October 5, 2017

David Morton, Chairperson
Site C Inquiry Panel
British Columbia Utilities Commission
Suite 410, 900 Howe Street
Vancouver, BC V6Z 2N3

RE: SITE C WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Dear Mr. Morton:

In BC, as consumers, we waste electricity. It was mentioned at the Hearings in Kelowna that Canada is 5th in per capita consumption of electricity. Perhaps because it is so cheap we use more than necessary – we waste it – lights left on, heating with electricity when energy efficient alternatives exist (solar heating, even gas has a better conversion for heat).

My comments are aimed at residential usage – my philosophy is the less we use personally the more (low cost) electricity there is for industry to be and stay competitive.

When I lived in an apartment my electrical consumption was $18 every two months - $9/month ran my fridge, cooked meals every day, ran my computer & printer, watched television and had lights on. When I would be away for five weeks the bill reduced very little, suggesting to me most of that consumption was to operate the fridge. Why do other British Columbians need more for those basic needs than I do? Means of heating could be accomplished by other means.

Nevada has learned to adapt to water restrictions. More people move there but they are not increasing the amount of water available. I think BC might adopt a similar outlook. We can get by with less and thus the costs of generation need not be higher. In addition I favour increasing pricing to help curtail consumption or at least have multiple tier pricing to reward low consumption users – let the high consumption users subsidize the low consumption usage.

Although it may not seem it, these comments are aimed at the unnecessary cost of having the Site C Dam when conservation would serve the purpose of meeting electrical needs and be less expensive.

Other spokespersons at the Kelowna Hearings seemed to think that because we want (we waste) electricity we are entitled to waste the environment of northern BC and waste the rights of people living there. There didn’t seem to be any sense of responsibility for their actions of high personal consumption (leading to more demand through growth) having consequences of higher costs. These actions have consequences of destroying wildlife habitat, eliminating agricultural land and infringing on indigenous territories. They seem to think it is an entitlement to destroy, eliminate and infringe because they continue wasting inexpensive electricity.
Some sixty years ago, when the Bennett Dam was built, there was a trampling of indigenous rights. It took fifty years to reach a settlement for the First Nations affected. It was a mere slap on the wrist to BC Hydro. Perhaps BC Hydro believes they can get away with similar minor reparations (figuring it is easier to gain forgiveness for transgressions than permission) for the Site C Dam. There is the risk a future judiciary review (i.e. a judge presiding over a lawsuit) may rule along the lines of “You didn’t learn the first time. Dismantle the Dam and restore the land, as a lesson, so you will not do it a third time.” That is a cost possibility to consider and it may be higher than the estimated $8 billion to build the dam.

I do not want to see my tax dollars going into erecting this unnecessary structure that will displace people, reduce agricultural land and dishonour the governments’ fiduciary duty to look after the Indigenous people who have not consented to infringing on their traditional territory and violating their customs and culture. The costs are not just measured in dollars.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these remarks.

Yours truly,

Terry Vulcano