

Arguments for Site C dam to continue as planned

As a concerned mother and citizen/taxpayer of BC, I want to tell you about the personal impact of this decision regarding the Site C dam. There are four points that I would like to bring to your attention:

1. Lesson about integrity and honesty. We as parents, try to teach our children to act with integrity and to honor our commitments. Yes should mean yes and no should mean no. As government, you must be an example to the people. Just because there is a change in governance does not excuse you from existing commitments. Those commitments are legally binding to the BC government, regardless of who that was/is in office. When these contracts are drafted and agreed upon, they are accepted as legally binding and they set out terms of reference on which both sides must abide by in order to keep peace and honor promises. It's called integrity. Negating on these contracts sends a bad message that government can not be trusted and is unwilling to keep commitments. If the government chooses to cancel the site C dam project, they are sending a message that they can not be trusted. At the highest level, they would be breaking the contract that was put in place between the BC government and companies and they in turn will be breaking contracts between companies and workers. Not only will this decision hurt this deal but future deals as well. Which company will work with a government that sends out a message of walking away from their commitments? It is called dishonesty and to some extent fraud. It will bring distrust and instability to our province and companies will not choose to do business here in BC. Our government's hand shake would be worthless. Case in point the LNG projects. This legacy of distrust will takes years to undo, if ever.

2. Lesson about planning and foresight. We try to teach our children to be mindful about the environment and not to be wasteful. This involves resource management. We know we need more energy because our population is growing, our cities are growing. Even though the Deloitte papers say consumption has flat lined, it is only because of efficiencies in lighting that this is happening and our conservation efforts. Another big factor is due to the change in industry, specifically loss of big mills, big mining operations, and large manufacturing jobs disappearing from here to other provinces and countries. Efficiencies and conservation will level off and then what? You will see the usage increase due to population increases and our reliance on electrical things come to unprecedented fullness.

From a world perspective, electricity consumption has increased. Look around you, see how dependent we are on electricity and how lit up our world is. One only needs to see our planet from space to appreciate the velocity of electricity usage to know how dependent we are on electricity. A decade ago, we did not have high rises in Vancouver that reached beyond 50 floors. Now, every building is going beyond that. It takes electricity to drive elevators, move escalators, keep signs on, light up the hallways and stairways, open/close garage doors, light up the underground parking, open/close front doors and air vents, operate air conditioners or heaters, etc. There are computers on every desk, a cell phone on each person, and cars that plug into the electrical grid. We have

laptops, use treadmills, binge watch Netflix, use kettles, program coffeemakers, use electric shaver, toothbrush, have 24/7 monitoring to keep us secure, monitor babies with baby cams. How much electricity do we need to keep the lights on 24/7, keep traffic lights on, run schools and hospitals, keep factories running, keep people working, run computers and keep cell phones charged? Let's unplug it and find out. The last windstorm knocked out electricity for 5 days, it was unbearable.

The move from gasoline to electric cars will only compound the need for more electricity. We are talking about millions of cars potentially. Let's face it, electricity is essential for today's lifestyle and we will need more of it as we move into the next decade and likely next century. There is no historic data that will predict our course into the future because it is going to be very different. You can quote statistics all you want because we know for a fact that you can interpret it anyway you want. At some point supply will not keep up with demand. The current dams will not last into the next decades. To be forward thinkers, government must plan for the future and not bury their head in the sand (historic rhetoric and plain old denial) nor have their head in the clouds (special interest groups or hypocritical thinking). The government and you are tasked to look with the bigger perspective and govern in a fiscally responsible way. It takes decades to build a dam from planning to completion stage. Same is true for any large scale project. We have the technology, the money and the man power NOW to make Site C dam a reality and it would be at the lowest cost now compared to future should this be stalled or found to be necessary 10 years from now. Dams have allowed us to prosper, to control water, and to produce much needed power that allowed us to have industry and to prosper. Looking ahead is what government is asked to do with some regard for history indeed but not allow history to keep us in the dark ages. Dams do come at a cost but what doesn't. In essence it's clean and it is renewable and it can save lives. The engineers know what they are doing.

