use Fund (ITUF). The details and approach to the ITUF were collaboratively developed by BC Hydro and the participating First Nations. The ITUF is valued at \$15 million, including funding for a Culture and Heritage Resources Committee. For more information about the Indigenous-led projects being funded through ITUF, visit www.sitecproject.com

Action 2.6

Collaborating with Indigenous people and First Nations to realize social and economic benefits associated with improving energy performance in their homes, businesses and community.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

BC Hydro offers additional funding and support for customers in Non-Integrated Areas to make energy-efficient upgrades that reduce reliance on diesel-generated electricity. We've partnered with the Government of B.C. and the New Relationship Trust to provide funding for energy-efficient upgrades through the Community Energy Diesel Reduction program. Our funding supports projects that improve the energy efficiency of residential buildings. We're also supporting the Indigenous Climate Action Network (I-CAN), a program administered by the Coastal First Nations Great Bear Initiative in partnership with the Government of BC and the Government of Canada. This program provides funding and support for Climate Action Coordinator positions, training, and peer learning opportunities for remote First Nations communities across B.C.

In BC Hydro's integrated area (main grid-connected), BC Hydro supported energy management capacity in 2024-25 through funding agreements with the Aboriginal Housing and Management Association, Musqueam Indian Band, Tsleil-Waututh Nation, Squamish Nation, Nisga'a Lisims Government, and the BC First Nations Energy and Mining Council.

BC Hydro also offers demand side management programs that support energy efficiency projects in residential and community buildings with electric space and water heating. Programs include energy efficiency incentive funding for non-integrated customers through the rebates for home renovations program, free energy-savings kits, and bonus incentives on select energy-efficient upgrades through the business energy-savings incentives program. BC Hydro's Indigenous Communities Conservation Program includes two energy efficiency offers for communities in our integrated areas.

During the reporting period:

- Two First Nations completed projects through our Indigenous Communities Conservation Program (ICCP) Home Energy Check-up offer, resulting in home assessments and upgrades being undertaken in 45 homes.
- Energy efficiency upgrades were completed in 135 homes with support from ICCP's Home Energy Upgrade Rebates offer.
- We ran a targeted offer to replace refrigerators on Haida Gwaii with newer, more energy-efficient models. We replaced 78 fridges—handling the removal and disposal of the old fridge and the installation of the new appliance.
- We launched new solar and battery incentives that offer rebates up to \$50,000 for First Nations customers on each eligible grid-connected solar panel installation or battery storage system.

In 2024, our investment in the I-CAN funded Climate Action Coordinators in eight First Nation communities including Dease River, Uchucklesaht, Nuxalk, Gitga'at, Skidegate, Old Massett, Heiltsuk, and Ulkatcho. These Coordinators work to advance the energy goals of their communities, including energy development opportunities and demand side management programs.



Decision-making



Decision-making

BC Hydro makes a variety of decisions every day in order to provide electricity across the province, and we're working together with First Nations to increase their involvement in those decisions. To support First Nation self-determination and self-governance, we are collaborating more closely on decisions that may affect First Nations, with the goal of securing consent for our work. Some examples of how we've done this during the reporting period include:

Action 3.1

Co-developing processes, agreements, and other constructive arrangements that enable greater participation in decision-making and are designed to seek First Nations' free, prior and informed consent to BC Hydro's projects and initiatives, to support self-determination and inclusion in decision-making as described in the UN Declaration.

↳ PROGRESS TO DATE:

- The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of B.C., Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations, and public stakeholders to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams. Starting in 2024, the program's Steering Committee added First Nations members to ensure First Nations have a defined decision-making role in the program, in addition to the governance role First Nations play as members of the program's regional boards. This change has been institutionalized in the program's governance manual by creating three new positions on the Steering Committee that didn't exist before to ensure we'll have First Nations representation going forward.
- We're working together with St'át'imc Nation to manage the impacts of BC Hydro's Bridge River facilities. The St'át'imc-BC Hydro Joint Planning Forum meets monthly to jointly plan measures designed to avoid or mitigate impacts to the environment, fish and wildlife, which often include joint recommendations on outage timing designed to preserve fish flows. The forum represents an example where First Nations are involved in joint decision-making on the operational side of our business. Working with St'át'imc to develop a mutual understanding of our respective interests as these relate to BC Hydro's operations is a key part of developing our long-term relationship and seeking consent for our future work in St'át'imc territory.

