

BRITISH COLUMBIA UTILITIES COMMISSION
IN THE MATTER OF THE UTILITIES COMMISSION ACT
R.S.B.C. 1996, CHAPTER 473

And

British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority
British Columbia Utilities Commission Inquiry
Respecting Site C

VANCOUVER , B.C.
October 6th, 2017

FIRST NATIONS SESSION
VANCOUVER

BEFORE:

D.M. Morton,	Commision Chair/Panel Chair
D.A. Cote,	Commissioner
K.A. Keilty,	Commissioner
R.I. Mason,	Commissioner

VOLUME 10

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VANCOUVER, B.C.
October 6th, 2017

(PROCEEDINGS COMMENCED AT 10:01 A.M.)

THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning. Thank you for joining us as we proceed through our second -- through our two and half week schedule of Site C Inquiry Community Input Sessions around the province.

My name is Dave Morton and I'm the Panel Chair for the Site C Inquiry and I'm also the Chair and CEO of the British Columbia Utilities Commission. With me are my fellow Site C Inquiry panel members, Dennis Cote on my left, Karen Keilty on my right, and Richard Mason on her right.

This First Nations input session is part of the second important phase of Site C Inquiry. As you know, we spent the first six weeks of this inquiry collecting data and analysis from many parties interested and affected by BC Hydro's Site C project. The quality of these submissions was commendable. Many people committed a great deal to producing quality submissions within the short timeframe that was provided. This affirms what we already know, that there are experts and effected parties who can bring us insight into the many complexities of evaluating the economic impact of the Site C project.

We now have the task of making findings in

1 this inquiry and we recognize that our findings are
2 better with your input.

3 Before we begin, I'll introduce you to Mr.
4 Bemister, who I'm sure you've already encountered.
5 And he's not in the room right at this moment, but
6 he's from Allwest Reporting and his staff are here and
7 they will be recording and transcribing this input
8 session. A live audio can be streamed from our
9 website and following this session, the transcript
10 will be available at our website as
11 www.sitecinquiry.com.

12 The panel is aware of the circulation of
13 the unredacted Deloitte report filed in the first
14 phase of this inquiry. The information redacted in
15 that report was done so to ensure that current and
16 future negotiations between BC Hydro and its suppliers
17 were not compromised as a result of this information
18 being publicly available. If negotiations are
19 compromised, then that could have an economic impact
20 on all ratepayers and that was why the panel agreed to
21 its redaction on a confidentiality basis.

22 We still consider the information
23 confidential despite its inappropriate disclosure in
24 the press. The panel may redact submissions that
25 contained reference to that confidential information
26 both here today as well as in written submissions

1 filed.

2 Before beginning your presentation we ask
3 that you please state your first name and spell your
4 last name for the transcription record. Thank you.

5 On that note we will begin this session in
6 Vancouver now.

7 **Proceeding Time 10:05 a.m. T02**

8 MS. EDWARDS: Thank you. Can you hear me?

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, thank you.

10 **SUBMISSIONS BY CHIEF EDWARDS AND COUNCILLOR THEVARGE**

11 **(#0210 & #0211):**

12 CHIEF EDWARDS: My name is Michelle Edwards -- do you
13 want me to spell my last name? Is that what you said?

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, please.

15 CHIEF EDWARDS: E-D-W-A-R-D-S.

16 First I would -- we would like to
17 acknowledge our presence on the unceded territory of
18 the Coast Salish people, the Tsleil-waututh, Squamish,
19 and Musqueam. We also want to thank the BCUC and the
20 Commissioners for taking the time to consider our
21 presentation.

22 My name is Michelle Edwards. I am the
23 Chief of the Sekw'el'was N'Quatqua communities,
24 located in the Staliam territory. Little bit about
25 myself. I have been the Chief in my community for six
26 years. I was on council for three years before that.

1 I have worked for my community for approximately 25
2 years.

3 Recently I was on the climate leadership
4 team appointed by Minister John Restad, and we had
5 very detailed discussions about Site C, the review,
6 numbers. I've also been on the steering committee
7 with BC Hydro. I was on there for about three years.
8 So my knowledge, what I'm going to speak to you about,
9 is becoming -- is coming to you from a very
10 knowledgeable place. I feel I am informed on what I'm
11 going to be discussing with you, and also feel that my
12 friend, acquaintance, and counselor Chantel is also
13 the same, and I would like to have her introduce
14 herself.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

16 COUNCILLOR THEVARGE: Good morning, everybody. My name
17 is Chantel, last name Thevarge. T-H-E-V-A-R-G-E. I
18 currently reside on council for my community in
19 N'Quatqua of the St'at'imc Nation. I've been on
20 council since 2013. September, 2016 I was appointed
21 to the St'at'imc subcommittee.

22 My grandfather was chief of my community
23 for 14-plus years. My uncle, who was chief for a full
24 term of four years, was also involved in the
25 negotiations and the initial agreements.

26 I am going to start the presentation. We

1 want to tell you why we are here and why this inquiry
2 is so important to us as indigenous governments and
3 communities.

4 BC Hydro and the province should be doing
5 what is right for the ratepayers and First Nations by
6 maintaining and operating the existing assets in the
7 best possible condition to meet the needs of all
8 British Columbians. Doing this is one of the
9 alternatives to building Site C.

10 CHIEF EDWARDS: Building Site C will destroy hundreds of
11 graves and other cultural sites in the Treaty 8
12 territory, and cause severe permanent and irreversible
13 harm to the natural environment which people of the
14 northeast rely on. This destruction removes existence
15 from their land. Our very being should not be removed
16 from the land. That is who our ancestors were, that's
17 where they were, and that's where we would like our
18 first generation -- next generation to be able to go
19 back and be able to find that existence on the land.

20 If the Site C project is approved over the
21 objections of the First Nations, then the new
22 provincial government is condoning the extreme harm
23 caused by Site C and using economic benefits as
24 justification. From both first-hand knowledge and the
25 stories and experiences of our elders, we can tell you
26 that there is no justification for destroying the

1 environment that people depend on for their way of
2 life, nor will so-called economic benefits ever
3 replace what will be lost.

4 This slide is a depiction of an aqueduct
5 that was built in the Stl'atl'imx territory back in
6 the 1950s that was used as a diversion. The dam that
7 was built for this doesn't even generate any power.
8 It was just built to divert water, which generates 44
9 megawatts of power downstream. But what this did was,
10 it wiped out entire stocks of salmon that our people
11 had depended on for years, that we had continuously
12 over the years tried and tried to restore, and we
13 thought we were getting there. And then what we are
14 going to tell you, the story we are going to tell you,
15 is why we don't think we will ever get those stocks
16 back.

17 **Proceeding Time 10:10 a.m. T3**

18 COUNCILLOR THEVARGE: We believe there is a better way, a
19 better way to bring economic benefits to First Nations
20 and communities throughout B.C. and at the same time
21 protect and enhance our ecosystem and environment. In
22 our written submission to the Commission we set out a
23 very clear alternative to Site C. We recognize that
24 our alternative would only be a part of replacing the
25 capacity and energy that Site C could provide. While
26 the Commission has received many submissions on

1 alternatives and many of them are quite glamorous,
2 such as geothermal, solar, and battery storage, what
3 we are talking about is not glamorous at all. We are
4 talking about something that already exists and has
5 already destroyed and changed the way of life for
6 St'at'imc people forever.

7 CHIEF EDWARDS: And we know this, as I said. We've had
8 three dams in our territory that were built back in
9 the 1950s. We know what these damages are going to
10 be. We know what the destruction is going to be. We
11 can tell you what we've lost and what we will probably
12 never gain again. We know that these facilities are
13 not going away.

14 What we want is certainty on how they
15 operate and for BC Hydro and the province to meet its
16 commitments that were made under our St'at'imc
17 agreement. We thought that BC Hydro and the province
18 reached a settlement that fully addressed historic
19 wrongs that were committed in the past and to provide
20 certainty on how the system would operate in the
21 future and to the benefit of the St'at'imc ratepayers
22 and BC Hydro. Rather, BC Hydro is putting in place a
23 shiny new lemon called Site C, while allowing their
24 existing public assets to run to failure and again
25 destroy our way of life.

26 COUNCILLOR THEVARGE: We would like to give you some

1 information on the N'Quatqua and Sekw'el'was people,
2 our culture, and the importance of the territory where
3 BC Hydro's facilities are located.

