9 INFORMATION DISTRIBUTION AND CONSULTATION

In accordance with Section 7 of the EIS Guidelines, Section 9 describes the Project's information distribution and consultation program with the public (Section 9.1), Aboriginal groups (Section 9.2), and government agencies (Section 9.3). For the purpose of Section 9.1, the "public" is defined to consist of local and regional governments, communities, stakeholders, property owners, and the general public. Section 9.3 on government agency consultation includes federal, provincial, and territorial governments and agencies.

Sections 9.1, 9.2, and 9.3 below each describe the information distribution and consultation activities for the public, Aboriginal groups, and government agencies, respectively, that were conducted prior to and during the environmental assessment process. This includes the pre-Panel Review Stage and communication that would occur during construction.

Each section includes a summary of issues, concerns, and interests, based on input provided by the public, Aboriginal groups, and government agencies. These are presented in the form of tracking tables provided in the following appendices:

- Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation (Parts 1-3)
- Volume 1 Appendix H Aboriginal Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation
- Volume 1 Appendix I Government Agency Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation

Any outstanding issues and processes to resolve them are included in each section below, where applicable.

9.1 Public Information Distribution and Consultation

This section describes BC Hydro's information distribution and consultation activities undertaken with the public, as defined above. This section is divided into four subsections.

Section 9.1.1 provides historical background to the public information distribution and consultation program for the Project.

Section 9.1.2 provides a description of the public information distribution and consultation program leading up to and including the pre-Panel Review Stage. Details include the purpose, methods, and activities BC Hydro used to inform and consult with the public. This section also describes the communication and public notification activities relating to the EIS Guidelines and the EIS, including how public input was received and responded to during the public comment period for the EIS Guidelines, and the expected information and distribution activities anticipated during the public comment period for the EIS.

Section 9.1.3 provides the sources of input for the issues and interests identified by the public during the Project's public information distribution and consultation activities during the pre-Panel Review Stage, how those issues were considered by BC Hydro, and how they are summarized in issues tracking tables. A similar summary is provided with respect to issues identified by local and regional governments, and with respect to issues identified by the public during the public comment period for the EIS Guidelines.

Section 9.1.4 provides an outline of the communications and community relations that would be carried out during construction.

9.1.1 Background

In the late 1950s, the location known as "Site C" was identified as a potential third dam and hydroelectric generating station on the Peace River. In the late 1970s, "Site C" was examined further by BC Hydro and the provincial government as a potential source of hydroelectric power for British Columbia. In advance of an application to the British Columbia Utilities Commission (BCUC) to develop the site, BC Hydro began public meetings in 1977. Additional public meetings and open houses were held prior to the filing of an application for an Energy Project Certificate with the BCUC in 1981. In 1983, the BCUC concluded that construction of a dam at "Site C" was an acceptable project, but indicated that more information was required around the future demand for electricity and alternatives to the project. BC Hydro undertook no further public consultation until 1989. Between 1989 and 1991, there was further consultation when the development of a hydroelectric dam at "Site C" was again examined. In 1991, the provincial government suspended this option in favour of demand-side management.

In 2007, the provincial government's *BC Energy Plan* directed BC Hydro to

> "enter into initial discussions with First Nations, the Province of Alberta, and communities to discuss Site C [the current Project, as defined by this EIS] to ensure that communications regarding the potential project and the processes being followed are well known."

Based on this direction, BC Hydro designed a multi-phased public information and consultation program that provided opportunities for public input early in project planning, as well as throughout project planning and design (2007–2012). BC Hydro initiated its multi-phased program by conducting pre-consultation with members of the public, seeking input regarding how they wanted to be consulted and on what topics.

9.1.2 Pre-Panel Review Stage

The following sections describe the Project's public information distribution and consultation program leading up to and including the pre-Panel Review stage.

9.1.2.1 Purpose

The purpose of BC Hydro's public information distribution and consultation program has been to:

- Consult on components of the Project and its potential effects and benefits

- Consider public input in the context of technical, environmental, economic, health, social, and heritage information
- Keep communities, stakeholders, property owners, and the general public informed about the proposed Project and the opportunities for public participation

9.1.2.2 Information Distribution: Methods and Activities

The following subsections describe the methods and activities used by BC Hydro to exchange and disseminate Project information. Consultation methods and activities are described below in Section 9.1.2.3.

The information distribution methods and activities include:

- Community relations
- Project website
- Field study notices and project information sheets
- Public inquiries
- Business liaison program
- Media relations

9.1.2.2.1 Community Relations

In 2007, BC Hydro initiated a community relations program that will continue through all stages of the Project. The program provides an avenue for the public to receive information about the Project, and to ask questions and provide comments regarding the Project outside of formal consultation periods. The program also provides a mechanism for notification of ongoing consultation opportunities.

The community relations program consists of the following:

- Community consultation offices in Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope
- Regular and ongoing field study communications
- Regular and ongoing presentations and meetings with stakeholders and community groups
- Community outreach, defined as the sharing of Project updates and Project information as part of a larger BC Hydro- or community-sponsored event, such as a trade show

The objective of the Project's community relations program has been, and will continue to be, to provide timely information to the public, and to address their inquiries in an effective and timely manner.

See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 6 Pubic Information Materials and Part 7 Community Outreach Activities for two documents that provide information on the Project's community relations activities:

- Part 6 Public Information Materials lists the field studies, Project information, Project updates, maps, and field study outlines that have been posted on the Project website

- Part 7 Community Outreach Activities provides a list and description of the Project's community outreach activities from 2007 to November 30, 2012. In total, BC Hydro conducted or participated in 161 activities (e.g., project updates at trade shows, etc.).

9.1.2.2.2 Project Website

The Project website (www.bchydro.com/sitec) was launched in December 2007 and provides comprehensive Project information, contact information, and current news about the Project, as well as notices about public consultation opportunities.

The website contains the following sections:

About Site C – This section provides current news and background information about the Project, such as Project updates and bulletins, information sheets, brochures, and videos. At the request of the public, orthophotographical maps were also added to the website. The maps show the location of the Project and reservoir area, preliminary impact lines, and preferred Highway 29 realignments.

Where We Are Today – This section provides information about BC Hydro's multi-staged approach to evaluating the Project. Specific information about field studies taking place in the Project activity zone is also located in this section. BC Hydro has provided and published information notices about all studies taking place in the Project activity zone since 2008.

Consulting With You – This section provides information about consultation opportunities for the public and Aboriginal groups.

Site C Reports – This section includes more than 150 reports about the Project and is organized by subject. In addition to reports on environmental, engineering, and technical studies, the website also includes historical reports from the 1990s.

Business and Job Opportunities – Information about employment and contractor opportunities with the Project is located in this section, as well as information about business information sessions and registration forms for the Site C Business Directory. (See Section 9.1.2.2.5 Business Liaison Program for more information.)

Contact Us – This section contains contact information for the two community consultation offices and office hours, as well as a toll-free line, mailing address, fax number, and an option to receive email alerts about the Project.

Frequently Asked Questions – This section contains a list of common questions and answers about the Project.