Action 3.2

Co-developing procedures designed to ensure the prompt and fair resolution of any conflicts between BC Hydro and First Nations.

Action 3.3

Greater involvement and collaboration in planning, including multi-year regional planning and at the earliest stages of BC Hydro projects.

↳ PROGRESS TO DATE:

We're working together with First Nations on our long-term regional plans. In June 2024, BC Hydro filed its 2024 Fort Nelson Long-Term Resource Plan Application. Long-term resource plans are the earliest we can engage with First Nations on meeting our customers' future electricity needs. We worked with local First Nations to gather information prior to the development of the plan and engage on the content of the draft plan to ensure that the plan would be informed by the values and interests of the communities. The result of this engagement was that Fort Nelson First Nation provided BC Hydro with a letter supporting BC Hydro's near-term actions recommended in the plan.

Action 3.4

Co-designing and supporting processes that accommodate the work of First Nations decision-making governance institutions and structures.

↳ **PROGRESS TO DATE:**

The Province of British Columbia and the S'ólh Téméxw Stewardship Alliance Member First Nations are parties to a Strategic Engagement Agreement. The Agreement includes an engagement framework for effectively and comprehensively identifying and informing each other of potential impacts on Stó:lō rights, including processes that outline how the Nations will work together internally to respond to provincial activities. In 2024, BC Hydro was proud to support these structures by confirming that we will follow the engagement approach outlined in the Strategic Engagement Agreement.



**Water, land
and environment**



Water, land and environment

The historic and ongoing impacts to water, land and the environment from the construction and operation of BC Hydro's infrastructure has had direct and long-lasting impacts to First Nations' rights, title and ways of life. We are working together with First Nations to both reduce the impacts of our activities and explore opportunities for environmental stewardship, environmental enhancements, and addressing climate change. Key actions we've collaborated on during the reporting period include:

Action 4.1

Learning about First Nations knowledge and methodologies around water, land and environment and collaborating to include First Nations expertise, knowledge, and reverence for water into our decision-making processes.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

BC Hydro and Squamish Nation are seeking to advance the Cheakamus Water Use Plan Order Review process in a collaborative way aimed at achieving consensus on final recommendations for amendments to the Order. An important goal is to seek consensus on priority issues which will inform our review and final recommendations. One outcome of this collaborative process is the inclusion of two priority issues grounded in Squamish cultural values: respect for the Salmon People, and respect for the spirit of the river. These values have been reflected in two measurable objectives in our decision-making process to assist in developing the final recommendations: minimizing fish mortality (respect for the Salmon People) and maximizing natural river flows (respect for the spirit of the river). This collaborative work requires careful consideration and continues to be a multi-year effort; an outcome on final recommendations is yet to be finalized.

Action 4.2

Co-designing new approaches to minimize the environmental and archaeological impacts of BC Hydro activities and that also contribute to addressing past and ongoing impacts.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

We're working with First Nation to minimize the environmental impacts associated with diesel generation. Located in Anahim Lake, the Ulkatcho First Nation's power is currently 100% diesel generated. Together with support from BC Hydro and the provincial and federal governments, Ulkatcho will build what's expected to become Canada's largest off-grid solar farm. This new solar energy project is anticipated to decrease our carbon footprint by reducing the diesel required to power this remote community by about 64%. That's equal to saving 1.1 million litres of diesel and offsetting about 3,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions each year. We're proud to have signed our first ever Community Energy Purchase Agreement with the Ulkatcho First Nation in April 2024. Through the agreement, we're committed to purchasing electricity from Ulkatcho's solar plant for the next 20 years.



Chief Lynda Price and Chris O'Riley at the signing ceremony
(source: [Ulkatcho First Nation](#)).

Action 4.3

Exploring opportunities for environmental enhancements and archaeological site protections through BC Hydro's projects and programs.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

- BC Hydro's Community ReGreening program supports the planting of trees and other vegetation that help enhance ecological networks across the province, including funding for Indigenous cultural plantings. We approved funding for nine applications by First Nations to plant culturally significant vegetation in their communities as part of BC Hydro's Community ReGreening Program in 2024.
- The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program provides funding for projects that conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams. The program approved \$8.7 million for 81 fish and wildlife projects to be implemented in 2024 and 2025.

