



# Welcome to the La Joie Dam Improvement Project

Virtual open-house March/April 2026



# Virtual meeting etiquette



- We're not recording and kindly ask that others do not record.
- During the presentation, please put questions in the chat.
- Remember to mute your microphone if you're not speaking to the group.
- Share air space so that everyone can participate.
- Challenge ideas, not people.



# Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the La Joie Dam, part of the Bridge River system, is located on the unceded and traditional territory of St'át'imc Nation.

We acknowledge the impacts that BC Hydro's system has had on the Nation and the land they have made use of since time immemorial. We share in the responsibility to act as stewards of the land and care for its resources.



# Agenda

- First Nations consultation
- La Joie Dam Improvement Project overview
- Key outcomes of feasibility studies
  - Project access routes
  - Work camp planning (accommodations)
- Spring 2026 dam drilling program
- Grizzly Bar Side Channel fish habitat restoration
- How to connect
- Questions and comments



# Honouring our Agreements with First Nations

La Joie is part of the Bridge River system, located entirely in St'át'imc Nation Territory.

- St'át'imc and BC Hydro have agreements that define how we work together and provide a framework for a relationship based on mutual respect and understanding.
- We're collaborating at various levels to deepen our understanding of St'át'imc values and integrate St'át'imc perspectives into project design and planning.
- We're also working together to identify meaningful economic and employment opportunities.



# Project lingo 101

A quick guide to the project design lingo you'll be hearing as we walk through the dam improvements, camp and project access planning work.



## Conceptual design

High-level thinking stage. We explore **possible solutions**, identify constraints, and consider different approaches.

No detailed drawings yet—just concepts, alternatives, and big-picture viability.

## Feasibility design

We refine the **leading alternative** to ensure it is practical, safe, and achievable.

Includes early technical assessments, costing, risks, and confirming the project is feasible.

## Preliminary design

The design becomes more detailed.

We develop **initial layouts, technical drawings, and engineering assumptions**.

Helps inform permitting, early procurement, and more precise cost estimates.

## Detailed design

Final, fully engineered design.

Includes **complete drawings, specifications, construction details**, and everything contractors need to build.

This is the stage right before construction begins.