4 The community of N'Quatqua is situated at
5 the head of Anderson Lake and has a distinct culture
6 and shares the St'at'imc language. As interior Salish
7 we have a strong connection to our land, water, and
8 all life. We value all cultural teachings and hold
9 our traditions high. We believe in having strong
10 roots with our past, as well as continual growth with
11 the future to bring a balanced and harmonized approach
12 to our lives. Our people have thrived in our
13 territory for generations and have many amazing
14 teachings that have helped us live in abundance and
15 showed our people how to live in harmony.

16 Our community is the birthplace for
17 important sockeye and coho salmon stocks, as well as
18 resident Anderson Lake trout. We are committed to
19 hard work and diligence to protect these valuable
20 fisheries that define the St'at'imc way of life for
21 future generations.

22 Each year, St'at'imc unity is celebrated in
23 May. All the community is gathered to recognize our
24 traditions and ancestors and seek a unified vision for
25 our future.

26 CHIEF EDWARDS: We the people of Sekw'el'was have

1 survived and thrived through many hardships. We are
2 proud of who we are and where we come from. Our
3 community has a rich history of tool making and
4 trading with other nations. Sekw'el'was is known as a
5 gathering place for many neighbouring nations. Our
6 community is located in an area rich with resources
7 such as water, fish, game, and medicine, which makes
8 us a prime nation to trade with. Our ancestors were
9 known as expert stone tool makers, and this is evident
10 in the stories that are written on the land, which is
11 another reason nations came to trade with us. We have
12 had a thriving economy going back thousands of years.
13 This pit house is an example of our presence on this
14 land and the ability to sustain ourselves as people.

15 I'd like to go to our pit house villages as
16 an example of who we were as St'at'imc, who we were as
17 people across this continent. When you look at this
18 house pit and if you've seen that there were 72 others
19 around it, you have to look at who we were as a
20 people, how we structured ourselves as a community,
21 how we organized ourself as a government. We would
22 have had to have many people, many men go out and cut
23 these trees down, bring them in. We would have been
24 architects, we would have been engineers. We would
25 have had to organize ourselves. This is who we were
26 as people. This is how we had an economy that we

1 overwhelming volume of information to wade through
2 regarding Site C. Therefore, we are going to tell you
3 why we do not believe that proceeding with Site C is
4 in the best interests of ratepayers and *Oucanou*,
5 people of the land.

6 Many of the submissions on Site C have
7 highlighted the debt level that is already being
8 carried by BC Hydro and impacts of the debt on
9 ratepayers, as well as the additional debt load being
10 added by Site C.

11 We believe that BC Hydro's first obligation
12 is to ensure that their existing assets are kept in
13 good to excellent condition and do not cause ongoing
14 and unnecessary impacts on the territories of First
15 Nations including the ecosystems, wildlife and habitat
16 that First Nations require to sustain their way of
17 life.

18 We will provide details of BC Hydro's
19 assets, their current conditions and what can be done
20 to both restore and allow the Bridge Seaton system to
21 be a meaningful alternative to Site C.

22 We would like to make sure that the
23 Commission is fully aware of the substantial
24 commitments that BC Hydro and the province have made
25 to address the historic wrongs that were forced upon
26 the St'at'imc people.

1 CHIEF EDWARDS: We want to talk about the importance of
2 the Crown acting honourably in fulfilling the spirit
3 and intent of the St'at'imc settlement agreement. BC
4 Hydro and the St'at'imc spent over 20 years trying to
5 reach this agreement, and spent tens of millions of
6 ratepayers' dollars in this process.

7 For the St'at'imc the agreement was
8 intended to ensure that our way of life could be
9 preserved and enhanced by having certainty around how
10 the new system would operate.

11 For BC Hydro and the ratepayers, the
12 agreement should have provided certainty that the
13 current facilities throughout the Bridge Seton system
14 could continue to operate and generate electricity for
15 the province. Although BC Hydro had prior knowledge
16 before this agreement was finalized, BC Hydro did not
17 disclose to the St'at'imc that the Bridge Seton system
18 could not operate in the manner set out in the
19 agreement. BC Hydro failed to uphold the honour of
20 the Crown.

21 As we pointed out in our written
22 submission, since the agreement was signed, BC Hydro
23 has changed the flows in the Bridge Seton system to
24 address the seismic issues on the Lajoie dam and the
25 derating of the Bridge 1 and 2 generating facilities.

26 In the end, St'at'imc were misled. BC

1 Hydro acted dishonorably in signing an agreement when
2 they knew they could not meet the flows in the Bridge
3 Seton operating regime. If BC Hydro were to address,
4 mitigate and stop the harm that they are now doing to
5 the St'at'imc people and territory, they can start to
6 restore the honour of the Crown.

7 Our submission to this inquiry not only
8 provides an alternative to Site C, but also
9 demonstrates that BC Hydro has deliberately delayed
10 and postponed addressing the deteriorating conditions
11 throughout the Bridge Seton system.

12 The Site C project is consuming a very
13 large portion of capital funds, and Site C takes away
14 these funds from other projects, particularly capital
15 dollars are needed to modernize existing assets and
16 make them reliable for long-term operations.

17 **Proceeding Time 10:20 a.m. T05**

18 Even more importantly, Site C is using the
19 best human resources that BC Hydro has. The
20 reassignment of some of BC Hydro's staff from Site C
21 projects to work on the Bridge Seton system would
22 substantially enhance ability BC Hydro to get the job
23 done.

24 COUNCILLOR THEVARGE: The Bridge Seton generation system
25 is a viable alternative to Site C. We want to see a
26 firm commitment for the capital dollars and a firm

1 commitment for a timeline for the completion of the
2 Bridge Seton restoration. We have been in
3 communication with BC Hydro. Their president, Chris
4 O'Riley, in a recent e-mail, did advise us this. In
5 the Bridge Seton system, and forecasted, as part of BC
6 Hydro's ten-year capital plan to invest in incremental
7 \$590 million, including a seismic upgrade project at
8 the Lajoie Dam.

9 While we were pleased to receive this e-
10 mail from Chris O'Riley, it does not in any way
11 provide us with assurance that this work will get
12 done, nor the anticipated timetable for this
13 completion. However, the RRA for the fiscal '17 to
14 fiscal '19 period contains BC Hydro's capital forecast
15 update that only identifies \$53 to \$83 million for the
16 bridge two units, five and six upgrades. All other
17 capital expenditures, including Lajoie Dam, are
18 identified as "to be determined".

19 We want BC Hydro to immediately submit an
20 updated ten-year capital forecast for the 2017-19 RRA
21 that includes the 590 million for the Bridge Seton
22 generation system, plus a breakdown on where the
23 installers would be expanded, and the time frame for
24 these expenditures.

25 CHIEF EDWARDS: To give the Commission a better
26 understanding of the mismanagement of the Bridge Seton

1 generation system, and the resulting impacts on our
2 territory, we would like to walk you through where the
3 Lajoie system is located, and the facilities that BC
4 Hydro has.

5 That is what this slide -- and I'm going to
6 -- I don't know who's got a pointer there. Lajoie Dam
7 is located -- it's the furthestmost dam in our
8 territory, and it's located up in the Gold Bridge and
9 Bralorne area. And that is the one that they need to
10 fix. They need to lower the water there.

11 If you go over to Seton, that's where the
12 bridge 1 and 2 units are. That's where the majority
13 of the generation is done. And if you go down to
14 Seton, we have another smaller generation facility
15 there. We have a canal there, and we have a dam
16 there, that generates no power.

17 What Lajoie is doing, they're holding back
18 a lot of water. And it was just really this past year
19 where we really understood what needed to be done up
20 there. By them lowering that water, they're going to
21 be spilling the majority of their water that cannot be
22 hold [sic] in this reservoir.

23 BC Hydro has been aware of the seismic risk
24 to Lajoie Dam since at least 2003. The St'at'imc
25 agreement was signed in 2011, and three years BC Hydro
26 informed St'at'imc that the Lajoie Dam was now under

1 emergency conditions, and that the level of the
2 Downton Lake reservoir would have to be lowered to
3 reduce the risk of a dam breach in the event of an
4 earthquake.

