As a British Columbia taxpayer who purchases electrical power, I attended the Site C hearing in Kelowna on September 25 and listened with great interest to all the participants. I am by no means an expert in the economic, historical, or political factors that were introduced, and I was impressed by the arguments for and against the project. However, these are the points that matter most to me:

• Another dam on the Peace River would further diminish the hunting and fishing lands currently used by the First Nations in the region. Not only would this affect the people who live there; it would drastically change the ecology of the area by altering the balance of fish and wildlife.

• Though the several thousand hectares affected by flooding may seem small by some standards, another dam would submerge valuable farmland and hamper the food security of northern BC.

• The targets for dam construction are predicated on unknown future demand. If the aim of the dam is to meet the future needs of an increased population, less harm can be done by paying more attention to the reduction of electrical demand. This can be done in a number of ways. One of the most effective is to increase hydro rates for users of higher amounts of electricity. If people can be educated or coerced to reduce hydro usage, there might never be enough of a demand to justify the dam. And even if this turns out not to be the case, delaying construction could give enough time to explore alternatives to current hydro generation.

Thank you for giving citizens the opportunity to express themselves on this very important issue.
Presenting to the B.C. Utilities Commission (BCUC): Site C Inquiry

1. Who can speak? (Anyone!)
   - The purpose of the Public Sessions is to gather input from the general public.
   - There will be community input sessions at 9 locations around the province for the public to provide their feedback to the Panel.
   - Attendees are encouraged to pre-register as space is limited at each venue.
   - The opportunity to present is not guaranteed as it depends on the number of speakers; however, in order to facilitate as many presentations as possible, the panel will limit speakers to a maximum of 5 minutes.

2. What can I say? Anything you want - here are the BCUC guidelines:
   - Each speaker should state their name, where they are from, and the organization they represent, if applicable.
   - There is no oath required.
   - Each speaker will have a maximum of 5 minutes to speak. Speakers will be warned and may be cut off if their comments contain profanity, disclose confidential or private information, or if they exceed the maximum 5-minute time limit.
   - There is no cross-examination of speakers although panel members may ask questions or request clarifications. The inquiry panel will not answer questions from speakers.

3. What will the BCUC be listening for? These are the questions the BCUC is considering:
   - whether the project is on time and within budget;
   - the cost to ratepayers of suspending the project;
   - the cost to ratepayers of terminating the project;
   - what portfolio of generating projects and demand-side management initiatives could provide similar benefits; and
   - what are expected peak capacity demand and energy demand.

For more information on the process, visit http://www.sitecinquiry.com/
http://sierraclub.bc.ca/tell-bcuc-cant-afford-site-c/
PLAY LIST OF 10 KEY POINTS
(select & expand as needed for your context and audience: each point has a fact sheet that follows up with more details – see next pages)

1. We don’t need this energy.

2. The Site C dam costs too much. It's up to BC Hydro to prove that this is the best deal for ratepayers.

3. This dam is neither clean nor green.

4. It’s not too late to stop the dam. We need to cut our losses while we can. Don’t fall into the sunk costs fallacy.

5. The Peace is the place to “Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC” (from the NDP Platform).

6. Invest in fair wage construction jobs, public infrastructure and public services in the Peace and throughout BC.

7. Where feasible, re-purpose Site C infrastructure in consultation with the impacted Treaty 8 people, both Indigenous and settler parties who have a responsibility to honour the treaty.

8. Reconciliation among the people leads to reconciliation with the land.

9. Nature provides the most viable future for the Peace and for BC.

10. The world needs the Peace.
1. We don’t need this energy.

Demand for electric power in BC has flat-lined for the past 10 years.
- Eoin Finn: http://commonground.ca/site-c-and-ing-a-tenuous-relationship/

BC Hydro’s conservation programs (also called demand-side management) have been effective, and should be continued or expanded. Instead Hydro has been politically interfered with so as to increase waste by cutting its conservation goals.
- https://thetyee.ca/News/2016/02/24/Power-Smart-Conservation-Goals/

See the Site C Joint Review Panel Chair, Harry Swain’s comments in https://www.desmog.ca/2016/06/20/no-need-site-c-review-panel-chair-speaks-out-against-dam-new-video
2. The Site C dam costs too much. It's up to BC Hydro to prove that this is the best deal for ratepayers.