Action 4.4

Seeking consent and consensus on water use and watershed planning.

As of the end of the reporting period, BC Hydro is engaging First Nations across the Province on seven Water Use Plan Order Reviews, with the goal of achieving consensus amongst all participants in the review and consent from individual participating Nations for the recommendations developed through these processes. These reviews are still in progress, with anticipated filings with the Comptroller of Water Rights between 2025 and 2026.

Action 4.5

Collaborating on the design and implementation of aquatic restoration programs and activities addressing fish and fish habitat.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

- We recognize the historic significance of salmon to First Nations and are working to mitigate the impacts BC Hydro's facilities have on salmon and salmon habitat. At the Coquitlam Dam, BC Hydro has committed funding to a 10-year program to design, build and operate a sockeye salmon hatchery in partnership with kʷikʷəłəm First Nation that is targeting to release 15,000 smolts (young salmon that are ready to migrate out to sea) per year over the next 10 years. In addition, our Fish and Wildlife Compensation program is funding a multi-year project to improve fish flows in the lower Coquitlam River watershed by reconnecting the 31,800-square-metre Reeve Slough via a relic channel to the Coquitlam River. Once complete, the project will maintain water levels in the slough to support the existing native aquatic and semiaquatic species of plants and animals as well as all seven species of Pacific salmonids.
- Duncan Dam is located about 8 km upstream of Kootenay Lake and was built as part of the Columbia River Treaty in 1967. Every year Bull Trout migrate from Kootenay Lake through Duncan Dam to spawn in the cool headwaters of the Upper Duncan River watershed. Once through the dam, Bull Trout will migrate nearly 100 km upstream through the reservoir and river to tributaries at the very top of the Duncan River system. A fish weir was installed at the dam in 1994 to provide a stepping stool for fish at the dam, but high flows through the dam in 2011 damaged the fish weir and it was taken out of operation. In spring 2024, we installed a new permanent concrete weir, and bull trout have already been seen using it.

Action 4.6

Expanding opportunities for environmental stewardship by First Nations related to our projects and operations.

↳ PROGRESS TO DATE:

- BC Hydro undertakes a variety of different types of environmental work in order to avoid environmental impacts throughout the lifecycle of our assets and operations. Having First Nations undertake environmental services work on our behalf provides opportunities for First Nations to exercise their role as stewards of the land. During the reporting period, BC Hydro pre-qualified 11 First Nations businesses to provide BC Hydro with environmental services. Once pre-qualified, BC Hydro can easily engage these businesses for environmental work on everything from major capital projects to maintenance programs that will contribute to a healthy environment for the long-term.
- As part of BC Hydro's Reservoir Archaeology Program, we are providing funding to a First Nations-led Guardian Watch Program. The Guardian Watch aims to be a presence within the BC Hydro reservoir drawdown zones and Fish and Wildlife Conservation Program conservancy lands around Castlegar. Working with Compliance and Enforcement Natural Resource Officers, First Nations Guardians share information and educate the public, and act as a formal presence to observe, record and report potential infractions, supporting First Nations stewardship of the land and cultural resources.

Action 4.7

Supporting the restoration of land ownership, stewardship and protection by First Nations through property dispositions, leasing and other land-related initiatives.



Economic relations



Economic Relations

Both the UN Declaration and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action speak to the importance of economic development and the need to ensure that Indigenous people see long-term, sustainable economic benefits from development projects. Opportunities for First Nations and Indigenous people as partners, employees and owners in BC Hydro's business or businesses supplying BC Hydro provides a clear path for First Nations and Indigenous people to achieve economic self-determination. BC Hydro is committed to economic reconciliation across our business—here are some of the ways we worked towards this with First Nations in the reporting period:

Action 5.1

Continuing to provide directed procurement opportunities, including expanding opportunities on the operational side of our business where our most significant infrastructure footprint is located. Our directed procurement approach is focused on the First Nations with agreements where our most significant infrastructure footprint is located because these are the First Nations that have been most impacted by our business.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

During BC Hydro's most recent fiscal year (April 1, 2024—March 31, 2025), BC Hydro issued \$258 million in directed procurement contracts to First Nations designated businesses. In total, BC Hydro has issued over \$1.6 billion to First Nations designated businesses since 2015 (the year we started tracking this metric).