5 One of the key issues during the
6 negotiation of the St'at'imc settlement agreement was
7 restoration and enhancement of salmon runs on the
8 Lower Bridge River and Seton system. This was
9 achieved through negotiating a commitment for annual
10 flows from three to six CMS on the Lower Bridge River.

11 In 2014, BC Hydro advised St'at'imc that
12 due to seismic risk they would have to lower the
13 Downton Lake Reservoir at Lajoie Dam from an elevation
14 of 749.8 meters down to 734 meters. BC Hydro
15 management told us this was their ten-year emergency.

16 However, it wasn't until 2016 that BC Hydro
17 informed St'at'imc that they would seek variance
18 orders from the Water Comptroller to allow flows that
19 are substantially higher than those in the St'at'imc
20 settlement agreement. It is difficult to see how
21 these conditions were an emergency, never mind one
22 that lasts ten years.

23 **Proceeding Time 10:24 a.m. T6**

24 BC Hydro has been aware of the seismic
25 conditions of Lajoie Dam for at least the last 14
26 years, and studies at the time indicated

1 reconstruction of the dam would take between 15 and 20
2 years.

3 The water management problem is further
4 complicated by BC Hydro's mismanagement of the Bridge
5 1 and 2 facilities to near failure. The additional
6 seismic issues on Terzaghi Dam and the need to
7 continuously repair and ultimately replace the Seton
8 Canal.

9 In the spring of 2016 BC Hydro increased
10 the flow for the Lower Bridge River from maximum 15
11 CMS to over 100 CMS. On the Seton River directly
12 through Sekw'el'was territory, flows reached 113 CMS,
13 yet the target maximum flow is actually only 60 CMS.
14 Currently Bridge 1 and 2 are supposed to produce 70
15 megawatts but are de-rated due to their poor
16 condition. The restoration of the Bridge 1 and 2
17 facilities is crucial to stabilizing the entire Bridge
18 Seton generation system so that it can be restored to
19 full use.

20 The other critical component is the Seton
21 Canal. The canal diverts water from the Bridge 1 and
22 2 through Seton Lake and into the Seton generation
23 facility. If the Seton Canal or Dam fails, then all
24 this water would be released into the Seton River.
25 Severe changes in flow on the Seton River and Cayoosh
26 Creek will cause fish mortality and irreparable damage

1 to habitat and species that migrate throughout this
2 system.

3 We would also like to note that as a result
4 of the canal being built in our community, dividing my
5 community, Sekw'el'was is no longer able to develop
6 land below the canal, due to the risk of the canal
7 failure.

8 We want a firm commitment for capital
9 funding, competent human resources, and an accelerated
10 timetable for the restoration for the Bridge Seton
11 generation system. In our written submission we
12 provided the timetable identified by BC Hydro. We are
13 highly skeptical that the in-service date for Bridge 2
14 Units 5 and 6 will be met in fiscal 2019 or within the
15 next 18 months. Due to the lowering of Downton Lake
16 Reservoir and the resulting changes in operating
17 flows, BC Hydro may not be able to take outages for
18 the duration required for completion of this project.
19 Also, since Bridge 1 and 2 have no bypass ability, the
20 generators may need to be kept on line in order to
21 pass water through the facility into Seton Lake.

22 If BC Hydro were to commit more capital and
23 human resources to the restoration of Bridge Seton
24 system, we believe that the entire system could be
25 fully restored by 2028, thus delivering the full
26 capacity and energy that should be produced. This is

1 a viable alternative to Site C.

2 Further St'at'imc settlement agreement, BC
3 Hydro must work collaboratively with St'at'imc in the
4 planning and ongoing development for the restoration
5 of the Seton Bridge generation system. Just to
6 elaborate on that, when we say work collaboratively,
7 we have commitments in our agreement to be building
8 capacity, to be sharing information on what this work
9 is supposed to be that is going to be happening in our
10 community. Really we're having a hard time with that.
11 Our community of Sekw'el'was, we purchased an
12 engineering company. We have a great foundation of
13 knowledge that works for my community and is loyal to
14 my community, and that is why I know so much about
15 these facilities. I know how they need to be operated
16 and I know what the work is to be done, and I think
17 Hydro fears that and they shouldn't. We have a
18 relationship agreement and it seems like now we're
19 operating on an unrelationship agreement. We're
20 struggling to actually get to that place.

21 COUNCILLOR THEVARGE: Do not destroy our way of life.

22 The Commission should understand that our way of life
23 depends upon a sustainable ecosystem and the
24 enhancement of fish, wildlife and habitat. Our
25 written submission points out in great detail that the
26 mechanical facilities and conveyance structures

1 continue to decline, causing deterioration of our
2 surrounding watersheds and habitat, as well as fish
3 and wildlife. This system has not been managed in a
4 manner that reflects and upholds BC Hydro's
5 responsibility to the province and the ratepayers.
6 Progressive impacts, unmitigated, will eventually
7 result in irreversible damage to an already stressed
8 and fragile ecosystem. Cumulative effects do not
9 reveal themselves overnight.

10 **Proceeding Time 10:30 a.m. T07**

11 As damaged environmental conditions become
12 the new norm, it becomes increasingly difficult to
13 assess the full extent of the impacts on our territory
14 starting from the first year the Bridge Seton system
15 was allowed to deteriorate with inadequate maintenance
16 and sustaining capital spending by BC Hydro.

17 The multi-year reproductive nature of
18 ocean-going fish also makes it difficult to determine
19 the severity of temporal impacts until it's too late.
20 At Lejoie dam which is in the territory of N'Quatqua,
21 lowering of the Downton reservoir results in ecosystem
22 changes that will last over the next twenty years
23 until BC Hydro's current capital planning horizon.
24 The ecosystem will then be forced to adjust when new
25 vegetation growth occurs in the lowered reservoir zone
26 and wildlife will have to adapt to a new zone and part

1 of their habitat.

2 When the Lejoie dam is finally restored,
3 the water level will return back to its former
4 authorized maximum and wipe out this newly formed
5 ecosystem, once again bringing destruction to the
6 N'Quatqua territory.

7 N'Quatqua's community is located at the end
8 of Anderson Lake, which feeds water into Seton Lake.
9 The changes in water flows have impacted the return of
10 salmon into spawning areas in the community. Salmon
11 must travel through Seton River into Seton Lake and
12 then travel all the way through Anderson Lake to
13 complete their spawning cycle. The changes in water
14 flows have already caused early migration of sockeye
15 fry. They would normally rear in the lakes for two
16 years before starting their epic journey back to the
17 Pacific Ocean.

18 Over the course of the last two years, the
19 Bridge Seton system has operated out of compliance
20 with their water licences and the water use plan. The
21 substantially higher water flows have caused impacts
22 to fish habitat including erosion of spawning beds,
23 earlier emergence and mortality of salmon smolts and
24 fry, death of adult steelhead, Kokanee, and Seton lake
25 resident sturgeon.

26 Additional impacts include loss of cultural

1 and spiritual areas, spawning beds and food sources
2 for wildlife. Erosion and flooding have also impacted
3 access to the wildlife birthing areas resulting in
4 stranding and separation of young from their mothers.

5 CHIEF EDWARDS: Our loss is everyone's loss. Many
6 people that come to our territory do not know or see
7 the impacts that these facilities have had on our way
8 of life. People come to our territory to see the
9 salmon runs on our rivers, the wildlife and the
10 amazing and unique ecosystems. Many of our businesses
11 in the territory depend on people wanting to stay in
12 our hotels and RV sites, eat in the local restaurants
13 and take tours. Many people come here for hunting and
14 recreational fishing. All of this brings money into
15 the community and creates jobs and supports local
16 families. The loss of all this will be the loss for
17 everyone in our territory.

18 Our experience over the years has been that
19 BC Hydro only tells us what they want us to know. By
20 not being fully informed of what BC Hydro is doing and
21 BC Hydro's lack of willingness to communicate and be
22 inclusive in their decisions on our territory, we have
23 learnt the hard way. We have heard the claim that
24 dams and reservoirs will bring economics and other
25 benefits, yet we have seen a destruction that has been
26 caused by these facilities over the years.