From [http://peacevalley.ca/cost](http://peacevalley.ca/cost):

BC Hydro currently estimates that Site C Dam will cost $8.8 billion and "projects losing $800 million in the first 4 years of operation." (Report of the Joint Review Panel, Site C Clean Energy Project, BC Hydro, May 1, 2014)

BC Hydro has already **confirmed rate increases** between 2014-2018 of 28%. It is anticipated that cumulatively, rate increases over the next 10 years will be about 45% without Site C. BC Hydro intends to increase rates even further to recover the costs of Site C.

**Site C: BC's next White Elephant? The energy from Site C is not needed.**

After 28 days of hearings and review of 28,000 pages of documentation, the Joint Review Panel **concluded** that BC Hydro has failed to prove that we need Site C. Further, they emphasized that because there are significant adverse effects, justification for the project must rest on an unambiguous need for the power.

**Alternative sources of power would be more cost effective.**

“Site C is now much more expensive than an alternative consisting primarily of wind power, pumped storage, and energy conservation.”

Energy expert Philip Raphals states that even if BC Hydro's greatest energy predictions are realized, Site C is still more expensive than a combined range of alternatives.

The Joint Review Panel also **urged BC Hydro** to consider using the **tremendous geothermal potential in BC** as an alternative to Site C. BC Hydro has confirmed that over 700Mw of geothermal power exists in the province, about two-thirds of the 1,100Mw capacity of Site C.

**BC businesses are very concerned about how Site C will affect their bottom line.**

The Association of Major Power Customers of BC **has stated** that Site C is not the right project now; citing additional concerns regarding recent rate increases and the accuracy of BC Hydro's energy forecasts. "The huge cost [of Site C] will rob the province of valuable resources that could be used to deliver other needed government services as well as burden the BC economy with debt and high electric power rates that will sap our competitiveness." - Dan Potts, former executive director of the Association of Major Power customers of BC

The BC Chamber of Commerce states that with regard to Site C, "... the payoff for the province and its taxpaying citizens won't justify the huge investment required." (Business Vancouver, editorial, June 3-9, 2014)

In December, 2014, after the BC government announced that they intend to proceed with Site C, Business Vancouver **published an editorial** citing their concern that the provincial government has left a multi-billion dollar white elephant under the tree for British Columbians.
3. This dam is neither clean nor green.

California won’t buy this dirty power. “Hydro projects bigger than 30 megawatts (MW) do not even qualify as renewable energy under California’s current renewable portfolio standard (RPS) requirement. And while solar and wind generation surge, even small hydro is expected to account for less than 0.5 percent of the state’s renewable, online capacity by the end of 2016. To California, Site C is a dinosaur—and anything but green.”

- Christopher Pollon, The Peace in Peril, page 84.

BC should study climate change models before making any decision to build a mega dam.
- Rebecca Lawton

Previous dams on the Peace have already inflicted too much devastation on Indigenous people and their homelands:
Amazay: A Film About Water, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pypoI54tLxg

Previous dams have traumatized downstream Dene people, who cannot afford any more damage:
Death of a Delta - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6bezgkuK5C8

BC Hydro’s so-called apology for the destructive impacts of the WAC Bennett dam is meaningless unless it changes its actions on the Peace River:
4. It’s not too late to stop the dam. We need to cut our losses while we can. Don’t fall into the sunk costs fallacy.

If multinational corporations like Petronas can walk away from a boondoggle, so can BC taxpayers.

From https://keepingthepeace.wordpress.com/site-c-info/why-site-c-just-doesnt-make-sense/:

Your hydro bills will increase 28% between 2014 and 2018 and it is projected they will increase approximately 45% before Site C is completed. BC Hydro will no recoup the costs of the $8.9 billion dam until it is operational, so rates will increase again at that time. Imagine how your rates will be affected by a project that is conservatively estimated at $8.9 billion.