9.1.2.2.3 Field Study Notices and Project Information Sheets

BC Hydro provided regular and ongoing notification regarding technical and environmental field studies and activities taking place in the Project activity zone. These field study notices, as well as information sheets, have been posted to the Site C website and at the Site C community consultation offices in Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope. See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 6 Public Information Materials for a full listing.

9.1.2.2.4 Public Inquiries

In 2007, BC Hydro established a program to respond to public inquiries about the Project. Public inquiries have been made through the Project's toll-free information line, by email, fax, mail, and in person at the community consultation offices. Between December 1, 2007 and November 15, 2012, a total of 2,902 public inquiries were recorded.

Inquiry topics included, but were not exclusive to (listed in order of most frequent to least frequent): general information about the Project; expressions of support for the Project; business and procurement opportunities; expressions of opposition to the Project; environment and wildlife; First Nations; flooding and water management; Highway 29; recreation; Project timeline; and transmission.

For a full list of the type and source of public inquires, see Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 5 Public Inquiries.

9.1.2.2.5 Business Liaison Program

The Project established a Business Liaison Program to:

- Keep the business community updated on the status of the Project
- Inform and engage the B.C. business community on future Site C business opportunities

To meet the objectives of the program, the Project established a business directory and conducted business information sessions, as described below.

<u>Business Directory</u>

The Site C Business Directory provides information about possible business opportunities with the Project. Registered companies receive updates, via email, on potential business opportunities as they arise, including notifications about events such as Site C Business Information Sessions.

As of November 30, 2012, there were 512 companies registered with the Site C Business Directory.

<u>Business Information Sessions</u>

Business information sessions on the Project were held in the communities of Chetwynd, Dawson Creek, Fort St. John, Prince George, and Vancouver in fall 2011 and fall 2012. An additional session in the District of Hudson's Hope was added in fall 2012. BC Hydro partnered with business organizations and the District of Hudson's Hope to host and promote the business information sessions.

The sessions provided an early opportunity for businesses to hear directly from members of the Project team about Project design, as well as about potential future business opportunities. Attendees were asked to provide feedback on how they would like to be engaged about potential business opportunities in the future.

A total of 372 people attended the November 2011 business information sessions, and 52 individuals completed registration forms for the Site C Business Directory.

Information contained in the feedback forms from the November 2011 sessions indicated that 95% of respondents said they would be interested in attending a business information session in the future. Based on that feedback, a second round of business information sessions was held in November 2012 in the same five communities, with the addition of Hudson's Hope.

A total of 313 people attended the November 2012 business information sessions, and 41 individuals completed registration forms for the Site C Business Directory. At that session, 99% of respondents indicated they would be interested in attending a business information session in the future.

See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 8 Business Liaison Program for more information about the Business Directory and for copies of the December 2011 and December 2012 Site C Business Information Sessions Summary reports.

9.1.2.2.6 Media Relations

In 2007, a media spokesperson for the Project was assigned to respond to media inquiries. Media relations activities were designed to be responsive and inform the media and its audiences about the Project, as well as provide a forum for public notification of consultation opportunities. Media relations activities included:

- Responding to media inquiries and interview requests
- Submitting letters to the editor
- Providing technical media briefings as required
- Submitting Information Bulletins/News Releases
- Notifying media of opportunities for public consultation and other events

9.1.2.3 Public Consultation: Methods and Activities

In addition to sharing and distributing information as described in the previous section, BC Hydro conducted consultation with the public leading up to and including the pre-Panel Review stage. Public consultation included asking for public comment about the consultation process itself, Project design features, and potential Project effects, including draft mitigation plans.

This section describes consultation activities with the public, including:

- Consultation methods
- Public notification
- Consultation activities and topics
- Reporting
- Public opinion research

A summary of issues, concerns and interests – based on input provided by the public and stakeholders – and how BC Hydro has considered them in project planning and design, is outlined in Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and

Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 1 Public and Stakeholder Issues and Interests Tracking Table.

Additionally, a summary of issues, concerns and interests – based on input provided by regional and local governments – and how BC Hydro has considered them in project planning and design, is outlined in Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 2 Regional and Local Government Liaison Program Summary, and Issues and Interests Tracking Table.

9.1.2.3.1 Consultation Methods

Methods used for consultation included the following:

- **Community Consultation Offices**: BC Hydro opened a community consultation office in Fort St. John on January 7, 2008, and based on community feedback, opened another office in Hudson's Hope on October 7, 2008. The offices are staffed by Project employees (the Hudson's Hope office is staffed one day per week; the Fort St. John office is staffed five days per week) to provide a location where the public can get information about the Project, ask questions, and submit feedback forms or written submissions.
- **Consultation Discussion Guides and Feedback Forms**: A discussion guide was produced for each round of consultation. The discussion guides provided information such as an overview of the Project, the current stage of project planning, and how public input would be used and considered, as well as technical information (graphs or maps) specific to each topic of consultation.
- Each discussion guide also included feedback forms with specific questions related to consultation topics, as well as space for participants to provide additional feedback on any topic related to the Project. Online feedback forms were also available through the Project website.
- For a listing of consultation discussion guides and feedback forms and their links to the Project website, see Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.
- **Open Houses**: Open houses provided an opportunity for the public to read information about the Project provided in the discussion guides, view display boards and wall-sized maps, and to have one-on-one or small-group discussions with members of the Project team and subject matter experts. At many open houses, a question-and-answer session was also held, moderated by a professional facilitator. When a question-and-answer session was held, meeting notes were taken that were subsequently made available on the Project website.
- **Stakeholder Meetings**: Meetings were held with groups of stakeholders consisting of 10 to 40 people. At these meetings, participants were provided with a discussion guide and feedback form, and Project subject matter experts were available to present information and answer questions. Stakeholder meetings were moderated by a professional facilitator. Meeting notes were taken and subsequently made available on the Project website. See Section 9.1.2.3.2 Public Notification below for more information about stakeholders.

- **Property Owner Meetings**: Meetings were held with property owners potentially directly affected by the Project. Most meetings took place with individual property owners, but some were held as small-group meetings on specific issues of interest. BC Hydro also conducted specific meetings with property owners potentially affected by realignment of segments of Highway 29, reservoir creation and impact lines, transportation infrastructure, and sources of construction materials.
- **Submissions**: The Project received public submissions and input about the Project through email, mail, fax, and the Project's toll-free line.
- **Website/Email**: All consultation materials were posted to the Project website (www.bchydro.com/sitec), including a feedback form that could be completed online.
- **Toll-free line**: Consultation input was received through phone calls to the Project's toll-free line (1-877-217-0777).
- **Public Opinion Research**: BC Hydro conducted two province-wide public opinion polls regarding the Project, one in 2008 and one in 2012. For more information, see Section 9.1.2.3.5 Public Opinion Research.
- **Fact Sheets**: Fact sheets were produced for topics of high interest (such as agriculture, consultation opportunities, and impact lines) and were available on the Project website and at consultation events.

9.1.2.3.2 Public Notification

- **Stakeholder identification**: BC Hydro's water use planning processes, long-term electricity planning processes and several stages of consultation about Site C helped the Project team identify and develop a preliminary list of potential stakeholders who might be interested in consultation opportunities regarding the Project. Local governments and regional districts were also added to this stakeholder list.