Solar and wind is coming but it is not reliable and can flick off at any time and power would fluctuate with seasons and weather. How angry do you get when you get a bad connection with your devices? Does it not frustrate you to no end? Imagine putting your entire province on such technology? For now, when I flick on the switch, electricity flows!!! Thank goodness for those visionaries of the past. It was due to the brave people from the past who had a vision for the future to allow us to have the luxuries of today. Brave because like you, they faced opposition of their day, naysayers who have nothing better to do then to disagree for their own gain/rhetoric, without regard for the populace at large. Brave because they were able to see into the future and make the tough decisions that had to be made. Now it is our turn! The previous government had the foresight and was willing to get the job done. Site C will meet BC's needs for decades and maybe centuries to come. It might even earn BC taxpayers some extra income if we are wise stewards about it. So let's get this project going and stop stalling. While this is being debated, the resulting delays and cost over-runs will pile up and costs us taxpayers and ratepayers much more. We can not afford to stall this.

Solar and alternate energy resources will take decades to master, there's still too many variables to make it 100% reliable as sole sources of energy. It will be too late if we are

to wait for these. There are pros and cons with solar and wind energy as well, we just haven't seen the ramifications of them until time tells (as it becomes more evident with use). Are you willing to give up land for solar panels or have birds killed by wind turbines? How do you dispose of solar cells when they need replacing, how often do they need replacing, how toxic are the manufacturing practices of making them and disposing them? How safe are wind turbines in a hurricane or wind storm? How safe are solar panels in a hurricane or wind storm? How many acres of land will you use to put solar or turbines on? If you use land up, you can't farm on it either. You can't build houses or live on it. Will animals be allowed to use the same land or will they be closed off? Will their migrant paths be interrupted thereby putting them on the endangered list? I've not done research on any of this but would appreciate you asking these questions before shutting down Site C. The grass always looks greener from the other side. Do you want electricity rationed like in other countries or costs go through the roof while we wait to figure all this out?

With regards to the farmlands in the Peace region, they are only productive for 6 months of the year. The rest of the year it is frozen. By food and land usage, our lands here in the Fraser delta are far more fertile and should be conserved yet government allows them to come out of ALR for houses. A dam is far more useful for the BC population than houses.

3. Lesson on being fiscally responsible. Government should take a lesson from private enterprise or a simple household. It has to learn to reduce waste and duplication. It can not afford to spend, spend and spend or waste, waste and more waste and keep coming to the tax payers to pick up the pieces. Cancelling the Site C dam is a waste, a big atrocity perpetrated on BC citizens. The billions of dollars that have been spent or is needed to compensate for the cancelled contracts will only come back to bite the people. BC Hydro will be passing the losses to the consumers which are us, the same taxpayers, all for nothing. Don't kid yourselves. We will be left holding the bag. Peter has to be paid. And it will be for nothing...a huge waste. It is being irresponsible. As a tax payer I take offense. We all work 5 days or more per week to put a roof over my family's heads, food on the table, and pay taxes for schools, hospitals, social services, disability agencies etc etc etc. We all try to make my dollars stretch, so like you, I do not appreciate government wasting money and always coming back for more each year. At some point, we as taxpayers have to say enough is enough!!!! According to the last news reports, you have heard that we are making more money but does it feel like it or does our bank account agree? NO!!! Do you know why? It's because government is taking more than half of it before we see it and everything is being taxed to death. Wonder why no one is feeling richer making more money, because it's all smoke and mirrors, before taxes and after taxes, at the end of the day, they are actually bringing home less money than 10 years ago and everything including electricity is going up including government waste. It is a sad state.

4. Lesson on being self-sufficient or at least being a productive member of society. Our 25 yr old daughter went up to Dawson Creek with her boyfriend to find work and a better life. It's been tough here in the lower mainland due to the high cost of housing so

they made a decision to go where there were good paying jobs. Since the oil price crash, site C dam was the one thing that was sustaining the economy for them and others like them. If the project is shelved as result of your review and the NDP-Green coalition, she and thousands of young people like her will be out of a job and on unemployment and scrambling back down to the lower mainland. This will put many young people out of work, in an area that used to enjoy prosperity. It would be a huge blow to their efforts and will set many back financially and emotionally. They will distrust government. Can you blame them? By cancelling Site C, government is sending out a clear message that they prefer them on EI or social assistance or disability or hospitalized due to mental breakdown or be off on stress and illness due to loss of jobs and homes. Any forward thinking government would be very mindful about sending such a message. It would be irresponsible and alienating, not to mention damaging all around. Please allow the young ones in FSJ and Dawson Creek to continue to go to work. Say yes to Site C.

Thank you for accepting my submission for review. Appreciate having the means (and the electricity) to do so.

Susan Graves