Given the absent export market, continuing Site C will lead to:

• A huge increase in borrowing and costs;
• A severely damaged B.C. Hydro and B.C. credit rating;
• Huge increases in B.C. Hydro rates for consumers, way beyond the 80 per cent imposed on consumers the last 10 years;
• The flooding of 5,000 hectares of prime agricultural land; and
• 10,000 hectares of aboriginal hunting, fishing and gathering lands will be affected.

The immense value of large natural ecosystems needs to be more accurately factored into our understanding of BC’s economic strengths. The David Suzuki Foundation has done a study to articulate the value of natural capital in the Peace region (online at http://www.davidsuzuki.org/publications/DSF_Peace_natcap_web_July_29%20copy.pdf).

Based on this study, Damien Gillis asserts that “Keeping the Peace Valley’s farmland and ecosystems intact would be worth $7.9 billion to $8.6 billion a year” in perpetuity.

- http://commonsensecanadian.ca/peace-valley-farmland-ecosystems-worth-8-billion-year-study/
5. The Peace is the place to “Grow BC, Feed BC, Buy BC” (from the NDP Platform)

Northern food security matters more than ever in a time of accelerating climate change. Now is the time to revitalize the Agricultural Land Commission and the Agricultural Land Reserve.

Where possible, remove BC Hydro’s flood reserve that has reduced agricultural capacity for decades. Support the young farmers in the Peace to access land and expand local food production. Increase the use of BC-grown and processed foods in hospitals, schools and other public facilities. Bring back an enhanced Buy BC marketing program to help local producers market their products and expand market access in the rest of Canada and abroad (from the Minister for Agriculture’s mandate letter).

From https://keepingthepeace.wordpress.com/site-c-info/why-site-c-just-doesnt-make-sense/

the Peace River Valley has a unique, warm microclimate with the only Class 1 soil north of Quesnel. At a time when traditional food supply land in California (which Canadians significantly rely upon) is decreasing due to drought, it is absurd to flood vast amounts of prime agricultural land. At a time when the 100 mile diet is emphasized, it just doesn’t make sense to dramatically reduce the capacity for the North to grow its own produce. It would mean sacrificing over 7,000 acres of prime agricultural land, class 1 and 2. Considering that only 1.5% of BC’s landmass is class 1 and 2 soils, BC cannot afford this.

From http://peacevalley.ca/ - Site C dam would result in the largest withdrawal from the agricultural land reserve in BC’s history.

Site C would flood 83km of the Peace River, widening it by up to 3 times, as well as 10km of the Moberly and 14km of the Halfway Rivers. Over 57,000 acres of agricultural and forested land would be impacted by Site C, including 31,528 acres of Class 1-7 agricultural land and over 17,000 acres of forested land.

Where is BC going to source fruits and vegetables as traditional food producing lands are being depleted by the effects of global warming?

Droughts in the US are seriously impacting the production of traditional food producing lands, food that British Columbians depend on.
"As world prices for food escalate in response to inevitable pressure, the land in the Peace River Valley is our food security Plan B.... The land to be flooded by Site C is capable of providing a sustainably produced supply of fresh fruits and vegetables to over a million people!"
- Wendy Holm, professional agrologist with over 40 years' experience in agricultural economics and public policy in Canada and BC

The Peace River Valley provides a unique microclimate where crops one wouldn't expect to grow this far north actually thrive, including corn, field tomatoes, cantaloupe and watermelon.
"The Peace River Valley has extraordinarily high value for agriculture and it's my opinion that the public interest is better served by allowing it to continue to sustain citizens through agricultural production rather than destroying it for power production."
- Eveline Wolterson, soil scientist and physical chemist with 40 years’ experience researching and consulting on agriculture

BC Hydro states that Site C will have a 100-year life; the agricultural land in the Peace River Valley will support life in perpetuity.