  BC Hydro also undertook broad public notification to encourage participation in the consultation process. Members of the public and stakeholder organizations were added to the stakeholder list over time and include:

  - Those who signed up to receive updates through the Project website
  - Members of the public who participated in stakeholder meetings and open houses
  - Members of the public who submitted feedback during consultation or submitted an inquiry through the public inquiry program
  - Those who signed up to the Site C Business Directory or attended a business information session
- **Newspaper/radio ads**: Prior to each round of public consultation, notification of consultation opportunities (stakeholder meetings, open houses, and online consultation) were placed in newspapers in the northern B.C. (see listing below) and, when appropriate, in the *Vancouver Sun* and *Business in Vancouver*.

  Northern and other provincial B.C. media included:

  <u>Newspapers</u>

  - *Alaska Highway News*

- *Chetwynd Echo*
- *Dawson Creek Daily News*
- *Dawson Creek Mirror*
- *Fort Nelson News*
- *Fort St. John Northerner*
- *Hudson's Hope Bulletin*
- *Northeast News*
- *Mackenzie Times*
- *Prince George Citizen*
- *Prince George Free Press*
- *Tumbler Ridge News*
- *Victoria Times Colonist*

<u>Radio</u>

- Fort St. John:
  - CKFU FM
  - CHRX FM
  - CKNL FM
- Chetwynd and Dawson Creek:
  - CHET FM
  - CHAD AM
  - CJDC AM
- Prince George:
  - CFIS FM
  - CIRX FM
  - CJCI FM
  - CKDV FM
  - CKKN FM

<u>Online</u>

- Energeticitycity.ca
- Opinion250.ca

- **Emails to stakeholder list**: BC Hydro sent invitation emails to stakeholders inviting them to participate in stakeholder meetings, open houses, or to complete online feedback forms.
- **BC Hydro bill inserts**: Approximately 1.3 million residential BC Hydro customers received a bill insert regarding the Project and opportunities to participate in

consultation. These inserts were sent prior to Project Definition Consultation, fall 2008 and Project Definition Consultation, spring 2012.

- **Project updates**: BC Hydro produced Project updates with notification of opportunities to participate in consultation, which were emailed to those who signed up for Project updates.
- **Website:** The Project website was updated with opportunities to participate in consultation.
- **Householder notification**: BC Hydro sent household mailers to approximately 21,000 households in the Peace River region prior to periods of consultation. The mailers included information about opportunities to participate in consultation, the topics of consultation, and the schedule of open houses.
- **Phone call notification/reminders**: Prior to each round of consultation, reminder phone calls were made to those who were sent email invitations.
- **Media**: Media in the Peace River region were advised of the consultation opportunities in their communities. This usually led to stories regarding the consultation process, which included links to the Project website or consultation meeting dates and times.

9.1.2.3.3 Consultation Activities

The following section summarizes BC Hydro-led public consultation activities completed to date.

<u>Pre-Consultation, December 2007 – February 2008</u>

During pre-consultation (December 2007 to February 2008), BC Hydro asked the public across British Columbia how they wanted to be consulted and about what topics they wished to discuss during consultation for the Project.

In total, there were 992 participant interactions during pre-consultation, which included 400 participants attending 48 stakeholder meetings; 56 participants attending a public meeting and open house at Hudson's Hope; 305 feedback forms returned; 31 additional submissions by mail, email and fax; and 200 visits to the Fort St. John community consultation office.

BC Hydro made changes to its consultation program based on public feedback from pre-consultation. For example:

- Open houses were added as a consultation method
- Feedback from pre-consultation informed the topics that were brought forward for Project Definition Consultation, such as recreation, transportation, energy alternatives, local effects, and community benefits
- A consultation office was opened in the District of Hudson's Hope

The feedback received during pre-consultation is described in the Pre-Consultation Summary Report (2008) and how that input was considered is found in the Consideration of Input from Pre-Consultation document (2008). For both documents, see Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

Project Definition Consultation, May to June 2008

From May to June 2008, BC Hydro consulted on the following topics:

- Site C as an energy option
- Community and provincial benefits
- Project design elements
- Recreation (such as river-based opportunities versus reservoir-based opportunities)
- Infrastructure (such as relocation of segments of Highway 29 and worker housing)
- Environment (such as potential increase of fog and effects on fish)
- Land uses (such as heritage resources and impacts on archaeological sites)

During this round of consultation, there were 1,160 participant interactions, which included 284 participants attending 29 stakeholder meetings; 380 participants attending 10 open houses; 224 feedback forms returned; 22 submissions received by mail, email, fax, or phone; and 250 visits to the Fort St. John Community Consultation Office.

See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

Project Definition Consultation, October - December 2008

From October–December 2008, BC Hydro consulted on the following topics:

- Site C as an energy option
- Powerhouse access bridge and associated access roads
- Provincial and community benefits – other potential infrastructure improvements
- Reservoir preparation considerations
- Sourcing dam construction materials, and relocation and reclamation of excavated soil and rock
- Potential environmental effects

During this round of consultation there were 1,254 participant interactions, which included 358 participants attending 26 stakeholder meetings; 326 participants attending seven open houses; 345 feedback forms returned; 72 submissions received by mail, email, fax, or phone; and 153 visits to the Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope community consultation offices.

See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

Project Definition Consultation, Spring 2012

The topics presented in spring 2012 consultation included:

- Highway 29 realignment options
- Outdoor recreation
- 85th Avenue Industrial Lands

Information was also provided about worker accommodation, transmission line and preliminary impact lines, and land use.

During the spring 2012 consultation period, there were 926 participant interactions, which included 302 participants attending 18 stakeholder meetings; 278 participants attending five open houses; 85 feedback forms returned; 39 submissions received by mail, email, and fax; and 150 visits to the Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope community consultation offices.

Project Definition Consultation, Fall 2012

Consultation topics during fall 2012 included:

- Worker accommodation
- Transportation
- Clearing
- Agriculture

During the fall 2012 consultation period, there were 495 participant interactions, which included 231 participants attending 15 stakeholder meetings; 118 participants attending four open houses; 42 feedback forms returned;12 submissions received by mail, email, and fax; and 92 visits to the Fort St. John and Hudson's Hope community consultation offices.

The feedback received during the spring and fall rounds of Project Definition Consultation in 2012 is described in Project Definition Consultation Summary reports. How that input was considered is found in the Consideration of Consultation Input document. See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

Regional and Local Government Liaison Program

BC Hydro established a Regional and Local Government Liaison Program in April 2010 to formalize engagement with local governments and provide a forum for discussion. Program components included:

- Regional and Local Government Liaison Committee (RLGC) The RLGC provided a forum for BC Hydro and elected officials to share information and discuss community interests, issues and potential benefits related to the Project. Terms for Reference for the RLGC were developed and approved by the Committee.
    - The Committee was chaired by the Project's Executive Vice President and meets quarterly
    - Five RLGC meetings were held between June 2010 and September 2011 in Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope, Taylor, Dawson Creek, and Chetwynd
    - Four RLGC Meetings were held between October 2011 and November 2012 in Fort St. John (2), Hudson's Hope, and Taylor
    - A SharePoint website was developed to allow committee members to share meeting materials. Meeting materials were also made available to the public on the Project website.