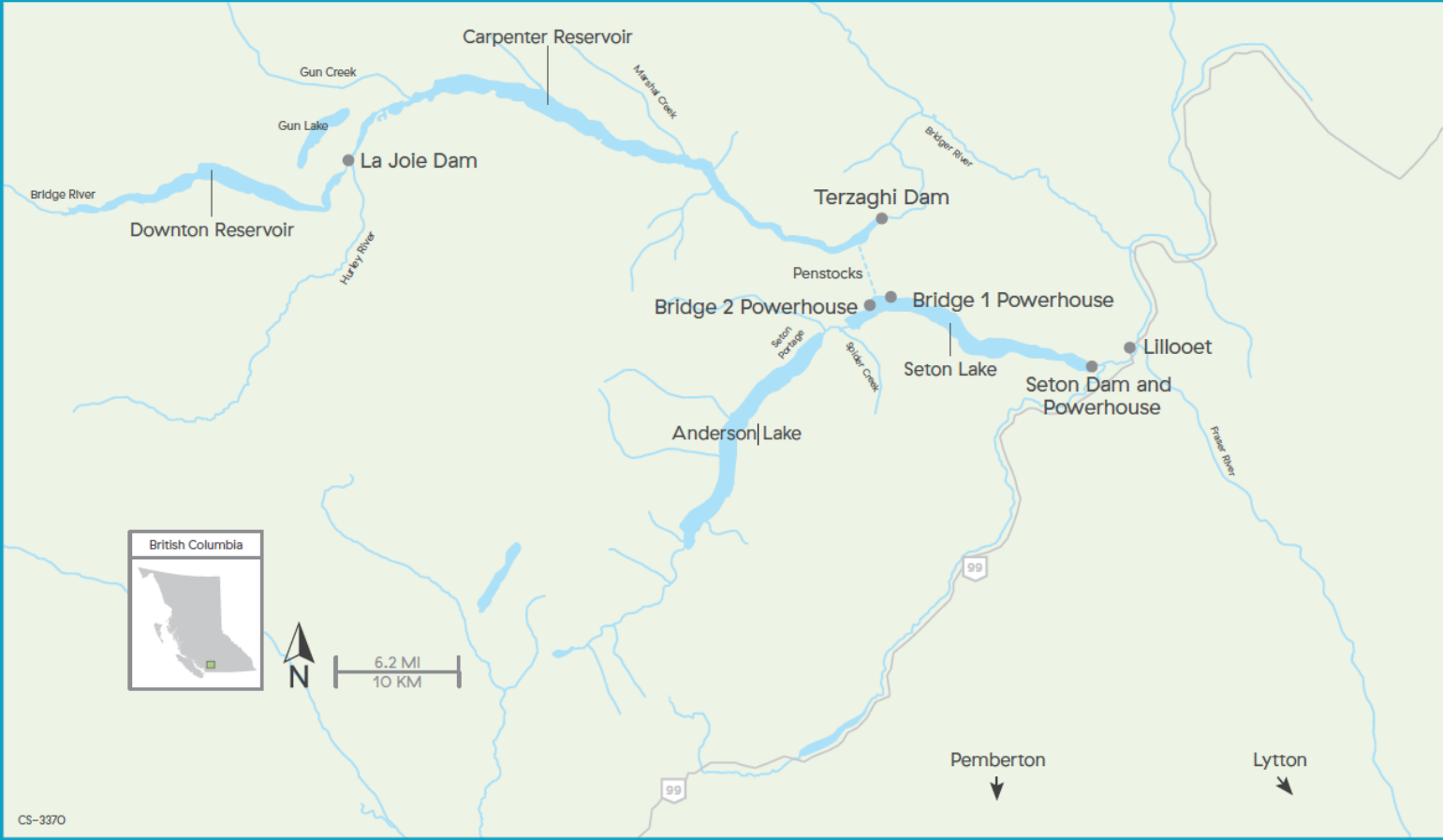


An aerial photograph of a mountain valley. In the background, a range of snow-capped mountains stretches across the horizon. The middle ground features a large reservoir or dam structure nestled in a valley. The foreground shows a winding road and a river flowing through a forested area with patches of snow. The overall scene is a scenic mountain landscape.

# Project overview



# Bridge River System



CS-3370

# Project overview: Why the project is needed



La Joie Dam, powerhouse, and intake tower (Feb. 2026)

## Purpose: address safety risks related to the La Joie dam's age and seismic vulnerabilities

In 2015, we adjusted dam operations to mitigate seismic risks by reducing Downton Reservoir's maximum elevation from 750m to 734m. This lowered the reservoir's storage capacity by approximately one-half, reducing our ability to manage flows throughout the Bridge system.

This is an interim measure until the project is complete.

## Leading alternative: improve dam to restore full reservoir level

- The leading alternative received conditional endorsement from St'át'imc Authority.
- The Project is subject to British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) review.



# Investigating improvements



*La Joie Dam and intake tower standing in Downton Reservoir (Feb. 2026)*

**Addressing existing deterioration and seismic deficiencies requires extensive upgrades.**

We're evaluating how to improve the facility to meet dam safety requirements.

A project update on these evaluations is anticipated for summer 2026.



# Temporary reservoir drawdowns



Crews investigating at the toe of the La Joie Dam during the spring 2022 temporary drawdown (April 2022)

**Deep temporary drawdowns (lowering the water level) of the reservoir are required to provide access to the lower parts of the dam and intake tower.**

- To achieve a drawdown, water is released through the turbine and outlets year-round until the target water level is reached.
  - The water then moves through Carpenter reservoir and the Bridge powerhouses.
- Due to environmental risks, we're working to limit drawdowns below 710 meters, which may require approvals from environmental agencies.
- Options for the number and duration of drawdowns are being studied. This is key to construction planning and schedule.
- Safety and environmental plans will be developed closer to construction.