There are many energy alternatives, but there are no alternatives to food producing land.
6. Invest in fair wage construction jobs, public infrastructure and public services in the Peace and throughout BC.

- Many workers left their home communities to go work at Site C simply because they were following the jobs. Instead of investing public money at over $400,000 per job to create work at Site C, invest that money in fair-wage construction jobs building much-needed public infrastructure projects throughout BC, such as hospitals, schools, affordable housing, public transit, water treatment plants. And, if these projects are done properly, there will be significantly more apprenticeships, many of which can draw in women and Indigenous people to the trades.

- Replacing the Taylor bridge is an urgent requirement for the North. The Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) would have a preliminary plan of what type of structure and that could be fast tracked to re-assign jobs from dam to bridge.

- Infrastructure jobs: federal money for hospitals, Taylor Bridge, schools, mental health centre, First Nations education, area highways…Crews producing armour type rock products at Wuthrich and West Pine quarries could carry on, as having a stockpile of that material for future road and bridge projects is not harmful. Volumes to be determined by MOTI project inventories. Much of the road infrastructure in the North is in poor condition and needs upgrading to provincial standard.

- Fort St. John has a shortage of people to deliver family care, mental health services, addiction counselling, child care, etc. There is a large gender gap in wages up north that needs addressing through a diversified employment plan.

- Crews are producing aggregate on site that can be used for future paving whether for new construction projects or road re-surfacing.

- “To the critics who say cancelling the project will cost jobs, there are many other sustainable, fair-wage, construction-job opportunities in B.C., and I include the resource sector — projects for new mines, restoring pine-beetle-ravaged forests, new paralam construction plants, and, yes, even a number of viable LNG projects.” — Mike Harcourt, former premier of BC

7. Where feasible, re-purpose Site C infrastructure in consultation with the impacted Treaty 8 people, both Indigenous and settler parties who have a responsibility to honour the treaty.

- A vision for the valley is emerging from cooperation between the Treaty 8 Tribal Association, the Peace Valley Landowner Association, the Peace Valley Environment Association and Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, who together presented this vision to the Joint Review Panel in 2014.

- BC Hydro has caused uncertainty in the valley through their passive land acquisition program, but this land could be returned to the people of Treaty 8. A staged removal of the flood reserve in conjunction with a comprehensive land use plan offers a sustainable future for the Peace.

- An intensive market garden/row crop experimental/demonstration station could showcase what the Peace River Valley can grow, and strengthen local and northern food security.

- The BC NDP’s platform includes building “new campsites to catch up with current demand.” A dam site turned into a riverside cultural campsite, among other things, could be a strong draw for people in BC as well as an international tourist attraction.
8. Reconciliation among the people leads to reconciliation with the land.

Caleb Behn: http://www.cbc.ca/radio/thecurrent/the-current-for-august-24-2016-1.3733551/site-c-dam-project-betrays-trudeau-s-commitment-to-first-nations-say-critics-1.3733566

Helen Knott: https://www.amnesty.ca/blog/honouring-intent-treaties

The NDP state they “will make reconciliation with First Nations a priority, creating certainty and opportunity for First Nations and for our economy as a whole.”

Honouring Treaty 8 and respecting the Moberly River and Prophet River First Nations is key to both reconciliation and certainty. Meaningful action involves the following:

Adopt and implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, wherein Article 25 states,

Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and strengthen their distinctive spiritual relationship with their traditionally owned or otherwise occupied and used lands, territories, waters and coastal seas and other resources and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations in this regard.

And Article 29 of UNDRIP states:

Indigenous peoples have the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of their lands or territories and resources. States shall establish and implement assistance programmes for indigenous peoples for such conservation and protection, without discrimination.

The West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations should be able to maintain their distinctive spiritual relationship with the Peace River Valley and to uphold their responsibilities to future generations. They have the right to conserve and protect the environment without having to undergo lengthy, expensive legal battles against unjust colonial governments with deep pockets.

Reconciliation also addresses the gendered impact of resource development on women, in particular the safety and wellness of Indigenous women and girls in northeast BC: http://www.amnesty.ca/outofsight
9. Nature provides the most viable future for the Peace and for BC.