1 perspectives of aboriginal peoples. We are doing this
2 so we can learn to listen differently, and it's how we
3 will build our understanding of issues facing
4 aboriginal peoples in British Columbia, and ultimately
5 improve our relationship as we make this journey
6 together. At BC Hydro we are committed to building
7 our own understanding and supporting the work of the
8 Commission. We believe this is foundational to
9 building enduring relationships with aboriginal
10 people. All of us at BC Hydro are committed to
11 incorporating aboriginal views into how we conduct our
12 business, and include aboriginal participation in our
13 operations. We have a responsibility to continue to
14 build upon the knowledge and understanding we gain
15 from this event and to use this knowledge to work with
16 aboriginal people to find creative solutions to
17 support your rightful social and economic standing in
18 B.C."

19 We ask the Commission to consider the
20 impacts of allowing the Bridge Seton system to run to
21 failure. And we also ask the Commission to consider
22 the commitments made by the provincial and federal
23 governments to fully implement the United Nations
24 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.
25 While water is only specifically mentioned twice in
26 the text of the UNDRIP, there are a number of key

1 articles about protection of indigenous ownership and
2 control over water. These include protection of
3 indigenous relationships with their land and
4 territories, rights to use, own, develop, and control
5 lands and resources, including the right to determine
6 development and the right to redress if development
7 hinders these rights. Clear language on the duty to
8 consult, get free, prior, and informed consent in the
9 case of resource development. Protection against
10 forcible removal from their lands and territory.

11 Taken together the key articles from the
12 UNDRIP clearly establish that we, as indigenous
13 people, have rights related to consultation both prior
14 to actions being taken on their lands and territories,
15 as well as part of a redress strategy to address
16 historic and ongoing injustices. The inclusion of the
17 Bridge Seton system as a clear alternative to Site C
18 would be another step by the B.C. Utilities Commission
19 towards the process of reconciliation.

20 CHIEF EDWARDS: Before I conclude, I just wanted to give
21 you a little bit of my own insight into the St'at'imc
22 settlement agreement when we signed it. I was the big
23 promoter of it. I seen opportunities, I seen, you
24 know, our visions that were going to be coming true.
25 I seen, you know, that we were going to have educated
26 people, that we were -- that there was hope in our

1 territory.

2 And it really started working out that way.
3 For Sekw'el'was, we took that opportunity, and we
4 invested, because we know that we need a healthy
5 economy to create a healthy community. And we are
6 still doing that. Sometimes we're struggling but, as
7 a chief, every day that's our investment. Those are
8 our dollars. I have to look after them.

9 It was really disheartening to find out
10 what was going to be going on. For years we thought
11 we were actually restoring who we were as people, that
12 we were going to have that ability to go out and
13 create those healthy ecosystems. We were doing that.
14 We were doing that with BC Hydro. We thought we were
15 doing that with the government. Thought we were doing
16 that with the locals there. And then they sprung this
17 on us. That, no, we were sitting there, we were
18 trying to negotiate as a three or six CMS. And now
19 all of a sudden it's up to 22. That may not seem like
20 a lot to anybody, but when you're in my community and
21 you're watching a river rage through your community
22 for four months that never did before, those are big
23 changes.

24 **Proceeding Time 10:40 a.m. T9**

25 When you're seeing fawns being swept down
26 the creek because they are not used to that, when

1 you're seeing cubs, when you're seeing people who have
2 put their hides in the river who can't even get out
3 there to get them any more. People who have gone for
4 a spiritual swim every day for the last 50 years can
5 no longer access that creek because we have a raging
6 river going through. And all we wanted to do was work
7 with BC Hydro. That is where we were trying to get
8 to. And we can. We tried to show them that an
9 economy can be created within our region, with our
10 people working on these projects, building up a system
11 that they let age to failure. Who does that as a
12 business person? Goes and invests in something and
13 then just lets it fail. That's not a very good
14 investment.

15 As ratepayers, as we all are, we expect
16 better from these governments, from these Crown
17 corporations. Look after your assets. That is what
18 we want them to do. They've got 23-26 existing
19 facilities throughout B.C. That's how you create an
20 economy across the province. You don't go and create
21 one up in the north. That's not the way we plan. And
22 believe me, First Nations people, we can plan because
23 that's what the government expects from us, INAC.
24 Every time we turn around we need a plan from you.
25 Well, we've become really good planners.

26 So in my concluding remarks, we ask that

1 the BCUC take the position that the Site C project
2 should be cancelled, and as an alternative realize the
3 benefits that would result from the restoration of
4 existing assets that are owned by BC Hydro.

5 Consideration should be given to the
6 following: (1) Continuing of Site C will impose
7 unsustainable costs and debt on ratepayers, including
8 First Nation communities throughout British Columbia.
9 (2) BC Hydro has existing assets throughout the
10 province that can be repaired and upgraded to provide
11 viable economic alternatives at similar or less cost
12 than power from Site C. (3) The Bridge Seton
13 generation system is one of the viable alternatives to
14 Site C. We ask the province to provide direction to
15 BC Hydro to formally update the 10-year capital
16 forecast in the RRA fiscal 17-19 to include the
17 forecasted 590 million restoration for the Bridge
18 Seton assets; (b) develop a detailed breakdown of
19 these expenditures and the timing of these
20 expenditures; (c) to work collaboratively with the
21 St'at'imc to determine how their restoration schedule
22 can be accelerated with full restoration by 2028; and
23 (d) commit the best of BC Hydro resources and
24 personnel to this work. (4) apply the United Nations
25 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples with
26 respect to water in our territories and reporting back

1 to the provincial government and Site C and viable
2 alternatives. (5) If Site C proceeds and accelerated
3 investments are not made in the Bridge Seton
4 generation system, then the St'at'imc people will
5 continue to experience ongoing destruction of the
6 ecosystem that they rely upon for fisheries, wildlife
7 habitat, and our way of life.

8 And with that I would like to thank you for
9 giving us this opportunity to come and present to you
10 on why we feel that Site C should not be going ahead.
11 [non-English spoken].

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much. That was a very
13 interesting presentation. I have been through your
14 lands and I've been up the Anderson Lake Road and seen
15 the facilities there and been up the Early Pass and I
16 find it's a really beautiful area. So thank you for
17 your presentation.

18 I do have a question. The \$590 million
19 refit by 2028, how much incremental energy and
20 capacity would that provide for BC Hydro?

21 CHIEF EDWARDS: The facilities today, I think the eight
22 generation units, I guess over in Bridge 1 and 2, each
23 unit should be running 75 megawatts. I believe
24 they're running at 58.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. So you also mentioned that -- I
26 think it was that Seton Dam, the dam at the end of

1 National Government and these are my colleagues. They
2 are representing Homolco First Nation our joint
3 venture partner in an endeavour that we are in the
4 process of developing.

5 Should I talk louder? Into the mic? Okay,
6 thanks. Could everybody introduce themselves,
7 please.

8 MR. O'CONNOR: Shawn O'Connor.

9 CHIEF ENEVOLDSEN: Chief MaryAnn Enevoldsen.

10 MS. ANDREW: Counsellor Dorothy Andrew.

11 MR. CORMAN: Great, and I'm Robert Corman, C-O-R-M-A-N.

12 Essentially what we are doing here is we're
13 offering a presentation that talks about an
14 alternative to Site C, and it really is a joint
15 venture between two First Nations that are neighbours.

16 This is mostly for the audience. It's not
17 for you. I understand that you know what your Order-
18 in-Council is, but I thought I'd quickly bring it up.
19 Essentially there is two points to it. You want to
20 complete or suspend or terminate Site C, but
21 alternatively you want to come up with some
22 alternative commercial generating projects, and talk
23 or learn more about demand side management.

24 We really are not into one at all. We're
25 not talking about Site C, we're talking about point
26 number two.

1 Okay, so this really where we're going.
2 There's this massive project called Site C and I'm
3 just going to use it for analogy purposes, about 5,100
4 gigawatt hours, and we're basically coming along and
5 saying there's an alternative project out there called
6 Bute Inlet. And it's not quite the same scale. We're
7 around 3500, this is around 5,000, but it's still
8 pretty big.

9 What's really intriguing about his is the
10 geography and the amount of population in the area.
11 This area has very deep areas, so if there's any
12 damming, our flooding is very very minimal and our
13 population is very very sparse, so there is much less
14 public outcry to any involvement in this area.

15 This development here is something that
16 would be done in concert between BC Hydro, the Homolco
17 and the Tsilqot'in First Nation.

18 Essentially it really consists of three
19 dams, and they work in tandem with one another, but
20 the fundamental idea here is being able to create some
21 dipatchable energy.