# Project timeline estimate: Dam facility

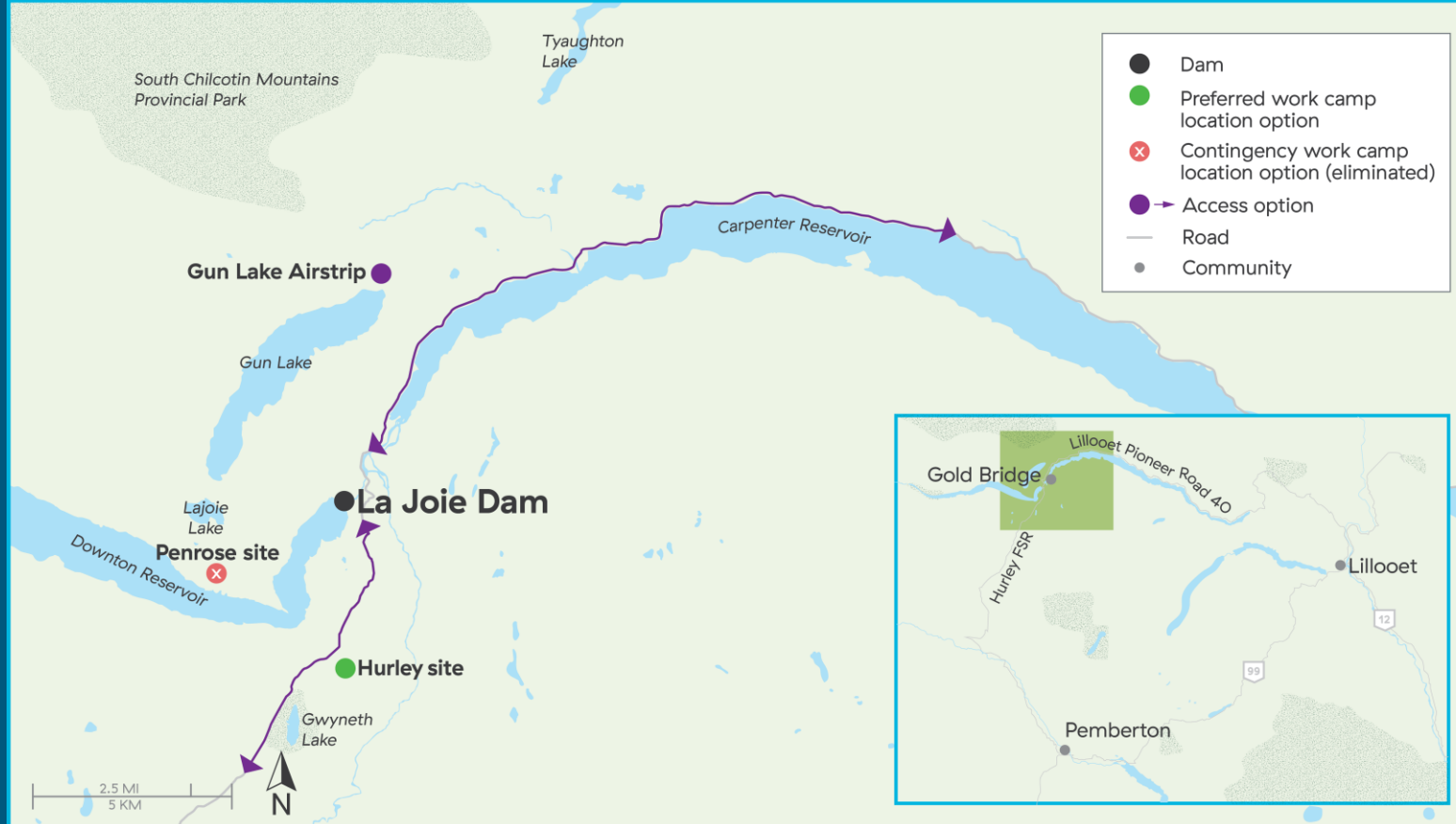
Dates	Key project milestones
Spring 2021	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Identified recommended leading alternative</li></ul>
Spring 2022	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Confirmed leading alternative</li></ul>
2026-2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Undertake further design</li></ul>
Spring 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Confirm preferred alternative</li></ul>
~2029	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Submit application for BC Utilities Commission review</li></ul>
~2030	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Earliest start of main works construction activities</li></ul>
~Winter 2030/2031	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>First drawdown anticipated</li></ul>
~Fall 2035	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Earliest in-service date</li></ul>

*Timeline is subject to change based on the project's progression.*

# Project access routes



# La Joie Dam Improvement Project: Access and accommodation feasibility studies



# Project access routes: Road 40



Lillooet Pioneer Road 40

Road 40 has been proposed as the primary project access route for equipment, materials, and supplies, and moves forward into detailed design

- ~25 high hazard locations have been identified.
  - This is being done in coordination with the Ministry of Transportation and Transit (MOTT)
  - Priority was given to locations with the highest hazard rating.
- Examples of the proposed targeted improvements from the Bridge River Bridge (Lillooet) to Gold Bridge include:
  - Rockfall and landslide mitigation.
  - Improved road signage.
  - Road surface improvements.
  - Widening a section of the road to allow for large trucks.
  - Taking the opportunity to improve sightlines where work is already taking place.