- Local Government Technical Engagement (LGTE) The LGTE provided regular and working communications between the Project team and staff from each municipality.
  - Meetings were led by the Socio-Economic lead for the Project
  - Capacity funding was offered to regional and local governments to participate; some accepted this offer
  - A total of 64 LGTE meetings and conference calls were held with individual local governments between June 2010 and November 2012. There were also six joint LGTE meetings during the same period.
- Council Presentations Project team representatives also provided updates to local and regional government councils on major Project milestones, or as requested. Regular meetings were held and inquiries answered, and workshops were held as appropriate on issues of community interest, including potential Project benefits.

For Regional and Local Government Liaison Summary reports (Winter 2011/2012 and January 2013), see the Project website and Volume 1 Appendix G, Part 2 Regional and Local Government Liaison Program Summary, and Issues and Interests Tracking Table.

Property Owner Liaison and Consultation

BC Hydro initiated a separate liaison and consultation program with property owners and established a properties team within the Project team to implement the program. The purpose of the program was to:

- Provide information and update property owners regarding Project planning and design
- Facilitate two-way information exchange between property owners and the Project team
- Engage with property owners prior to, and during, defined periods of consultation
- Negotiate and provide compensation for permissions to access private property for the purposes of technical and environmental field studies

In addition, BC Hydro held specific consultations with property owners as described below.

1. *Highway 29 realignment options (November 2008–February 2009*): The creation of the Site C reservoir would require the realignment of up to six segments of Highway 29 over a total distance of up to 30 km. In spring 2008, BC Hydro consulted with the public about the segments of the highway that, at that time, had been identified for potential realignment. BC Hydro undertook further property owner consultation from November 2008 to February 2009 on the specific highway realignment options.

   During this consultation, engineering and other representatives from the Project team met individually with potentially directly affected property owners to review property maps, and to seek feedback on the specific realignment options. A consultation summary report (Property Owner Consultation on Potential Highway 29 Realignment Options, November 2008–March 2009) is available on the Project website and is listed in Volume 1 Appendix G, Public Information Distribution and Consultation

Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

2. *Site C Project and Field Study Update (April 2011):* On April 5, 2011, at Hudson's Hope, and April 6, 2011, at Fort St. John, subject matter experts from the Project team provided property owners in the Peace River region with an information update on the Project and field studies planned for the 2011 field season. Topics included shoreline geotechnical investigations, heritage studies, clearing plan investigations, and wildlife studies. BC Hydro also sought permission from property owners to access properties to complete these studies.

3. *Preliminary Impact Lines and Highway 29 Realignment (2011–2012):* Prior to Project Definition Consultation, spring 2012, subject matter experts from the Project team met with property owners whose properties could be affected based on preliminary impact lines. Preliminary impact lines outline potential effects from flooding, erosion, slope instability, and landslide-generated waves that could affect safety and land use around the reservoir.

BC Hydro representatives also met with property owners whose properties could be potentially directly affected by Highway 29 realignment to discuss pre-construction work, including topographic surveys, geotechnical investigations, development of detailed bridge and drainage designs, confirmation of the highway alignment, and preparation of construction drawings and specifications.

BC Hydro representatives also met with property owners on the south bank of the proposed dam site whose properties could be potentially directly affected by upgrades to Jackfish Lake Road, construction of the Project access road and resource roads, and dam site area and transmission line construction.

<u>Local Area Consultations</u>

BC Hydro conducted area-specific consultation where Project-related plans and effects were of local interest. Consultation methods included stakeholder meetings, open houses, discussion papers and feedback forms.

Local area consultation included:

- *Hudson's Hope Shoreline Protection Consultation (October 2011–November 2011):* BC Hydro consulted with the District of Hudson's Hope, property owners and the community regarding the Hudson's Hope shoreline protection, including options for a berm, potential public use options for berm areas, public access to berm areas, and potential landscaping and recreation opportunities in berm areas.
- A consultation summary report is listed in Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials and is available on the Project website.

In addition, BC Hydro provided information and conducted local meetings with area residents in the vicinity of the 85th Avenue Industrial Lands, a 96 ha parcel of land located in the Peace River Regional District, adjacent to the City of Fort St. John, about the proposed use of the site during construction, potential mitigation measures, and future use after construction.

9.1.2.3.4 Reporting

Consultation Summary Reports

Following each round of consultation, a Consultation Summary Report was written by a professional facilitator and a survey research firm that independently tabulated the results of consultation. The Consultation Summary Reports included:

- Participation numbers
- Public notification prior to consultation
- Quantifiable results from feedback forms
- Qualitative results from the stakeholder meetings and open houses, including the key themes from each meeting
- Detailed meeting notes from each stakeholder meeting and open house where a question-and-answer session took place
- A copy of all feedback forms submitted, emails, public inquiries, and written submissions during the consultation period

The reports were posted on the Project website and made available in the Community Consultation Offices. An email was also sent to consultation participants advising that the Consultation Summary Reports were available online. See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

Consideration Memos

BC Hydro documented its consideration of public input in Consideration Memos. These memos demonstrated how BC Hydro considered the input along with technical and financial information in refining project designs or developing mitigation or compensation measures. See Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 4 BC Hydro-Led Public Consultation Activities and Materials.

9.1.2.3.5 Public Opinion Research

In July 2012, BC Hydro commissioned Harris/Decima to undertake a province-wide public opinion poll relating to the Project. The survey was conducted as part of BC Hydro's public and stakeholder consultation program and is publicly available.

The Harris/Decima poll was a telephone survey with a sample of 807 people across the province of British Columbia. The margin of error for a sample of this size is +/- 3.5% 19 times out of 20. Field dates for the study were July 8, 2012 to July 12, 2012.

The Harris/Decima survey found the following key results:

- 80% of those polled either supported (40%), or could accept under certain circumstances (40%), building Site C to meet future electricity needs, while 15% were opposed
- 77% would be comfortable with Site C, provided it underwent an extensive and independent environmental assessment that is approved at the end of the process, while 16% disagreed

- 80% would be comfortable with Site C provided that people and communities affected were properly consulted and their views taken into account as much as possible, while 15% disagreed
- 74% agreed that Site C would provide economic opportunities for B.C., particularly in the north, while 17% disagreed

These results are similar to an August 2008 public opinion poll conducted as part of BC Hydro's integrated energy planning. At that time, the poll found that 81% of those polled either supported (44%), or could accept under certain circumstances (37%), building Site C to meet future electricity needs, while 17% opposed the Project.

9.1.2.4 EIS Guidelines and EIS Communication

This section describes the communication and public notification activities relating to the EIS Guidelines and the EIS, including how public input was received and responded to during the public comment period for the EIS Guidelines, and the expected information and distribution activities anticipated during the planned public comment period for the EIS.

EIS Guidelines

During the pre-Panel Review Stage, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency (CEA Agency) and the B.C. Environmental Assessment Office (BCEAO) held a 45-day public comment period on the draft EIS Guidelines (April 17, 2012 to June 1, 2012). The Guidelines provided direction to BC Hydro and identified information required in the EIS.