22 The three dams around these areas, Moseley,
23 Nude Canyon and Waddington Canyon. And it shows a
24 little breakdown here. There's some drawings. I
25 brought these mostly for the benefit of any engineer
26 you pass this on. I'm not going to go into the detail

1 of it.

2 Here's Mosely in more painful detail. This
3 is what it looks like. I couldn't get a very clear
4 photograph its sort of characterized by a pretty foggy
5 area.

6 Here's the other component, Nude Canyon.
7 This is what Nudge Canyon looks like. It's a pretty
8 deep canyon.

9 Here's the third component, Waddington.
10 This is what Waddington looks like. Once again a very
11 deep canyon. So flooding in these areas have a
12 relatively small footprint because the canyons are
13 deep and the population is virtually non-existent.

14 **Proceeding Time 11:01 a.m. T11**

15 Now, what I'm going to do is I'm going to
16 run down a whole series of fascinating reasons why
17 this is a really good idea, and the first reason is,
18 there is a need for energy in British Columbia. And
19 the second half of my presentation goes into this in
20 painful detail. Because I think there's an aspect of
21 energy demand that your consultants, or your internal
22 people at BC Hydro, are not really paying enough
23 attention to. And I'm going to unpack it in a great
24 deal of detail to basically demonstrate that there's a
25 strong need or demand for more energy in the future.
26 Probably a lot sooner than most people think.

1 The second reason is, today there's about
2 \$20 million being invested in the entire concept. So
3 this is not an eye-in-the-sky [*sic*] romantic kind of
4 notion. A lot of tremendously serious engineering
5 work has gone into this. So, we know there is
6 actually a viable project there. It just simply
7 hasn't been built yet.

8 Third reason, something I talked about
9 briefly, very sparse population in the area. No
10 flooding existing infrastructure. So politically it
11 could have some support. There's always going to be
12 some detractors but not as many as you'd run into in
13 other areas.

14 And the fourth reason, the flooding is
15 going to be minimal, because we're doing it mostly in
16 canyons.

17 Fifth reason, we can develop this in
18 phases. Effectively the project consists of three
19 small dams, or smaller dams, that work in tandem. So
20 as the demand is required by the province, we can add
21 dams to the stream. And together, they add up to a
22 significant amount of hours.

23 Am I going too fast? Too slow?

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: No, that's fine for me. Yes.

25 MR. CORMAN: Good. All right.

26 Can you guys hear me? Good.

1 So here we are again, three smaller dams
2 working in tandem. Less environmental impact too,
3 when you're working on smaller projects.

4 Seventh reason. This is really intriguing.
5 It essentially ties directly into the Lower Mainland
6 grid, where basically most of the demand is emulating
7 [sic] from. You basically got these issues of
8 stability, security, reduced line losses, diversity of
9 supply. They all come into play because the geography
10 of the project is excellent. You know, it ties
11 directly into the main grid.

12 And the final reason is, this area is able
13 to capitalize on other sources of energy. It's very
14 windy. There's some geothermal initiatives in the
15 area. So in effect, if this is developed, it would
16 essentially create a green energy hub for British
17 Columbia. So there's a bunch of geographical things
18 that come together into the area that make it very
19 attractive for producing electricity.

20 Now, this is an important part of the
21 presentation. This is a rationale for doing it. This
22 is the reason why there's probably like a strong need
23 for more electricity, and this is something that comes
24 up in BC Hydro's reports all the time. The whole
25 concept of autonomous electric cars. However,
26 according to our analysis, and not enough attention is

1 really being paid to it, and I'm going to explain in
2 painful detail why more attention needs to be done
3 around this area. Because the numbers are really,
4 really simple. Anybody can follow them, understand
5 them. But BC Hydro and virtually other organizations
6 never really talk about it. But I'm going to lead you
7 through the calculations, and they're really fast,
8 easy, arithmetic.

9 So, this chart is provided by Transport
10 Canada. And basically explains how many miles we as
11 British Columbians drive. So you look in this column,
12 you can see vehicle kilometers in billions, and it's
13 33.3, and this is for British Columbia. So we
14 converted kilometres to miles, we basically drive 20.8
15 billion miles per year.

16 This is a very interesting table from U.S.
17 Department of Energy. It essentially takes all the
18 cars that are electric in British Columbia -- or, in
19 the United States, and are available for sale. From
20 here you'll see there's 141 that are currently on the
21 market. And you can orchestrate the information to
22 see how efficient they are. The most efficient
23 electrical car is a Hyundai Ioniq. And essentially it
24 gets 25 per 100 miles -- down here.

25 Now, this is a simple little modeling
26 concept. What if everybody in British Columbia had an

1 electric car? If you take that table I just showed
2 you, and took the worst car on the list, they are
3 basically burning 54 per 100 miles. The best on the
4 list burns 25 kilowatt hours per hundred miles. So
5 it's this versus this. China versus Korea.

6 And this is just a quick reminder to use as
7 a point of reference. Site C, got this from BC Hydro
8 -- excuse me. It points out that BC Hydro says that
9 Site C will produce 5,100 gigawatt hours. So 5100.
10 Okay? Am I going too fast? No? Good.

11 Okay. How much electricity do we need if
12 everybody in the entire province drove one of those
13 Hyundai cars? So from the earlier table you see it
14 was 25, and I changed the arithmetic to bring it down
15 from 100 miles to 1 mile, which moves the decimal to
16 here, 0.25. My earlier table pointed out we drive
17 these many miles, a whole bunch of miles every year.
18 If you multiply that number times that number, you
19 come up with that number. And if you change kilowatt
20 hours to gigawatt hours, you'd see that just getting
21 everybody to drive an electric car in the province
22 burns up an awful lot of electricity, 5203. Okay?

23 Now, this basically just as a bit of a
24 comparison, using the Hyundai model, the required
25 electricity would be this if we're all driving this
26 wonderful car. And Site C basically makes this

1 amount, which is a very similar number. So in effect
2 just operating electrical cars in the province that
3 were like this would require one Site C, in itself.
4 This has nothing to do with increases or changes
5 because of electrical demand because of energy, or
6 changing populations. That's just our existing
7 driving habits. And if everybody got a worse-quality
8 electrical car, the number is that, the number is
9 this, and essentially it would take two Site Cs just
10 to do that. Okay?

11 Now, so this is where the equation becomes
12 really interesting. So if the world is moving towards
13 electrical cars, do we have any indication that's
14 actually happening? And moreover, how quickly is it
15 happening?

16 So the whole notion would be -- so why
17 would anybody buy -- in other words, how fast will
18 market take up B if the world suddenly became more
19 electrical? And to do this, I'm going to basically
20 explain this concept of an autonomous electrical car,
21 and I'm going to do that by breaking down the three
22 words into "autonomous" and "electrical". And I'm
23 going to skip "car" because we all know what that is.

24 Okay, what does "autonomous" mean? I hope
25 some of you have seen this. Essentially the cars are
26 going down the road and there's no driver. They're

1 driving themselves. If you go to the Tesla site, they
2 have an absolutely amazing video of this. They've
3 driven over one million miles autonomously in the
4 United States. We have amazing statistics that prove
5 a whole bunch of factors around it. We know it works.
6 A million miles is a long ways.

7 **Proceeding Time 11:08 a.m. T12**

8 And essentially we know from Google, and
9 essentially an autonomous car which takes out all the
10 human error, which is the cause of most accidents,
11 basically reduces accidents by 90 percent. So in
12 effect, if we did this we'd have much lower health
13 care costs in the province, and I'm talking about
14 billions of dollars a year. So also much of your
15 accidents, about 90 percent of your accidents, roughly
16 we kill roughly a thousand people per year in
17 automobile accidents in British Columbia. So chop
18 that number down by about 90 percent. Fewer accidents
19 basically means less pain and death.

20 No speeding. Essentially these autonomous
21 cars plug into an artificial intelligence grid. All
22 the cars communicate to one another. They communicate
23 with the lights changing on the intersections, and
24 where there used to be people speeding, there wouldn't
25 be, because you can't. In effect we'd take all our
26 traffic control policemen and we'd move them to other

1 more serious crime issues.

2 So we take several hundred policemen and
3 redeploy them to other areas which basically will
4 lower crime probably in the province.