**Moving forward on this work will bring early benefits to the public and improve road conditions for other Bridge River System Upgrade projects.**



# Project access routes: Road 40

## 2026 spring/summer field investigations

Subsurface investigations are required to understand soil and rock conditions which will support detailed designs for Road 40 improvements.

These include:

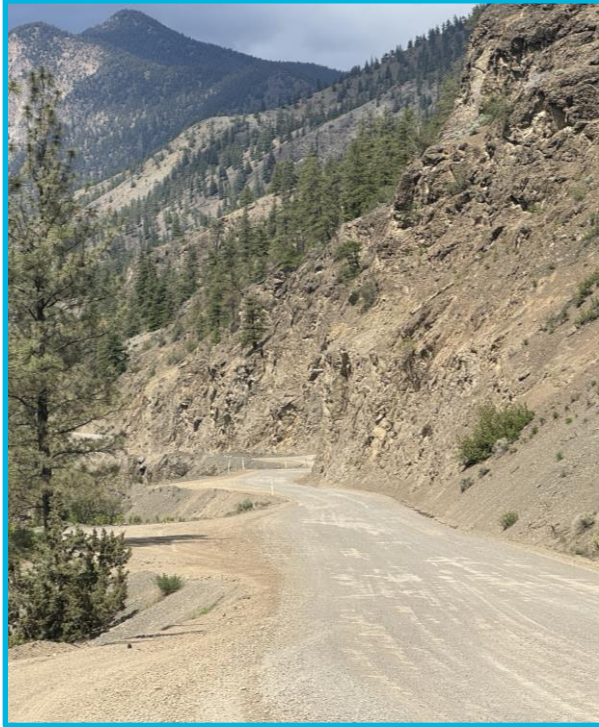
- ~110 test pits excavated into the Road 40 shoulder between Yalakom River and Gold Bridge.
- Geotechnical investigations to identify nearby rock and gravel that could support project construction.
- Expect single lane alternating traffic at investigation locations while work is in progress and the potential for a short road closure.
- Once work is complete, sites will be remediated.
- Test pitting and drilling will be done in phases, not all at once.



*An example of excavating test pits*



# Project access routes: Road 40



Lillooet Pioneer Road 40

A proposed construction timeline is under development.

**Earliest construction start: Summer 2027**

**Targeted in-service date: Summer 2029**

- First Nations consultation and public engagement activities on the proposed improvement locations are planned for this year.
- Public notifications including updates and potential traffic impacts will be communicated as plans are further developed.



# Project access routes: Hurley/Lillooet FSR



Hurley Forest Service Road

The Hurley FSR will move into preliminary design with a limited set of studies advanced, after which further work will be paused.

Key rationale for this approach:

- The outcomes of the engineering design for the dam improvements influences the need for the Hurley FSR as a project access route.
- This option will be 'shelf ready' for future risk/benefit analysis if needed.

2026 investigations to begin this spring/summer includes:

- ~90 test pits and ~15 drill holes.
  - Work is expected to last ~three months.
  - Expect single lane alternating traffic at investigation sites while work is in progress.
  - Once work is complete, sites will be remediated.

This work is being done in collaboration with the Ministry of Forests.



# Project access routes: Gun Lake Airstrip

The Gun Lake airstrip option moves forward into preliminary design.

## Key rationale to continue work on this option:

- Supports safety on Road 40 by reducing project traffic.
- Improves project schedule reliability by providing another access route.

## Assumptions and considerations:

- The use of 37 passenger aircraft and approximately 3-4 round-trip flights per week, split over 2 days (subject to change as project plans progress).
- The major contractor will be engaged as they will support with hiring the workforce for the project.