- Slope stabilization and environmental remediation is needed on site. While some of this can be done by repurposed workers, much of it can also be achieved at low cost by letting nature reclaim the site, as it is already doing with trees that were clear cut too early.

- An uptick in the amount of natural gas development and infrastructure work is occurring. Many workers from the project will not look far to find employment, and many locals have already gone back to their jobs in natural gas work, which for the most part are higher paying. A huge backlog of remediation and abandonment work needs to be done in the natural gas industry as older marginal vertical wells are shut in. Many jobs will be created as this activity ramps up. *Huge subsidies that have been issued to the industry need to be tied to reclamation activities that will result in jobs.*

- Forestry jobs will be the result of recent forest fire activity in the interior. Lumber prices have gone up and with the change in government, pressure may be applied to the Fort Nelson forest licensee to re-commission their OSB Mill and work with a local dimension mill to ramp up capabilities to handle the spruce and pine that also occurs in the mixed stands.

- Biomass generators have been installed at a couple local mills, which, with a change in policy could allow those mills to net meter electrical generation that is not allowed now. This makes these mills more competitive and helps to keep wood waste in the bush to a bare minimum. Jobs are the result and more generation can be installed.
10. The world needs the Peace.

Amnesty International highlights how this dam violates human rights, making it one of the ten global cases profiled in the Write for Rights campaign on International Human Rights Day. People around the world have written letters in support of protecting the Peace River from the Site C dam: http://globalnews.ca/news/3119627/amnesty-international-takes-aim-at-site-c/

http://www.amnesty.ca/outofsite

The Peace River affects many communities downstream, in Alberta, and all the way to the Arctic. https://thewalrus.ca/the-last-great-water-fight/

From http://sierraclub.bc.ca/take-action-centre/stop-site-c/:

UNESCO released a report strongly criticizing Canada for failing to protect Wood Buffalo National Park. The park risks the embarrassment of joining the list of UNESCO’s List of World Heritage in Danger due to impacts on the park from the Site C dam and tar sands development.

UNESCO’s report noted that impacts on the park are “far more complex and severe than previously thought.” It included 17 recommendations for Canada to address the threats the Park is facing from Site C dam, oil sands development and poor water governance. Canada’s federal government expressed its support for all but one of these recommendations, rejecting further assessment of the impact of Site C.

An inquiry into Site C by the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) is underway. It began in August 2017, with a preliminary report released on September 20th and a final report expected this November 1st.

Community input sessions are being held throughout the BC from September 23rd to October 11th. This is your chance to stand up and defend the Peace River Valley. To participate, please visit www.bcuc.com.

The following fact-based arguments come from highly credible sources including: the Deloitte LLP review of BC Hydro’s plans to build Site C; international energy expert, Robert McCullough with 37 years providing expert advice on energy issues; Dr. Harry Swain, former Chair of the Joint Review Panel for the EA on Site C; and, Eoin Finn, Director of the Pacific Electricity Ratepayers Assoc. and retired partner of a major accounting and consulting firm, among others.

**Why Site C should be terminated**

**Energy forecasts are unreliable**
- Over the past 20 years, BC Hydro’s forecasts have overestimated demand by over 30% on average - Deloitte

“BC Hydro forecasts are dangerously vintage. BC Hydro is still forecasting rapid growth even though demand has been flat for many years” - McCullough

**No market for the power**
- Despite Hydro’s inflated forecasts, BC’s energy demand is flat and will remain so for some time.
- If Site C were completed, BC Hydro will lose money on exports to the U.S.
- Presently BC has to sell power for less than it costs to produce.
- Demand growth is effectively zero as new energy saving technologies such as LED lighting emerge and more conservation efforts are initiated.

“Quebec and Newfoundland are competing to sell energy to New England at a loss” - McCullough

**Creating jobs for necessary BC projects**
- Borrowing $10 billion for Site C, restricts opportunities to borrow for projects we really need like affordable housing, schools, hospitals and day care centres.
- These projects would provide fair-wage construction jobs throughout BC. This easily replaces ‘lost jobs’ from Site C.