5 The other interesting thing about
6 artificial -- AI stands for artificial intelligence,
7 is that it manages all the traffic flow. All the cars
8 are travelling at equidistance from one another. So
9 essentially traffic flow in the Lower Mainland becomes
10 very very much faster.

11 If you saw the paper this morning, there's
12 actually a headline that says we have the worst
13 traffic congestion, that is Vancouver, in all of
14 Canada. This, in effect, would be solved, because all
15 the cars would moving equidistant from one another.
16 And it's already being done in Korea. Like there's a
17 whole community in Korea that basically is running on
18 an AI traffic flow right now.

19 The trucking industry, you can go to the
20 website and they are basically saying if we could
21 somehow improve traffic flow in the area, we'd save
22 \$1.4 million a year, which is quite a bit of money.

23 The other interesting thing is if there's
24 nobody actually driving the car and you're driving in
25 from Hope, you are much more productive. You could be
26 sleeping or you could be writing or you could be

1 talking or doing work, but essentially you are not
2 driving, so you get far more production out of the
3 population. But every morning, tens of thousands of
4 people travel and there's far less stress because
5 you're not driving. That's what autonomous really
6 really means, and it's really really real. We just
7 don't have it here yet.

8 What does "electric" mean? No petroleum
9 bill. Our operating costs are dramatically lower.
10 Fewer parts. An electric car has no transmission, it
11 has no exhaust system. There's fewer parts simply to
12 fail. Low replacement cost. Its lifespan is between
13 500,000 to 1,000,000 kilometres per year. Most cars
14 now are around a quarter of that.

15 Much less pollution because we're not
16 burning any petroleum products, and the cars are far
17 roomier because essentially there's no engine. They
18 move the firewall way forward and you have a bigger
19 vehicle for the same amount of money.

20 The one coming out by Tesla that you have
21 to order now – they are basically sold out for a whole
22 year in advance – is about \$45,000 for a four-seater
23 sedan. So it becomes very affordable also. And
24 that's what "electric" means.

25 Now, this whole notion of moving to an
26 electric car economy is nothing really new. It's just

1 we're really behind it in Canada. So if you look at
2 the countries that have currently legislation in
3 place, or they are currently drafting it, and the
4 legislation basically says they are going to ban, ban,
5 the sale of petroleum cars from between 2030 and 2050.
6 This is a list of the countries currently: Italy,
7 India, China, Korea, France, Ireland, Sweden, Belgium,
8 the Netherlands, Switzerland, Portugal, Denmark,
9 Germany, England, Norway, Austria.

10 I'd argue some of the most sophisticated
11 economies in the world are doing this, and that we
12 probably should too.

13 If you look at the United States, these are
14 the U.S. states that legislation either in place or
15 they are currently drafting it to ban the sale of
16 petroleum used cars: Oregon, Vermont, New York,
17 Maryland, California, Connecticut, Rhode Island and
18 Massachusetts. So this is not an airy-fairy science
19 fiction kind of idea. This is actually coming into
20 reality now.

21 Does the trend have legs? From the earlier
22 table I showed you that currently in the United States
23 you can buy 141 different kinds of cars that only run
24 on electricity. That doesn't include the hybrid cars
25 that run on both gasoline and petroleum products.
26 Just 144 that just run on gasoline. So the industry

1 as a whole, the manufacturers are getting into this in
2 a really big way.

3 Here's a really good example. Volvo. This
4 is an ad that Volvo presented not that long ago. All
5 Volvo cars are to be electric or hybrid from 2019. So
6 it's 2017. In the next two years, Volvo won't even
7 sell a car that runs only on petroleum.

8 **Proceeding Time 11:13 a.m. T13**

9 Then there's substantial organization. And
10 this I think is sort of my cap to the whole equation.
11 Stanford University. And why this caught my attention
12 is one of the authors of this report, they wrote a
13 report called RethinkX and it came out in May of 2017,
14 so it's very recent information. But one of the
15 authors is this gentleman down here and his name is
16 Seba. I play the stock market a lot. We have an
17 acronym of FANG, that's F-A-N-G, which stands for
18 Facebook Apple Netflix and Google which is now called
19 Alphabet. Three of those four organizations, not
20 Facebook -- whoops, how did that happen? Three of
21 those four organizations had Seba, Mr. St. James,
22 actually do the analysis on their market potential
23 when they were first starting and they all went
24 gigantic. And what he's coming along and saying is
25 this about electric cars, "Banning the sale of diesel
26 and gasoline vehicles by 2040 is a bit like banning

1 sale of horses for road transportation by 2040. There
2 won't be any to ban. Globally cars, buses and trucks
3 will no longer run on fossil fuels within the next
4 eight years." Okay? It's a guess, but he's got a
5 really good track record, like an amazing track
6 record.

7 That's our presentation. Essentially what
8 we're arguing is there's going to be like a surge in
9 demand for electricity. I really think that BC Hydro
10 should revisit their numbers on this. I think they're
11 being hopelessly romantic about their aspirations in
12 electrical cars, and we have a site that could provide
13 all kinds of electricity for the province in a very
14 green manner.

15 My Chief would have a few comments I think
16 she'd like to make. This is MarryAnn.

17 **SUBMISSIONS BY CHIEF ENEVOLDSEN (#0213):**

18 CHIEF ENEVOLDSEN: Good morning. I'd like to thank you
19 for giving us the opportunity to present our project
20 today. This project has been reuniting our families
21 with PNG and Homolco for the past three years. Being
22 family since we transformed, it's been really
23 important to us to reconnect with them, and having
24 Silkateen as part of Homolco's family again has just
25 opened up a whole new relationship. We're really
26 looking forward to developing this energy project

1 together, especially since it's very unique that the
2 rights and title have been settled in the territory
3 we're discussing. Not only has Silkateen been
4 welcoming with Homolco, but we're also looking at not
5 only energy projects but forestry initiatives and
6 other initiatives in our shred territory.

7 This project specifically has the potential
8 to end poverty for all seven of our nations, and I
9 really look forward to hopefully getting the
10 opportunity to bring this to the next level with
11 strong partners that we have found with the Silkateen
12 Nation. They've got the vision, the respect, and the
13 capacity that we need to move forward as partnership.
14 We're hoping that BC Hydro will also be that strong
15 partner that brings those values to the table so that
16 we can hopefully develop this project with them.

17 Again, thank you for your time today and
18 your consideration, and I look forward to presenting
19 again.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Have you spoken with BC
21 Hydro about -- have you begun discussions with Hydro
22 about this?

23 MR. CORMAN: Well, the research that went into this
24 occurred not recently. Most of the \$20 million was
25 spent a year or so ago.

26 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

1 MR. CORMAN: We haven't talked recently about this
2 project with them. I have other projects underway.
3 Currently we just got approval actually from the
4 president to build a solar farm in our territory, so
5 we're building a one megawatt solar farm and he
6 literally just sent me the power purchase agreement
7 yesterday. So we have some dialogue going on with BC
8 Hydro but not on this particular initiative, no, no.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay, thank you. Thank you for your
10 presentation. Any other questions? Okay, thank you.

11 Do you want to stand down for a few
12 minutes? Yeah. We'll just take a break while we see
13 if there's another presenter. I'm not sure if we have
14 one or not but we'll come back in a few minutes.

15 **(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED AT 11:18 A.M.)**

16 **(PROCEEDINGS RESUMED AT 11:25 A.M.)** **T14**

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: We're ready, ma'am. Please go ahead.

18 **SUBMISSIONS BY MS. McDONALD (#0156)**

19 MS. McDONALD: Okay. Just wanted to thank you guys for
20 the opportunity, and the invite to come down to speak
21 again. I am an entrepreneur. My business is in Fort
22 St. John.

23 A little history.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: And just state your name for the record
25 too, please. Yeah.

26 MS. McDONALD: Oh, sorry. It's Ramona McDonald.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

2 MS. McDONALD: Just a little bit of history. And this is
3 one of the things I had said on it last Sunday, that I
4 am a Métis woman and an entrepreneur from Fort St.
5 John, British Columbia. My children are all owners in
6 my company. My children are all First Nations of the
7 Prophet River First Nation. My late husband was a
8 Prophet River First Nation person, and which was -- in
9 the community we lived in.