## Proposed project related airstrip improvements include:

- Runway lengthening (from 780m to 1370m – 75%) and widening (18m to 30m)
- Drainage enhancements
- Wildlife mitigation (fencing)
- Facilities to support workers arriving and departing
- Access road re-alignments to support expansion



# Project access routes: Gun Lake Airstrip



*Gun Lake Airstrip*

## Summer 2026 field investigations

- Investigations to learn more about subsurface conditions will include:
  - Up to three drill holes.
  - Sites will be remediated once work is complete.

## Early timeline estimate

- 2026: Preliminary design
- 2027: Detailed design
- 2029: Construction anticipated to begin
- 2030: Targeted in-service date





# Work camp planning



# La Joie Dam Improvement Project: Access and accommodation feasibility studies



# Work camp planning: Hurley site identified as preferred option

No further work will take place at the Penrose site

## Key rationale:

- The Hurley site option best meets the criteria that has been developed and refined through conceptual and feasibility studies.
  - This included consultation with First Nations and engagement with key stakeholders and residents.

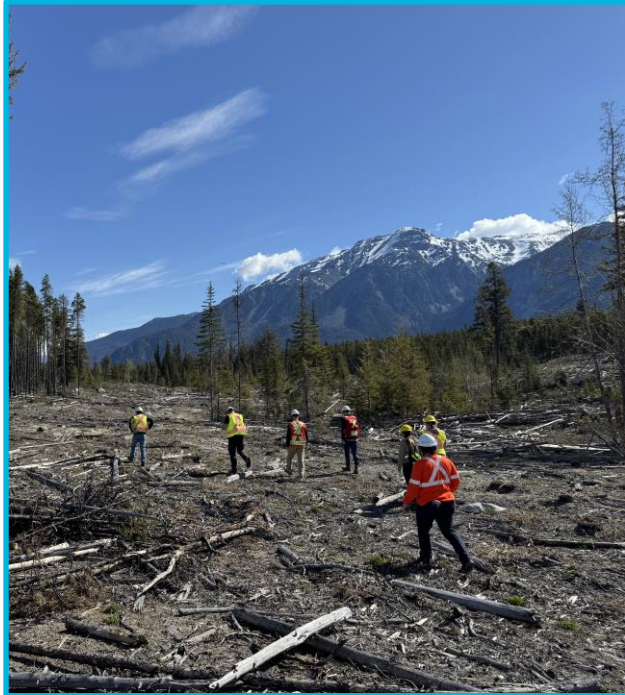
**Note:** As part of our procurement process when selecting a work camp operator, the intent is to remain open to bidders proposing alternative sites, provided they meet or exceed the standards of the preferred location.



*Crews at the Hurley work camp site option (May 2025)*



# Work camp planning: Hurley site, next steps



Crews at the Hurley work camp site option (May 2025)