As part of the public comment period, the CEA Agency and BCEAO hosted six public open houses in May 2012 in the communities of Fort St. John, Hudson's Hope, Chetwynd, Peace River (AB), Dawson Creek, and Prince George. During these Agency/BCEAO-led open houses, BC Hydro provided Project team subject matter experts to answer questions and to provide specific technical information regarding the draft EIS Guidelines. This information complemented the environmental assessment process and other Agency/BCEAO-related information provided by the Agency/BCEAO staff in attendance.

The CEA Agency and BCEAO provided public notification of the public comment period and open houses to local and regional media and stakeholders prior to the commencement of these activities, which included:

- A joint CEA Agency-BCEAO News Release announcing that the draft EIS Guidelines were available for public comment and to announce the open house sessions
- A public notice advertisement placed in seven regional newspapers and aired on five regional radio stations
- Emails to stakeholders
- Posting of the public notice and news release to the CEA Agency and BCEAO websites

The CEA Agency and BCEAO also accepted written comments from the public, stakeholders, and Aboriginal groups. These comments were posted on the CEA Agency public registry and BCEAO website.

On June 26, 2012, BC Hydro provided responses to 1,388 comments from 912 individual submissions received during the public comment period on the draft EIS Guidelines. In accordance with Chapter 7 of the EIS Guidelines, a summary of the issues raised and BC Hydro's responses to these information requests can be found in Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 3 EIS Guidelines Public Comment Summary Table.

For a listing of all the comments received and BC Hydro's responses, including "Topic Summaries" that provided more detailed responses on key themes raised during the public comment period, please see www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca or www.eao.gov.bc.ca.

EIS

It is anticipated that BC Hydro will similarly participate in public open houses during an Agency/BCEAO-led public comment period for the EIS in 2013, including responding to information requests. BC Hydro will provide subject matter experts at open houses and Advisory Working Group meetings to provide information and gather feedback. More information on Agency/BCEAO-led public comment periods for the Project can be found at:

- Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency: www.ceaa-acee.gc.ca
- British Columbia Environmental Assessment Office: www.eao.gov.bc.ca

9.1.3 Issues, Concerns, and Interests

A summary of issues, concerns, and interests – based on input provided by the public – and how BC Hydro considered them in project planning and design, is outlined in Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 1 Public and Stakeholder Issues and Interests Tracking Table.

Additionally, a summary of issues, concerns, and interests – based on input provided by regional and local governments – and how BC Hydro considered them in project planning and design, is outlined in Volume 1 Appendix G Public Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, Part 2 Regional and Local Government Liaison Program Summary, and Issues and Interests Tracking Table.

The summary of issues in the tracking tables are derived from the detailed consultation and information distribution activities and reports as described in this section. By nature, the tables provide a summary of the issues, not a detailed reporting of each issue, topic, or concern mentioned in the course of the five years of consultation on the Project. Detailed reporting includes:

- Consultation Summary Reports (Public and Stakeholder Consultation, and Property Owner Consultation)
    - The issues tracking tables reference the consolidated key themes from each round of consultation
    - Additional publicly available information
        - Meeting notes from each meeting where a question-and-answer session was held, including a summary of key themes of each of those individual meetings
        - Quantitative reporting from feedback forms

        - Key themes and qualitative feedback from “additional comment” sections of feedback form and written submissions
- Public Inquiry Process
    - BC Hydro has kept a record of each public inquiry and response
    - A log of visitors to the community consultation offices was tracked and inquiries logged into the public inquiry process
    - These inquiries were categorized and overall categories were summarized into the issues tracking tables

9.1.3.1 Process for Resolving Outstanding Issues

Throughout the Project’s environmental assessment – including the pre-Panel Review Stage, the Joint Review Panel Stage and the post-Panel Stage – BC Hydro has and will continue to work with the public to ensure that potential Project-related effects on identified interests and concerns continue to be heard and considered.

Throughout these stages, BC Hydro commits to identifying and considering outstanding public issues, concerns, or interests that have not been addressed. BC Hydro will respond to information requests during the EIS public comment period, the Joint Review Panel Stage, and the post-Panel Stage, and during ongoing community relations, consultation, and communication with the public.

BC Hydro continues to engage in discussions with local and regional governments about the Project’s construction plans, draft mitigation plans as well as pursuing potential legacy initiatives that would provide additional economic and social benefits for the region.

As described in Section 9.1.2.2, BC Hydro will continue to use the following methods and activities to resolve outstanding public issues through the information distribution program (and, where appropriate, the consultation methods and activities described in Section 9.1.2.3):

- Public inquiry program
- Local government liaison, and continuing discussion with local governments
- Business Liaison Program
- Local area consultations
- Property owner liaison

9.1.4 Construction Phase Communications and Community Relations

This section describes BC Hydro’s proposed communication objectives and community relations with the public during construction, should the Project proceed.

9.1.4.1 Objectives

The construction phase communication objectives are to:

- Continue to facilitate regular community and stakeholder communications regarding the Project

- Maintain cooperative relationships with regional and local government and work with them to manage construction information and issues
- Maintain strong relationships with the business community through the Business Liaison Program

9.1.4.1.1 Community Relations

The purpose of community relations during the construction phase is to continue to maintain and build relationships with the public through ongoing and regular Project updates, including:

- Construction activities and schedules
- Traffic information
- Other relevant Project information and milestones
- Community consultation offices

Community relations also includes attending public and stakeholder meetings and dealing with inquiries from the public, providing Project updates, and problem solving on issues as they arise, often with the involvement of construction managers.

BC Hydro would continue to provide local and regional media with Project updates.

A Public Safety Management Plan will be developed and implemented during construction and operations of the Project (see Volume 5 Section 35 Summary of Environmental Management Plans).

9.2 Aboriginal Group Information Distribution and Consultation

9.2.1 Introduction

The Aboriginal Group Information Distribution and Consultation section describes the approach, methods, and activities that BC Hydro used to inform and consult with Aboriginal groups prior to and during the environmental assessment process. The environmental process is described in Volume 1 Section 8 Assessment Process. This section provides an overview of consultation activities, presents the processes in place to address outstanding issues raised by Aboriginal groups, and looks ahead to the approach and activities that are planned for Aboriginal consultation, should the Project proceed to construction.

Specific details of consultation activities undertaken with each of the 29 Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1 are provided in Volume 5 Appendix A Asserted or Established Aboriginal Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements Supporting Documentation. The issues, interests, and concerns raised through the consultation process are presented in Volume 1 Appendix H Aboriginal Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation. Related material is also addressed in Volume 3 Section 19 Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes, Volume 5 Section 34 Asserted or Established Aboriginal Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements, Volume 5 Section

35 Summary of Environmental Management Plans, and Volume 5 Section 37 Requirements for the Federal Environmental Assessment.

BC Hydro is the Crown actor responsible for the development, construction, and operation of the Project and is, therefore, responsible for consultation with Aboriginal groups with respect to the Project generally. In addition, the BCEAO and CEA Agency have a role in consultation for the purposes of the environmental assessment being conducted under the EIS Guidelines. In the exercise of that role, they delegate to proponents certain procedural aspects of consultation. BC Hydro is a proponent in the environmental assessment process and has been delegated, through the provisions in the EIS Guidelines, certain procedural aspects of consultation to enable the BCEAO and the CEA Agency to fulfill their roles. While at times in this EIS BC Hydro will include consultation activities undertaken in connection with its Crown actor role, the EIS is directed to consultation with Aboriginal Groups through to the statutory decision-making stage of the environmental assessment and is not intended, except where noted, to reflect all of the consultation activities of BC Hydro that will be undertaken after the environmental assessment process is complete.

