

October 10, 2017

Dear Panel Members of the BC Utilities Commission:

Site C Inquiry Hearings

Cancelling Site C will result in an initial loss of jobs as well as costs to date and perhaps closing costs, but those jobs and costs will be recompensed over the years through the sustainable economic returns from the area's ecosystems and farmland, and through sounder investments of Site C funds into clean technology and infrastructure.

BC receives as much as \$8.6 billion a year from farmland and environmental benefits (safe water sources, flood control, recreation, wildlife activities) in the Peace watershed (David Suzuki Foundation). This dam will alter or flood almost 25 000 acres of forest, permanently removing a carbon sink that will likely soon be a valuable economic asset for greenhouse gas credits.

Site C will affect over 31 000 acres of farmland. Planted in potatoes, for example, 31 000 acres would yield roughly \$300 million (2006 BC Agriculture figures) in sustainable annual income, much of it spent locally. Stack the 165 permanent Site C jobs against the enormous economic losses from the destroyed natural landscapes, including all the local jobs to be lost in food production, transport, processing, etc. Cancelling Site C will maintain all these permanent local jobs and economic benefits, which will become more valuable as the decades pass.

Juxtaposed against the jobs to be lost to Site C is the drain of the dam's cost of billions of dollars that should be spent instead on Just Transition to tens of thousands of skilled jobs all over BC in the clean energy market including:

- conserving major amounts of power by retrofitting millions of buildings in BC and building new energy-efficient low and middle income housing;
- building safer public health infrastructures and energy-efficient transportation including rapid transit;
- providing co-op programs, grants and tax credits for research and start-up clean energy technology companies, making BC a real competitor in that worldwide projected market of \$790 billion (Clean Energy Canada).

Site C is projected to cost as much as \$15 billion (Energy Research and Social Science). Shortly after the approval of Site C, two wind farm corporations withdrew their proposals and left BC, taking their jobs with them. The geothermal industry could supply the same power for \$3.3 billion with 1870 permanent jobs to the 165 from Site C, and far fewer greenhouse gas emissions. Clearly, innovation can produce more jobs with far less costs and environmental disruption.

The steadily growing BC Tourism industry made \$14.6 billion in 2014 and provided 128 000 jobs. The proposed Okanagan National Park would create over 700 jobs with annual benefits of \$35 million in labour income, \$50 million in sustainable GDP and \$4 million in tax revenues (Vancouver Sun May 20, 2014 – Kelowna and South Okanagan Chambers of Commerce, Penticton Band and others).

Some of the Site C money would provide a much better return invested in tourism infrastructure that would create more jobs all over the province, including northern and rural areas, both in building or improving the infrastructure, and from the resulting increase in tourism - better ferry and transit service, restoring the Vancouver Island Railway, creating cycling, horse-riding and walking trails all over the province, support for historic areas, and improvements to our bedraggled parks and campgrounds.

Had Christy Clark submitted Site C to the full scrutiny of the Utilities Commission, a credible environmental assessment and a rigorous public and scientific review, we would not have already incurred the cost of both the work that has been done and the legal fees to obstruct the indigenous people and farmers fighting for their heritage. In refusing to follow those procedures of government that are a precept of our democracy, Clark imposed her dictatorial and short-sighted vision of make-work megaprojects that destroy our sustainable industries for a rush of short-term jobs that trickle away, leaving a debt that British Columbians will not pay off until the close of this century.

But we don't have to continue down that reckless path. We can stop, backtrack, repair and heal, and choose instead a better vision for a 21st century prosperous economy based on the immense value of the natural world. All over the North American continent, people are removing dams to reclaim the benefits of natural river flows. And so I ask you to delete Site C not once, not twice, but to triple-delete Site C.

Thank you.



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