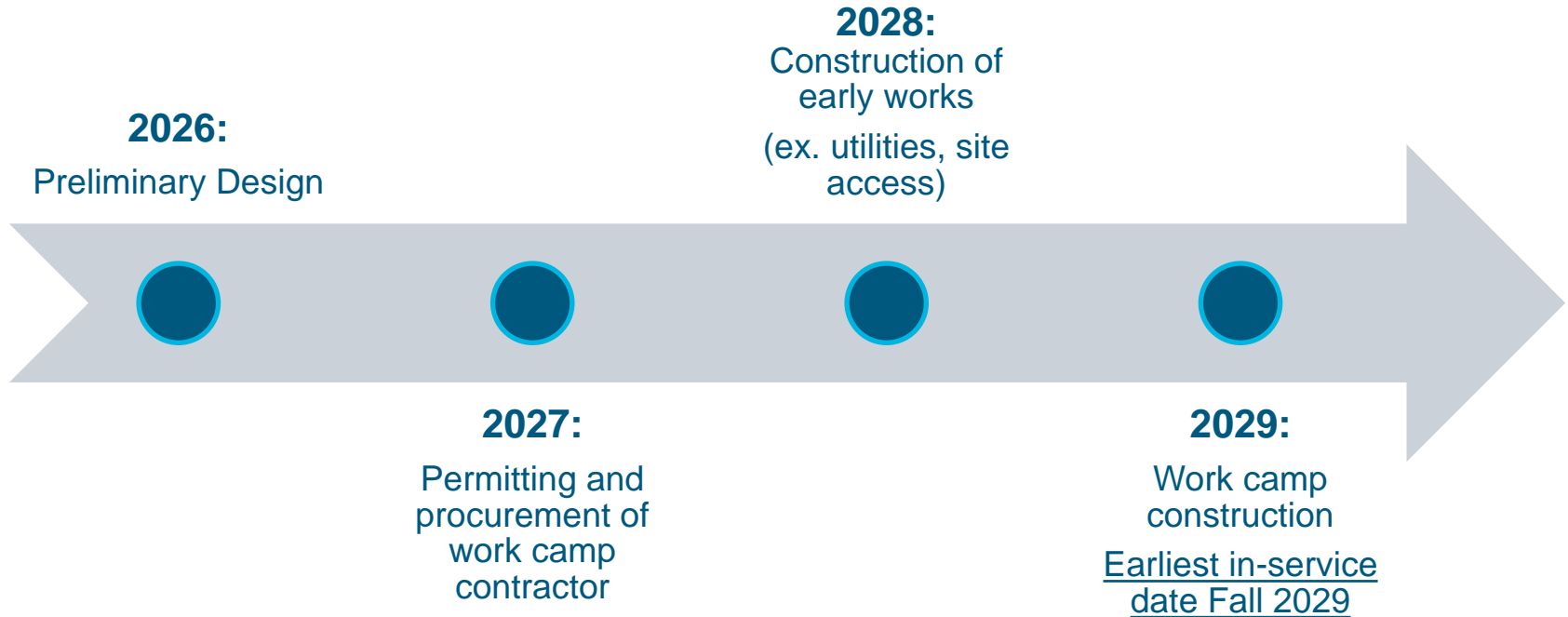
## Preliminary design for the work camp begins

### Key examples of work to be done in 2026:

- Remediation of the Penrose well drilling site.
- Explore water source options for the camp.
- Site investigations to support work camp access road improvements. This includes the Hurley FSR from Gold Bridge to the turnoff to Gwyneth Lake Provincial Park.
- Planning for power, septic and other site services.
- Further environmental and heritage studies.
- Prepare procurement process for work camp contractor.
- Continue consultation with First Nations and engagement with key stakeholders and residents.



# Work camp planning: Timeline estimate



An aerial photograph of a large concrete dam with a curved crest. The reservoir behind the dam is partially frozen with light blue ice. A drilling rig is positioned in the water near the dam's base. The surrounding landscape is a dense forest of evergreen trees with patches of snow on the ground.