10 When -- I grew up in the Dawson Creek area,
11 I raised my children in the Fort Nelson area, and I
12 built my business in the Fort St. John area. And to
13 this day I continue to build my business in Fort St.
14 John. I still have an office there, I still am there
15 a majority of the time. I do have a home in the
16 Kootenays with my new husband. But the north has
17 always been part of my life, and it has always been
18 there.

19 I went through some bad times through the
20 times that we had no employment, and our children grew
21 up in a very poor manner. They didn't always have
22 money to go and do the things that the other kids were
23 doing in the north. They didn't always have the
24 proper lunches to take, and they didn't always --
25 sometimes they went to school with just oatmeal in a
26 bowl to eat. We were very, very poor, and when we

1 lived in Fort Nelson, my husband didn't always have
2 employment.

3 And so when we grew -- as my kids grew up
4 and the more things that we started doing -- my mother
5 was here earlier. I learned a lot from my mother.
6 And my mother taught me how to work hard, and always
7 believe in working hard. And she's 80 years old
8 today, if you would have seen her in the back there.
9 She's 80 years old this year and she still works. And
10 she works a job in the east side Vancouver. And that.
11 So she's taught us how to work hard our whole life.
12 It's something that I've always taught my children.
13 As I say, my children are all -- have ownership in our
14 company. It is a family company. And it is based in
15 the north.

16 I'm here in support of the Site C dam. I
17 see that this Site C dam can give us more
18 opportunities and more chances to be able to expand
19 our businesses in the north and be able to see other
20 families get employment. And as I employ a lot of
21 people up north, you know, I just -- it breaks my
22 heart when we see that we're still seeing poverty in
23 our communities. We're still seeing poverty in our
24 towns, and we go up to Fort Nelson and we see poverty
25 there; in Fort St. John we see poverty there. Why are
26 we living in poverty when we have the opportunity to

1 continue to build a dam that can employ people, that
2 can train our young people to get ahead, so that
3 they're not following our footsteps.

4 We talk about our culture, we talk about
5 our heritage, which is a big value to me. I learned a
6 lot from my elders. I learned a lot about our
7 culture. I learned a lot about my husband's culture
8 and that -- or my late husband's culture. And that
9 was, you know, we work hard for what we do. Our
10 ancestors worked hard for what they do. They believed
11 in moving ahead and making things easier for the
12 communities that we lived in. And make it easier for
13 the families, and there was always growth in our
14 communities by our elders from way back.

15 Now, we go back a hundred, 200 years, we
16 could see that our ancestors were very innovative
17 people. They seen the chances of developing
18 something. We had our lawyers. We had our
19 politicians. We had our doctors. We had our workers,
20 and our labourers, our engineers. Those were all made
21 up of our community.

22 When I went to college, and that, I didn't
23 think I was able to go to college because I grew up
24 believing that I was just a dumb Indian. And that's
25 putting it as what I was told my whole life growing
26 up.

1 **Proceeding Time 11:30 a.m. T15**

2 And my whole life, surrounded that --
3 because of the colour of my skin. My sister was a
4 little bit fairer than I was, so she wasn't native.
5 Only I was. But she told me that it's okay, she just
6 has a suntan, so I went with that for many years. I
7 never learned who I was until later on in life. When
8 I was in high school I wanted to know my culture and I
9 wanted to be part of my culture. And so when the kids
10 made fun of me I got dressed up and I thought, I got
11 this right. And I remember putting the braids in my
12 hair and with the beaded ties and the feathers that
13 were on the beaded ties, but nobody taught me that the
14 feathers should have been laying down, not standing
15 up. So I went to school thinking I was pretty cool.

16 And that's what we're missing today.
17 That's the things that we miss. We do not teach our
18 kids the heritage that we have and the culture that we
19 have. We're so busy talking about it that we forget
20 to teach our children what it means to be native, what
21 it means to be moving ahead, and what it means to go
22 forward instead of always backwards. That's the
23 things that we miss in our communities. That is why
24 we see poverty. That is why we see our kids not
25 getting a proper education. That is why we're not
26 moving ahead and people are unemployed.

1 We have to look at it in a different way.
2 We can't talk about our culture. If we want to
3 practise our culture we can practise our culture. We
4 can do the things our ancestors done and teach our
5 children those things. But we can't ever go back to
6 the way life was and to the way things were, because
7 we all live in a society today where we drive
8 vehicles, where we have to work for a living and that
9 we have more things and we've evolved and we've gotten
10 bigger and we've seen where we are at today.

11 And that's one of the things that, when we
12 look at Site C, we need to see it as something moving
13 forward. It is an opportunity to move forward. We
14 have 193 -- 183 people working at that dam right now
15 of aboriginal people. Are we willing to say that
16 their voices don't count and that they should not have
17 employment because we want to shut the dam down? No,
18 we shouldn't. Should we take that away from their
19 families so that their families are not moving
20 forward? No, we shouldn't. We need to be able to
21 support them and we need to support the people that
22 are coming up behind us.

23 I worked in the high school for many years.
24 One of the things I taught the kids in the high school
25 is how to make choices. Every time we make a choice
26 in life, good or bad, we do carry on the consequences.

1 And they used to say to me every time they wanted to
2 do something they weren't supposed to, I'd say, "Okay,
3 you have choices," and then I was Mrs. Thomas. "Mrs.
4 Thomas, please, we don't like making choices." And
5 I'd say, "No, you make a choice."

6 And you know, I had some of the kids, some
7 of their kids that their own families didn't believe
8 in them that they were going to graduate, their own
9 communities did not support them that they would
10 graduate. They're going, "Why are you giving that
11 child another chance? He should just be thrown out."
12 And I would say, "No, he shouldn't be. He has a
13 choice to make and now he's given these choices."
14 Some of the worst kids that was labelled in the
15 schools were the ones that graduated and they went on
16 to post-secondary school.

17 And you've got to put a lot of pride in
18 those kids because they made a choice and they made a
19 good choice. Today they're working as welders,
20 they're working in the medical fields, they're working
21 in -- you know, they've done things in their life.
22 They've gone to college, they've gotten education.
23 And I still see some of these kids today and they come
24 up to me and they tell me what they're doing. You
25 know. They've been given opportunity to move forward
26 and they've been given an opportunity to do something

1 good for their own families and every one of them have
2 their own families now too. And that's where, you
3 know, when you start seeing the opportunities that are
4 there for our people, it's more than just a dam being
5 built. It's more than just protecting our heritage.
6 It is about giving opportunities to the youth that are
7 coming up behind us.

8 I talked to somebody not too long ago and
9 they were doing a program on a reserve, and of course
10 part of my company, a new part, is traffic control.
11 And I says, "You know, if you've got --" They're
12 doing employment training. I says, "If you have
13 people that are interested in working this summer,
14 tell them to send me a résumé."

15 **Proceeding Time 11:35 a.m. T16**

16 And he was one of my actual supervisors when I worked
17 in the schools, and I says to him -- and he says to
18 me, "I'll send you the ones -- anything that you see
19 my name on, those are the ones that I'm supporting."
20 And I said to him, I says, "How do you think we had
21 some of the worst kids in our school graduate? How do
22 you think they got through? What do you think I did
23 that was any different?" He says, "Well what?" I
24 says, "It took one person believing in those kids."
25 That one person -- and it wasn't just me that believed
26 in them, we had other people started believing in

1 them, they starting believing in themselves. That
2 gave them the opportunity to look at life different
3 and move ahead.

4 And he went, "You're right." He wasn't
5 believing in even the worst ones not being able to do
6 well. And he kind of changed his attitude on that.
7 And that's what we have to look at. When we are
8 looking at giving opportunities, it's not about
9 forgetting who we are or where we came from, because
10 those things will always be valuable to us. Our
11 culture will always be valuable to us.

12 Yes, many of us have lost our language.
13 I've gone to take language lessons all the time, but
14 you know, I think that it's important that we remember
15 our heritage and we remember where we came from and
16 when we come from a place of poverty and shame and
17 embarrassment in who we are, then maybe we need to
18 look at how can we change this? How do we change the
19 fact that we see so much poverty still and so much
20 addictions in our community and then within our First
21 Nation people, even my own family suffers, my children
22 suffer from addictions at times, and I look at that.
23 How do we go beyond that? How do we make that a
24 little bit better for the people that are in our
25 communities.