BC Hydro began consultation with Aboriginal groups in regard to the Project in late 2007 and prior to any decision to advance the Project to an environmental assessment. BC Hydro made initial contact with 41 Aboriginal groups in B.C., Alberta, and the Northwest Territories. BC Hydro provided project-related information and requested input from those Aboriginal groups in order to inform the Project from an early stage of development. In some cases, BC Hydro has entered into consultation agreements to provide interested Aboriginal groups with capacity funding and to set out a structured consultation process that reflects the interests of both parties.

As described in this section, BC Hydro has also entered into Traditional Land Use Agreements, and in addition to those agreements, some Aboriginal groups have provided traditional land use information relating to the Project. BC Hydro has conducted consultation with Aboriginal groups regarding Project components and activities, the potential effects of the Project, and the potential changes to the environment resulting from the Project. BC Hydro has also supported consultation with Aboriginal groups as part of the environmental assessment process, including the review of the draft EIS Guidelines. Through the course of the consultation process conducted to date, Aboriginal groups have raised issues, concerns, and interests. BC Hydro has responded to the Aboriginal groups as appropriate, and as information was available, and has developed a process for addressing outstanding issues, concerns, and interests. BC Hydro intends to utilize this approach, should the Project proceed to construction and operation.

9.2.1.1 Approach to Aboriginal Consultation on the Project

BC Hydro began consultation with Aboriginal groups in regard to the Project in late 2007 and prior to any decision to advance the Project to an environmental assessment. BC Hydro's Aboriginal Relations and Negotiations department established the Site C First Nations Engagement Team, tasked with carrying out consultations with Aboriginal groups with respect to the Project. Aboriginal consultation for the Project is ongoing. BC Hydro and Aboriginal groups are engaged in a process that will continue through all stages of the environmental assessment process, as well as through the proposed construction and operations stages, as described in greater detail below.

Since 2007, BC Hydro has been proactive in establishing relationships and meeting with Aboriginal groups who may potentially be affected by or have an interest in the Project. The extent (or level) of consultation has been guided by the potential for impacts on the exercise of asserted treaty and Aboriginal rights, as well as the level of interest expressed. In keeping with this adaptive and flexible approach, BC Hydro has engaged in consultation that has ranged from notification of key Project milestones for those Aboriginal groups where BC Hydro anticipated little to no potential adverse change in the environment from the Project, to structured consultations aimed at identifying and assessing potential effects of the Project on those groups located in and around the Project activity zone that may experience those effects, and seeking to address them.

As described in Volume 1 Section 4.1 Project Location, the Project is located within the area covered by Treaty 8. BC Hydro's understanding of Treaty 8 and the rights contained therein is set out in Volume 5 Section 34 Asserted or Established Aboriginal Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements. BC Hydro has consulted in greater depth with Treaty 8 First Nations that are in close proximity to the Project and whose members may experience direct effects that may result from the Project. For the purposes of this EIS, Blueberry River First Nations, McLeod Lake Indian Band, Saulteau First Nations, and the Treaty 8 Tribal Association (representing Doig River, Halfway River, Prophet River, and West Moberly First Nations), are considered by BC Hydro to be "Project Area Aboriginal Groups". With these groups, BC Hydro has engaged in more extensive consultations regarding project components and activities, and the potential effects of the Project. The scope of the topics covered through the consultation process is explored in greater detail in Section 9.2.3.3.

BC Hydro has also consulted with other Treaty 8 First Nations who are located in B.C. or downstream of the Project. This includes those Aboriginal groups located in Alberta and the Northwest Territories, in proximity to the Peace River watershed, and along the Slave River. Consultations with Aboriginal groups located away from the immediate Project activity zone have tended to focus on the potential downstream changes resulting from the Project.

BC Hydro has also consulted with the Tsay Keh Dene Band and Kwadacha First Nation to fulfill commitments in formal agreements with those First Nations to identify and attempt to address any potential effects and to identify project opportunities associated with any new BC Hydro projects within the area of the mainstem of the Peace River between Peace Canyon Dam and the Alberta border.

Métis groups have been engaged to varying degrees, dependent upon jurisdiction, level of interest expressed, and proximity to the Project or the Peace River watershed, consistent with the approach described above. The CEA Agency has also directed BC Hydro to consult with select Métis organizations in B.C., as outlined in Table 9.1.

In addition to the Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1, BC Hydro also engaged with additional Métis organizations and all remaining Treaty 8 First Nations in Alberta, the Northwest Territories, and Saskatchewan, including those located outside of the Peace River watershed. A list of these additional Aboriginal groups is presented in Section 9.2.2. BC Hydro has provided notification of Project milestones and, in many cases, has offered to meet and discuss the Project.

9.2.1.2 Project Consultation Objectives

BC Hydro's specific consultation objectives have and will continue to evolve over time in response to the stage of the Project, as well as feedback received from Aboriginal groups. Additional details regarding BC Hydro's specific consultation objectives at different stages of the Project can be found in Sections 9.2.3.3.1 and 9.2.3.3.2.

More generally, the objectives of BC Hydro's consultations with Aboriginal groups are to:

- Provide access to and facilitate an understanding of Project-related information
- Create opportunities to receive input from Aboriginal groups into the planning, design, construction and operation of the Project
- Facilitate Aboriginal participation in the environmental assessment process through provision of capacity funding and access to technical expertise as it relates to the Project
- Identify and understand the issues, interests, and concerns brought forward by Aboriginal groups about the Project and as they relate to the potential effects of the Project on:
    - The exercise of asserted or established Aboriginal and treaty rights
    - The past, current, and reasonably anticipated future use of lands and resources for traditional purposes (as defined in Section 20.3 of the EIS Guidelines)
    - Identify potential training, employment, contracting, and broader economic opportunities related to the Project that may be of interest to Aboriginal groups or individuals

9.2.2 Aboriginal Groups

This section describes the process BC Hydro used to identify Aboriginal groups whose Aboriginal or treaty rights could be adversely affected by the Project, and presents a complete list of the Aboriginal groups consulted in regard to the Project.

9.2.2.1 Identification of Aboriginal Groups

Prior to initiating consultation in late 2007, preparatory work was undertaken to identify the Aboriginal groups whose Aboriginal or treaty rights could potentially be affected by the Project. BC Hydro examined the then-anticipated Project activity zones and formed a general understanding of the potential for the Project to cause changes to the ecological, physical, and social environments, to human health, and to heritage resources. BC Hydro then reviewed publicly available information to determine which Aboriginal groups might potentially be exercising Aboriginal or treaty rights in the area. This work recognized the reach of the Peace River and its tributaries; BC Hydro elected to be more, rather than less, inclusive in the scope of Aboriginal groups that it would consult. BC Hydro remained receptive to meeting with any Aboriginal group who expressed interest in the Project and has undertaken to review its assumptions as BC Hydro's understanding of the Project and the interests of Aboriginal groups has evolved over time.