This total includes an increase in the work opportunities awarded to First Nations designated businesses on the operational side of our business, such as line construction work, earth moving, traffic management, and vegetation management, to \$23.9 million in BC Hydro's most recent fiscal year (up from \$15 million in the previous fiscal year).

Action 5.2

Supporting directed procurement by providing opportunities and programs, such as our First Nations Contractor Program.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

During the reporting period, we delivered two First Nation Contractor Program workshops to 12 First Nations designated business.

What is the First Nations Contractor Program?

The First Nations Contractor Program was developed in 2019 with the goal to on-board First Nations and their businesses so that getting work and getting-to-work is easier. This interactive program consists of three modules: procurement processes and practices, contract and construction management, and safety where participants can ask questions and discuss common circumstances, various types of work experiences, and good practices.

As First Nations and their businesses gain greater understanding of BC Hydro's business needs, policies, processes, people, and contracts, they gain better understanding on how to be successful in working with us, get up to speed faster, and become proactive in bringing forward improvements and savings that benefit all parties involved.

Action 5.3

Meet or exceed the representation in the available workforce by 2026: Indigenous people—5%.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

BC Hydro set a representation goal that is above the available Indigenous labour market as a commitment to build capacity and increase Indigenous participation in BC Hydro decisions, policies, processes and practices.

BC Hydro hired 27 Indigenous employees during the reporting period. Indigenous employees currently represent 3.9% of our workforce (or 328 employees). This percentage meets the available Indigenous workforce in B.C. (3.9%).

In February 2025, BC Hydro was certified as an Employer of Choice by Indigenous Works, an Indigenous-led non-profit organization with a mandate to improve the inclusion and engagement of Indigenous people in the Canadian economy. We achieved a 98% rating against the Indigenous Works Inclusion Continuum, which looks at factors ranging from leadership and governance to organizational culture to social impact. This designation demonstrates our ongoing commitment to advancing Indigenous workplace inclusion and positive employment outcomes.

“This places BC Hydro among the highest-scoring organizations in the program...underscoring its leadership in Indigenous employment and workplace inclusion.”

(Indigenous Works assessment report)

Action 5.4

Supporting employment and training at BC Hydro for Indigenous people through programs that increase opportunities for Indigenous employment and career growth, such as the Professionals in Development, Try-A-Trade, and Indigenous Career exploration Programs.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

Our Professionals in Development program offers Indigenous professionals paid work and professional development placements at BC Hydro. Candidates participate in work rotations over a one-to-two-year period in different business groups to help them gain BC Hydro work experience, insight into the company and develop a network. The intent of the program is to create opportunities for Indigenous candidates to apply on permanent BC Hydro roles.

Over the reporting period, three new participants were hired into the program and four existing participants were hired into full-time regular/temporary, outside of the program. Overall, since the start of the program in fall of 2021, the Professionals in Development program has brought in 25 Indigenous employees into BC Hydro and 13 participants have successfully secured full time BC Hydro roles.

In 2024, BC Hydro launched a new leadership development program for management and professional employees who aspire to be people managers. The pilot program included dedicated spots for Indigenous employees to participate and provide feedback on their experience in the program and input for program improvements to better support Indigenous employees.

The Try-A-Trade program offers qualified Indigenous participants the opportunity to learn the trades through a 16-week paid work experience program at BC Hydro. Training includes classroom learning and job experience placements with crews in various locations across the province. This helps better position candidates to compete for pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship programs. Five Try-A-Trade program participants were hired into pre-apprenticeship or apprenticeship positions during the reporting period.

The Try-A-Technical program pilot launched in January 2025 with its first participant. This program offers a 16-week paid work experience in office-based technical positions, helping participants create connections and develop skills to prepare them for future employment opportunities.