26 Role models. Who do we have as role models

1 and First Nation businesses? I look at the Site C and
2 I have to tell you, I'm not working at the Site C. I
3 don't work at the Site C. It's not that I didn't want
4 to, because I did want to very much. I was very very
5 excited. My dad worked on the W.A.C. Bennett dam. I
6 thought, yes, this is part of my heritage. I'm going
7 to work on the dam. Unfortunately I can't work on the
8 dam because our community is one of the ones that has
9 not signed an impact agreement, and so even though we
10 are Treaty 8 company, we can't work in the Treaty 8
11 territory because we're pegged for that community and
12 we're pegged for this community and this is the only
13 area that we can work in, which is unfortunate because
14 that just brings a whole bunch more racism to the
15 whole picture. That's another story another day.

16 But we want to be able to employ people, be
17 able to give them -- put their head up high. I want
18 to be able to have my company as a role model to my
19 son, to my daughters and to my other two children to
20 say, "You guys can build something, and this can be
21 yours." To my grandchildren, to say, "Yes, we are
22 First Nation companies. We are not a joint venture,
23 we're not a non-native company coming in with a signed
24 agreement. We are an aboriginal First Nation company
25 in the Treaty 8 territory and we're building a
26 business.

1 industry to that area. He was full of dreams and he
2 was full of hopes because -- you could see the sparkle
3 in his eyes when he talked about what he thinks he
4 could do and the things he can. I believe he
5 presented too.

6 And I thought, wow, like this is something
7 that this person is so excited because he sees
8 something beyond just the now. He sees what it can
9 look like in the future.

10 **Proceeding Time 11:41 a.m. T17**

11 And that's what we have to look at. We
12 can't look at just what we have today, but we have to
13 look at our people for tomorrow and what are we
14 bringing up for tomorrow and what's going to be there
15 for the people for tomorrow. And that's how we should
16 be looking is towards the things that are going to
17 impact.

18 There's a lot of money that has gone into
19 the Site C Dam. There's a lot of communities, there's
20 five communities that have signed impact agreements
21 that have been in support of the Site C Dam in the
22 Treaty 8 territory, and there is a lot of people in
23 Fort St. John and a lot of companies that depend on
24 the Site C Dam going forward.

25 Now, I do know that the impact agreements
26 that have been signed have given opportunities for

1 companies from the First Nation communities to work on
2 the Site C Dam, and do we take that away from them
3 now? Do we take something away from them that they
4 had a hope and that they had a dream to build their
5 company a little bit bigger and a little bit stronger
6 and to make something more substantial for their
7 families and to pass on to their -- inheritance on to
8 their children? To teach them the meaning of working
9 hard for something you want? And that, without
10 jeopardizing teaching what we believe in our heritage.
11 And that should never come to an end. That should
12 never stop teaching.

13 My mother teaches me every day something
14 about who I am and how I've become the person I am
15 today. And I hope that I teach my children every day,
16 my grandchildren and my great-granddaughter that they
17 need to be proud of who they are. It doesn't mean we
18 forget our heritage, because that's an important part
19 of who we are. But we also need to be strong and we
20 also need to be forward to where we want to be
21 tomorrow, wherever our generations wants to be the
22 next day. And my little great-granddaughter who's
23 only 11 months old now, where is she going to be in 20
24 years from now and when she's grown up? Where's her
25 hope? Where's her dreams going to be? And that's
26 what we want to look at. And by cancelling a Site C

1 Dam will impact a lot of communities in the Treaty 8
2 territory, and I think we have to look at that very
3 seriously because a lot of people depended on
4 employment.

5 I have a lot of friends that actually have
6 been working at Site C Dam, aboriginal people,
7 aboriginal women that have been working at the Site C
8 Dam and you know, they've gone where they didn't have
9 anything for a long time and now they have employment
10 and they have money in their pocket and they have
11 pride in what they're doing. Even if it's cleaning
12 rooms or if it's working as a medic on the dam
13 somewhere, or if it's driving the rock truck. There's
14 a few of them driving rock trucks out there. Braver
15 than I am. But you know, giving hope, giving pride in
16 who they are. That brings pride back to us as a
17 nation, and as an aboriginal person it makes me proud
18 to see that we are able to give those opportunities to
19 the people that are in the north.

20 We forget about who we are in the north.
21 Sometimes people from the south take advantage of who
22 we are of the north. Sometimes we get star struck by
23 people coming up going, "Oh yes, we need to stop
24 this," and we see that in the news all the time. And
25 of course we all have Facebook so we see the media
26 stuff every day. And you see a lot and then it's so

1 easy to be star struck by what's being said and that,
2 but when we take a look at going right back to who we
3 are once again, then we need to look at it.

4 This does not -- having a Site C Dam should
5 not affect our environment. And as aboriginal people
6 I really believe we need to make a strong stand to say
7 we still need to protect our environment. Our
8 environment should be an important part. We should
9 not let those things slide. And as it's being built,
10 we should be -- that consideration should be thought
11 about throughout the whole process of building the
12 Site C Dam, that the environment still needs
13 protected.

14 And yes, we're going to lose some farm
15 lands that are down in the bottom. For many years I
16 drove by, through the Hudson Hope Road and I never
17 seen the produce before until just recently when I
18 went down, and I just seen fields, and that's what
19 I've seen for many many years. And -- but we do need
20 to make sure, like we will lose some. But you know
21 what? We're not losing it all and that, and we do
22 need -- I know that there's been concessions made in
23 where the roads are going to be moved because of
24 traditional areas. That is greatly appreciated and
25 you have no idea, like, that you've taken in that
26 consideration for those areas that are sacred to the

1 people.

2 **Proceeding Time 11:46 a.m. T18**

3 But yes, we will lose some things, and we
4 will lose areas that might mean a lot more to us, or
5 to others, than it does to us.

6 But we also know that we can have some
7 other great things come out of this. We can have an
8 area, a recreational area. We can have the -- some
9 tourist businesses, and we can have more businesses
10 that can come up that are aboriginal businesses, true
11 First Nation and aboriginal businesses, not joint
12 ventures, but true businesses that are run by First
13 Nation people.

14 The more role models we put out there, the
15 more people that they have to follow after, and the
16 more success we're going to see in our communities.
17 Maybe one day we might not see poverty. Maybe one
18 day, we might not see addiction problems in our
19 communities and that. Lately, what -- when people
20 look at us, and we talk about our traditional ways,
21 what do we continue to see? We see addictions. We
22 see poverty. That is not the ways that we need to be
23 living.

24 We need to live for tomorrow, and we need
25 to build that strong First Nation aboriginal
26 communities without the poverty, without the

1 addictions, and we need to support the people that are
2 working at trying hard to make something different and
3 to make a difference in the communities that we live
4 in.

5 As I said, tradition means a lot to me.
6 And I might -- and as an entrepreneur, that doesn't go
7 away. It's not about making money, it's not about
8 making -- being -- it's more about being successful so
9 that we do have people following after our steps, and
10 that for me, like I say, it's never been about making
11 money. But I do want to build something that my
12 children can be proud of, and that my children can
13 hold their heads up and be proud of who they are and
14 where they came from. And I think that's with a lot
15 of people -- a lot of people want the opportunity to
16 give their children a little bit more than what we
17 had, or when they grew up, and my children are all
18 grown up as it is. But you know, what they grew up in
19 poverty and they didn't get the same things and that,
20 I don't want that for my grandchildren or my great-
21 granddaughter. I want to see the opportunities that
22 are there for them. And I want to be part of that in
23 promoting a strong business and promoting
24 opportunities for other entrepreneurs in the northeast
25 of B.C., in the Peace area, and there is quite a few
26 of us up there, and we need -- we want the

1 opportunities. And I think that we need to make sure
2 that those opportunities are kept.

3 Thank you. I think that's about it.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much. Is there any
5 questions? No? No.

6 Thank you, ma'am.

7 MS. McDONALD: Thank you.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Well, thank you very much
9 for everyone's interest, and thank you for -- I guess
10 many of our presenters have gone. But thank you for
11 that presentation, ma'am, and I hope you all have a
12 great day and a really good holiday weekend. Thank
13 you.

14 **(PROCEEDINGS ADJOURNED AT 11:50 A.M.)**

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THE FORGOING
is a true and accurate transcript
of the proceedings herein, to the
best of my skill and ability.



A.B. Lanigan, Court Reporter

October 6th, 2017