The Association of Major Power Producers have warned that an increase of more than 2.6% in energy costs will run the risk of destroying demand – “existing industrial customers will scale or shut down operations, or even transfer production to other jurisdictions.” Aug 30, 2017

**Alternatives are cheaper**
- Terminating Site C and building a renewable portfolio of wind and geothermal would save BC ratepayers $.7 to $1.6 billion.
- If and when BC needs more power, alternatives such as wind, solar and geothermal are now more cost effective and could provide energy with no increase in greenhouse gases, they are less expensive, more easily built and more flexible resources.

“If we stop now and the 25% sunk cost estimate is correct, ratepayers will be able to utter a sigh of relief” - McCullough

**Addressing Dispatchability**
- Site C is a large run-of-river project. It won’t provide back up power like WAC Bennett Dam.
- BC already has sufficient back up for intermittent sources (e.g., wind and solar) from WAC Bennett dam, the Northwest Electrical Grid, Columbia River Entitlement and Burrard Thermal.

In 2013, BC Hydro’s demand forecast did not include any energy for LNG. Now Hydro claims 60% of Site C power is for Site C. What gives?!
**More reasons to bring Site C to a full stop**

### Valuing ecological services
- The David Suzuki Foundation estimated the value of ecological services provided by the Peace River Watershed to be $7.9 to $8.6 billion per year.
- This includes services like carbon storage, water supply, air filtration, flood and erosion control, and wildlife habitat.

### Infringement of Aboriginal and Treaty Rights
- The Peace Valley is one of the last remaining areas in northeast BC that has been sufficiently protected from industrial development so that Indigenous peoples can still exercise their Treaty rights.
- The valley offers stories, contains cultural and burial sites, and serves as an indispensable source of food, furs, fish and medicines for Treaty 8 First Nations who have inhabited the area for over 10,000 years.

### Loss of food producing land
- BC is not food secure.
- Over 31,000 acres of Class 1-7 farmland could be destroyed by Site C.

### Our commitment to UNDRIP
- Both the federal and BC NDP governments promised to uphold the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP).
- Our governments have ignored this international pledge when it comes to Site C.
- Both the federal and BC governments must abide by Canada’s commitment to Indigenous and human rights at the United Nations.

### Loss of critical wildlife habitat
According to Dr. Clayton Apps, Wildlife Biologist,
- “Site C will form yet another barrier to wildlife movement in a region where industrial development is expanding rapidly.”
- “Site C will threaten the future survival of several wildlife populations in the Peace region.”

### Keep the Peace

**“The era of construction of large hydroelectric dams is over” – Premier Philippe Couillard, Quebec**

**“We haven’t pushed conservation and efficiency as far as they can go. We need to consider the costs and benefits of alternative energy production” - Swain**

**“The land to be flooded is capable of providing an annual, local and sustainably produced supply of fresh produce to over a million people” - Wendy Holm, Agricultural Economist.**

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**TAKE ACTION!**

Save BC from Site C – a project that will become the biggest White Elephant BC has ever seen. Defend over 57,000 acres of forest and farmland and prevent billions worth of debt for future generations:

1. Attend a BCUC Community Input session near you. Details at [www.bcuc.com](http://www.bcuc.com). Material to help you prepare can be found at [https://keepingthepeace.wordpress.com/resources/](https://keepingthepeace.wordpress.com/resources/).
2. Write letters asking the BC NDP and your MLA to stop borrowing for Site C and instead fund necessary public projects like day-care centres, hospitals, schools and affordable housing – projects that will provide fair-wage construction jobs throughout BC.
3. Signing our petition and joining our mailing list at [www.SaveBCfromSiteC.ca](http://www.SaveBCfromSiteC.ca) for updates.

Peace Valley Environment Association  
[SavePeaceValley](https://twitter.com/SavePeaceValley)  
www.SaveBCfromSiteC.ca

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Thank you for your support!

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