BC Hydro launched a new Indigenous Career Exploration Program in 2024 to reduce barriers engaging with our recruitment process. Program features include: providing individual career guidance, delivering workshops to Indigenous job seekers to increase awareness of the roles available, setting job alerts, creating cover letters, tailoring resumes, and help preparing for interviews. So far, 259 Indigenous participants have applied to the program, and 192 (74%) of applicants have accessed a 1:1 job match and career coaching session with a specialist recruiter.

Interested in working at BC Hydro?

Find out more about all of our Indigenous career opportunities at bchydro.com.

Action 5.5

Exploring new economic opportunities for First Nations related to our business. This may include exploring the potential for co-ownership of electrical infrastructure starting with new major transmission lines in the North coast.

➡ PROGRESS TO DATE:

Starting in 2023, BC Hydro has been working with the Province of BC and First Nations impacted by the proposed North Coast Transmission Line to pursue innovative partnership approaches to project development. This includes an equity opportunity where First Nations have an option to co-own the new transmission line with BC Hydro. Co-ownership of electricity infrastructure with First Nations is new to BC Hydro and the Northcoast Transmission line is an opportunity for us to learn how it can work in our business. Our learnings from the Northcoast Transmission line will inform how we approach future partnership opportunities with First Nations that advance economic reconciliation.

Action 5.6

Collaborating with the Province and First Nations on economic opportunities which may arise from the Indigenous Clean Energy Opportunities engagement process.

Action 5.7

Exploring opportunities to address First Nations' interests in revenue sharing, in alignment with the new fiscal framework currently being co-developed by the Province and First Nations.

Action 5.8

Supporting economic partnerships and benefits in the renewable energy sector through collaboration on future calls for power.

↳ PROGRESS TO DATE:

- In 2022, we identified a potential need for additional power, as our load resource balance was changing. When considering how we would procure new power and our engagement approach, BC Hydro took into consideration the changes in our operating context over the past 15 years, including the implementation of the UN Declaration.
- Over the course of 2024, we engaged extensively with First Nations through individual meetings, group workshops, surveys, and more. Over 99 First Nations engaged with us and contributed significantly to the design of the 2024 Call for Power. As a result, the call required a minimum of 25% equity ownership to be held by First Nations, with incentives for up to 51% ownership and other economic benefits such as procurement or employment. In December 2024, we announced that we had selected nine wind projects and one solar project through the Call for Power, most of which have 51% equity ownership by First Nations. As we look forward to future calls, this marks a historic step forward in energy partnership with First Nations.

What People are Saying about the Call for Power:

“Our investment in Taylor Wind will create jobs and economic development, while also respecting our Treaty and making wise use of our natural resources. Together, we are proving that reconciliation means creating triple-win solutions that benefit everyone. This is the future and the future is bright.”

Chief Rudy Paquette,
Saulteau First Nations
(Taylor Wind)



“We welcome the opportunity provided by BC Hydro’s selection of the Highland Valley Wind Project and look forward to working together with our partner, Capstone. This project is a significant advancement in economic reconciliation and marks a new era in Indigenous ownership and control of our resources. We believe that working together is the best course for all of us.”

Chief Greg Blain,
Ashcroft Indian Band
(Highland Valley Wind)

Conclusion

We hope that this report, the first of many, demonstrates how BC Hydro is adopting the UN Declaration as our framework for reconciliation within our mandate as a public utility. Through collaborative efforts with First Nations and Indigenous people throughout B.C., we are taking action in the key areas of respectful relations, social and cultural well-being, decision-making, water, lands and the environment, and economic relations. These actions reflect BC Hydro's commitment to reconciliation and the recognition of First Nations rights and title. While challenges remain, our commitment to meaningful engagement and partnership with First Nations and Indigenous people is a promising step towards a more equitable and sustainable energy sector.

Acknowledgments

We're grateful to all the First Nations on whose lands we operate, and who continue to work with us to advance true and lasting reconciliation. We also want to thank our partners at the First Nations Energy and Mining Council, and our UN Declaration Advisory Committee, for their advice and guidance as we implement our Plan.

Finally, we would like to thank artists Tiernan Short and Bert Peters for their beautiful cover art design. Tiernan and Bert belong to Nations Creations, an Indigenous-owned and operated manufacturer and platform for Indigenous artists located on unceded Stó:lō territory which encapsulates the beauty of its surroundings through its Indigenous artisan-created pieces.