Table 9.1 presents the list of Aboriginal groups potentially affected by the Project as identified in Section 20.1 of the EIS Guidelines. A map showing the location of the Indian

Reserves and Métis Settlements associated with these Aboriginal Groups is presented in Figure 4.4 in Volume 1 Section 4.1 Project Location.

Table 9.1 Aboriginal Groups Potentially Affected by the Project

Treaty 8 First Nation Signatories		
British Columbia	**Alberta**	**Northwest Territories**

• Blueberry River First Nations
• Fort Nelson First Nation
• McLeod Lake Indian Band
• Saulteau First Nations
• Treaty 8 Tribal Association (T8TA):
  • Doig River First Nation
  • Halfway River First Nation
  • Prophet River First Nation
  • West Moberly First Nations
	• Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation
	• Beaver First Nation
	• Dene Tha' First Nation
	• Duncan's First Nation
	• Horse Lake First Nation
	• Little Red River Cree Nation
	• Mikisew Cree First Nation
	• Smith's Landing First Nation
	• Sturgeon Lake Cree Nation
	• Tallcree First Nation
	• Woodland Cree First Nation
		• Deninu K'ue First Nation
		• Salt River First Nation

British Columbia First Nations		
• Kwadacha First Nation • Tsay Keh Dene Band		
Métis		
British Columbia	**Alberta**	**Northwest Territories**
• Métis Nation British Columbia (as directed by the CEA Agency) • Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society (as directed by the CEA Agency)	• Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 6 • Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement Society • Fort Chipewyan Métis Local 125	• Northwest Territory Métis Nation

Section 20.1 of the EIS Guidelines refer to the Fort Chipewyan Métis Local 125 as the Fort Chipewyan Métis Association, the McLeod Lake Indian Band as the McLeod Lake First Nation, the Tsay Keh Dene Band as the Tsay Keh Dene First Nation, and the Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 6 as the Métis Nation of Alberta – Zone 6.

Section 20.1 of the EIS Guidelines does not specifically include Tribal Associations, however, on March 24, 2008, the Saulteau, West Moberly, Halfway River, Fort Nelson, Doig River, and Prophet River First Nations indicated to BC Hydro that they wished to be consulted respecting the Project through a tribal council entity originally called the Council of Western Treaty 8 Chiefs and later referred to as the Council of B.C. Treaty 8 Chiefs. On January 25, 2010, Saulteau First Nations informed BC Hydro that it was no longer represented by the Tribal Council. Beginning in April 2010, Fort Nelson First Nation was no longer represented by the Tribal Council. After April 2010, the Tribal Council was referred to as the Treaty 8 Tribal Association (T8TA).

9.2.2.2 Additional Aboriginal Groups and Other Organizations

BC Hydro has indicated a willingness to meet with additional Aboriginal groups and other organizations to discuss the Project in more detail, or upon request to provide additional

information or project updates. In addition to the Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1, BC Hydro also provided information about the Project to the following groups:

- Bigstone Cree Nation
- Black Lake
- Chipewyan Prairie First Nation
- Clearwater River Dene
- Driftpile First Nation
- Fond du Lac First Nation
- Fort McKay First Nation
- Fort McMurray #468 First Nation
- Fort Resolution Métis
- Fort Smith Métis
- Fort Vermilion Métis Local
- Hay River Métis
- Kapawe'no First Nation
- K'atlodeeche First Nation
- Kee Tas Kee Now
- Kelly Lake Cree Nation
- Lesser Slave Lake Indian Regional Council
- Loon River Cree
- Lubicon Lake
- Lutsel K'e Dene First Nation
- Métis Nation of Alberta
- Métis Nation of Alberta Region 1
- North Peace Tribal Council
- Peace River Métis Local
- Peerless Trout First Nation
- Sawridge First Nation
- Sucker Creek First Nation
- Swan River First Nation
- Western Cree Tribal Council
- Whitefish Lake First Nation
- Yellowknives Dene First Nation

9.2.3 Pre-panel Review Stage

This section of the EIS provides a description of how project information was made available to Aboriginal groups and how this information was recorded. This section also presents a summary of BC Hydro's approach to consulting with Aboriginal groups in the pre-Panel Review Stage of the environmental assessment process, including the preparation of the EIS Guidelines and the EIS. Finally, this section, in combination with Volume 1 Appendix H Aboriginal Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation, will present the key issues and concerns raised by Aboriginal groups and the process proposed by BC Hydro for addressing outstanding issues.

9.2.3.1 Information Distribution Methods

Information was distributed to Aboriginal groups using the methods outlined below.

- **Project website**: The Project website (www.bchydro.com/sitec), which was launched in December 2007, contains all publicly available documents, provides comprehensive Project information, contact information, public consultation opportunities and current news about the Project. The Project website is more fully described in Section 9.1.2.2.2.
- **Secured file transfer website for Aboriginal groups**: In the spring of 2012, 55 Aboriginal groups, including all of the Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1, were provided with usernames and passwords for a protected web-based environment. The secured file transfer website includes key environmental and engineering reports, fieldwork updates, and information regarding economic opportunities associated with the Project. Those Aboriginal groups with which BC Hydro had not concluded a consultation agreement were offered the opportunity to sign a confidentiality agreement that would increase their access to confidential materials, such as up-to-date mapping and a series of presentations on key components of the Project and potential effects of the Project. The purpose of the secured file transfer website was to ensure distribution of key documents to all Aboriginal groups in a systematic and accessible manner.
- **Direct communication**: BC Hydro directly engaged with Aboriginal groups in the following ways: meetings, telephone calls, conference calls, site visits, faxes, letters, and emails. Communication was often supplemented by the use of visual aids, including PowerPoint presentations and Project maps.
- **In-community consultation**: BC Hydro has sought opportunities to engage directly with members of the Aboriginal communities. BC Hydro has organized and/or attended community meetings, often having technical staff available to engage directly with community leaders or members of the communities. BC Hydro has also attended and/or sponsored in-community conferences, events, and celebrations.
- **Technical Working Groups**: By agreement of the parties, BC Hydro technical experts and/or consultants have worked directly with their counterparts on staff with or retained by Aboriginal groups to review technical reports, as part of a working group or technical committee.

BC Hydro has used the following approach to obtain input from Aboriginal groups:

- BC Hydro provides Aboriginal groups with access to information related to the Project and seeks input, and the identification of issues, concerns or interests from those Aboriginal groups
- BC Hydro provides Aboriginal groups with resources, including the provision of capacity funding and access to subject matter specialists to evaluate and consider the information provided and, where appropriate, to formulate a response for BC Hydro's consideration
- BC Hydro considers all information provided by Aboriginal groups and allows for time and internal resources to take into account input received
- BC Hydro also allows for time in the Project schedule for the above process to be iterative, where appropriate, and to address concerns brought forward by Aboriginal groups

In order to facilitate the approach outlined above, BC Hydro has pursued consultation agreements with Aboriginal groups where more in-depth or structured consultation was required (lists of concluded consultation agreements are provided in Sections 9.2.3.3.1 and 9.2.3.3.2). Consultation agreements were negotiated between BC Hydro and the individual Aboriginal groups, or in some cases Tribal Associations designated by Aboriginal groups to represent them, and were designed to provide a framework for dialogue and a structured process for distributing and exchanging information about the Project.

