

Sent: February 25, 2021 8:17 PM
To: Commission, Secretary
Subject: Letter of Comment - Nelson Hydro COSA and RDA - Carmela Clare
Attachments: LettertoBCUC.docx

Date Submitted: February 25, 2021

Proceeding name: Nelson Hydro COSA and RDA

Are you currently registered as an intervener or interested party: Yes, Interested Party

Name: Carmela Clare

City: Procter

Province: British Columbia

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone number: [REDACTED]

Comment:

I am a resident of Procter, BC, and a customer of Nelson Hydro. I am strongly opposed to the rate increase Nelson Hydro is proposing for its rural residents.

Has Attachment:

True

Letter to the BC Utilities Commission
About the Proposed Nelson Hydro Increase

After retiring from my clerical job ten years ago, I moved from the Lower Mainland to Procter. I live in an older mobile home on a lot near the bakery. I am glad I have a wood stove because windstorms and lightning strikes are creating longer and more frequent blackouts here. This recent one of three days was my longest. I used candles for light and was able to cook food and heat water on the woodstove.

When the power came back on, I checked my freezer. Everything had melted and refrozen. I threw it all out and don't use the freezer anymore. Maybe my hydro bill will be less now than the \$139/mo. I calculated (by adding my last six bi-monthly bills together and dividing by 12).

After reading the Nelson Hydro mailouts announcing more rate increases, I got the impression it was my fault for their needing more money-- that because of me and other rural residents there were huge cleanup bills to be paid. I decided to do some research.

I found out that Nelson Hydro is owned by the City of Nelson and is run by management hired by Nelson City Council. The catchment area extends from near Bonnington Falls out to Coffee Creek. Nelson Hydro extended their lines to Procter about a hundred years ago. People in my neighbourhood have put a lot of money into Nelson Hydro's coffers.

Where did that money go? I found out a lot of Nelson Hydro's profits was used to finance City of Nelson amenities like the Civic Centre and the Solar Garden.

I want to see Nelson Hydro's books and find out exactly how their money is being spent and why they need so much more. I also want to see proof that

cleanup and line maintenance in rural areas really is more expensive than in Nelson itself.

I wonder just how much line maintenance has ever been done out here. There are some mighty rickety poles around, and a good clearing along lines only began a few years back as far as I can tell. I rarely see Nelson Hydro vehicles out here.

Nelson Hydro claims to be "honoured to serve our rural customers". I think rather that they have been happy to sell us power all the years when times were good and did very little serving in return for what we paid them. And now that climate change is causing more storms they are trying to make us scapegoats for their own unpreparedness. Hitting rural customers with a huge rate increase is a dishonourable and insulting ploy.

The Bonnington dam is small in comparison with the nearby Fortis dams. Nelson Hydro now buys about half its power from Fortis, re-selling it to us as well as power from Bonnington. Let's see the books! How much are they paying for Fortis power? How much are they charging us? Who are these people making the decisions? What are they being paid? What will their salary increases be for the next 3 years?

I strongly oppose this rate increase for rural residents. Disclosure of Nelson Hydro's books is crucial, A more respectful, collaborative approach to their customers would be helpful too. Maybe contracting some "rural" people to maintain lines could cut costs. One of my children suggested burying lines. If things don't improve, we can always try negotiating with Fortis directly for a better deal without a middleman.

Population growth is occurring all over the Nelson Hydro service area. More residents means greater power needs. We are all in this together. I appreciate the opportunity to express my opinion and hope a fair resolution is achieved through honesty and good will. Any mistakes I have

written are due to my own ignorance, and hope they have caused no offense.

Sincerely,

Carmela Mary Clare
Procter, BC
February 25, 2021,