# Spring 2026 dam drilling program

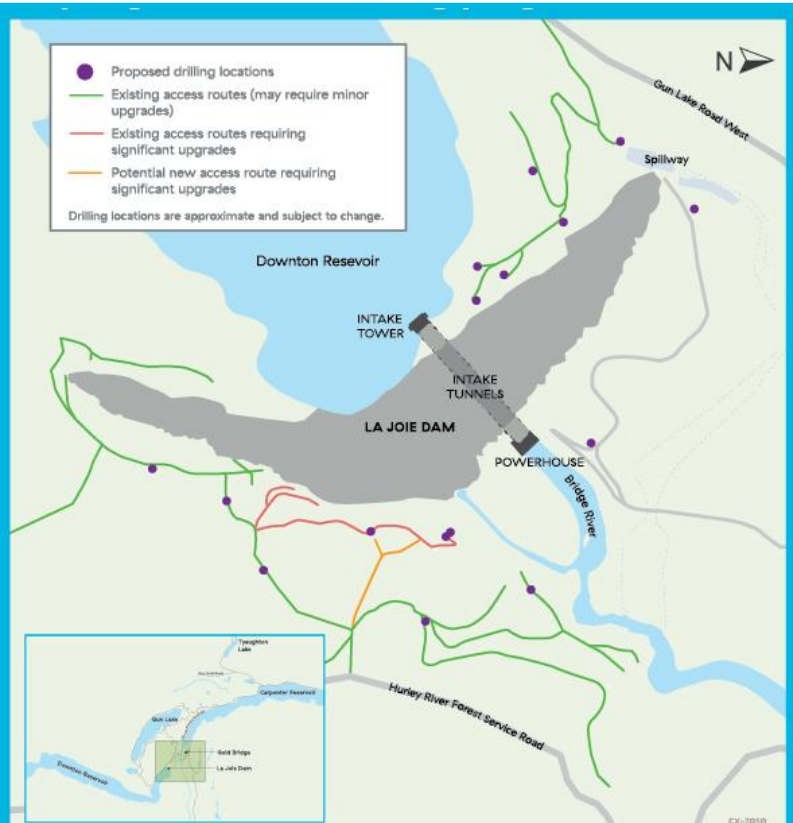


# Spring 2026 dam drilling program

We're conducting further geotechnical studies at the dam, to get a better sense of what the current conditions are below the surface in and around the facility.

Work is expected to be complete by July and includes:

- Improving access routes for crews and equipment, including some vegetation removal.
  - Pre-existing access routes are being used where possible to minimize impacts.
- Drilling activities which will take place during daylight hours.
- Drone surveys to assess the condition of the dam (expected to begin in May)
- Environmental and archeological studies were completed ahead of time and monitoring will occur during construction as required.



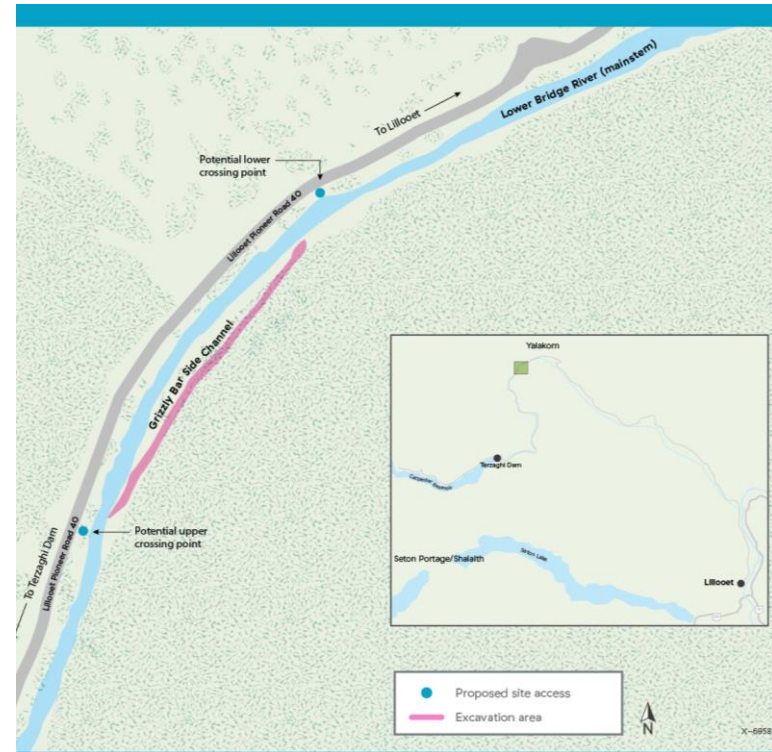
# Grizzly Bar Side Channel fish habitat restoration

We're restoring fish habitat in the Bridge River System by enhancing Grizzly Bar Side Channel.

This work will help prevent fish stranding and support healthy fish populations.

- Crews are excavating the side channel to improve connectivity to the main stem of the Lower Bridge River.
- This work offsets impacts from the spring 2022 Downton Reservoir drawdown.
- Construction started in early March and is expected to last ~3-4 weeks.
- **Learn more on our website:** [www.bchydro.com/lajoie](http://www.bchydro.com/lajoie)

This work is being done in consultation with regulators and in partnership with St'át'imc Nation.





*Grizzly Bar Side Channel before construction began*



*Grizzly Bar Side Channel during construction (March 2026)*



# How to connect



BC Hydro open house, Gold Bridge Community Club (October 2025)

For project information and questions:

-  [projects@bchydro.com](mailto:projects@bchydro.com)
-  1-866-647-3334
-  [www.bchydro.com/lajoie](http://www.bchydro.com/lajoie)
  - Subscribe for project updates



# Thank you for joining us!

## Questions and comments

Please:

- Type your comment or question in the chat box.
- Use the 'raise hand' function at the top of the screen to speak.
- Keep your microphone muted except when asking your question.





**BC Hydro**

Power smart