In some cases, in lieu of a formal consultation agreement, BC Hydro and Aboriginal groups or organizations signed letters of understanding. These agreements also facilitated a structured process for distributing and exchanging information about the Project. In other cases, BC Hydro undertook consultation and distributed information about the Project without any formal consultation agreement.

9.2.3.2 Methods of Documenting Project Consultation

BC Hydro has documented communication with Aboriginal groups using a variety of methods. Beginning in 2007, all project communication has been recorded using a document storage database. Prior to April 2010, BC Hydro also utilized Excel software to track consultation related records. In April 2010, BC Hydro began using the newly created Consultation and Agreement Tracking Software (CATS) to track and record communications with Aboriginal groups.

9.2.3.3 Description of Consultation Activities

The following section provides a summary description of the activities undertaken to notify and consult with the Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1 in regard to the Project. The consultation activities described below are presented in accordance with the stages of the Project, which are defined in Volume 1 Section 3.1 Project Overview. During Stage 1, Review of Project Feasibility, existing studies and historical information related to engineering, costs, environment, consultation, and First Nations were reviewed. The description below includes BC Hydro's approach to consultations with Aboriginal groups during Stages 2 and 3, including the environmental assessment process, activities related to the preparation and the review of the EIS Guidelines and

the EIS. While this section provides an overview of consultation activities, the specific details of consultation activities undertaken with each of the 29 Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1 are provided in Volume 5 Appendix A Aboriginal Summaries. The issues, interests, and concerns raised through the consultation process are presented in Volume 1 Appendix H Aboriginal Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation.

9.2.3.3.1 Stage 2: Consultation (Fall 2007–Spring 2010)

Objectives

Further to the objectives of consultation outlined in Section 9.2.1.2, BC Hydro has specific consultation objectives for each stage of the Project. During Stage 2, Project Definition and Consultation, the primary purposes of early consultation were to develop positive relationships with Aboriginal groups, to share information about the Project, give Aboriginal groups opportunities to advise BC Hydro of their interests and concerns, and to increase knowledge and mutual understandings about the potential effects of the Project.

Early Contact Regarding the Project

In February 2007, the provincial government's *BC Energy Plan* provided BC Hydro with the first direction to "enter into initial discussions First Nations, the Province of Alberta, and communities to discuss Site C to ensure that communications regarding the potential project and the processes being followed are well known."

In November of 2007, BC Hydro made initial telephone contact and sent an introductory letter to Aboriginal groups regarding the Project. The letter introduced BC Hydro's senior advisor responsible for Aboriginal consultation, and expressed BC Hydro's commitment to effective consultation with Aboriginal groups, should the Project proceed further through BC Hydro's multi-stage decision-making process.

In December 2007, BC Hydro released the "Peace River Site C Hydro Project, An Option to Help Close B.C.'s Growing Electricity Gap, Site C Feasibility Review: Stage 1 Completion Report", noting that dialogue with Aboriginal groups was needed to fully understand the issues, concerns, and potential effects of the Project on Aboriginal groups.

BC Hydro initially initiated consultation with 41 Aboriginal groups consisting primarily of Treaty 8 First Nations in B.C., as well as Aboriginal groups in Alberta and the Northwest Territories. In Stage 2, BC Hydro initiated consultation with all of the Aboriginal groups outlined in Table 9.1 with the exception of the Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 6 and Métis Nation British Columbia.

Initial meetings with all Project Area Aboriginal Groups, as defined in Section 9.2.1.1, occurred in March 2008. These meetings allowed BC Hydro to provide a high-level introduction to the Project, and to describe the status of early exploratory work and the proposed process to be used to inform Aboriginal groups, should the decision be made to advance the Project to the regulatory and environmental review stage.

In the spring of 2008, copies of the Summary: Stage 1 Review of Project Feasibility report (BC Hydro 2007b) were sent to Aboriginal groups. Introductory and follow-up meetings were then completed with 21 Aboriginal groups who had expressed an interest in meeting; in some cases, these entities represented more than one Aboriginal group.

Consultation Agreements

Based on these initial meetings, BC Hydro reached eight consultation agreements with groups representing 13 Aboriginal groups:

- Duncan's First Nation (September 16, 2008)
- Blueberry River First Nations (October 2, 2008)
- Treaty 8 Tribal Association (referred to in the consultation agreement as the "Treaty 8 First Nations", representing Doig River, Halfway River, Prophet River, Saulteau, West Moberly, and Fort Nelson First Nations) (December 1, 2008)
- Horse Lake First Nation (March 3, 2009)
- Dene Tha' First Nation (April 21, 2009)
- Little Red River Cree First Nation (April 24, 2009)
- Tallcree First Nation (May 7, 2009)
- McLeod Lake Indian Band (June 25, 2009)

BC Hydro also tabled consultation agreements with an additional five Aboriginal groups on the dates below; however, agreements were not finalized in Stage 2:

- Mikisew Cree First Nation (tabled March 3, 2009)
- Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (tabled March 4, 2009)
- Smith's Landing First Nation (tabled March 4, 2009)
- Beaver First Nation (tabled April 21, 2009)
- Deninu K'ue First Nation (tabled May 20, 2009)

Consultation agreements were negotiated between BC Hydro and Aboriginal groups, or their respective Tribal Associations, and were designed to provide a structured framework for dialogue, dispute resolution processes, an agreed work plan, and funding to support these activities.

Consultation Topics

BC Hydro sought input from Aboriginal groups on a range of studies related to the environment, archaeology, socio-economic conditions, and land use.

As described in Section 9.3.1, in 2008–09, BC Hydro created Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) for Fish and Aquatics; Wildlife and Vegetation; Land and Resource Use (Agriculture, Oil & Gas, Mines, Forestry, Parks and Conservation Lands); Recreation and Tourism; Community Services and Infrastructure; Heritage; and Greenhouse Gas. While all B.C. Treaty 8 First Nations and the Horse Lake First Nation were invited to participate along with provincial, federal, and municipal government agencies, only the Blueberry River First Nations participated in the TAC process. In May 2009, BC Hydro provided Aboriginal groups with materials from the environmental and socio-economic TACs. BC Hydro advised that it was providing the materials for the purpose of early information sharing, and cautioned that the information should not be relied upon as a forecast of final study results.

A separate technical advisory review process, called the Technical Advisory Representative (TAR) process, was established with the Treaty 8 Tribal Association. The TAR process covered the same key program areas as the Technical Advisory Committees outlined above; however, it was conducted in accordance with a TAR work plan developed collaboratively between BC Hydro and the Treaty 8 Tribal Association. The purpose of the TAR process was to exchange technical information about the Project, seek input from the Treaty 8 Tribal Association on potential environmental and socio-economic issues, and to identify information that would assist in assessing the potential effects of the Project. Seven meetings, over 10 days in total, occurred between March and November 2009, and resulted in the completion of a 74-page joint report signed off by both parties. The TAR process resulted in the parties sharing over 75 documents, including completed studies, proposed study outlines, terms of reference, preliminary wildlife inventory results, mapping, literature summaries, information sheets, and technical presentations.

By June of 2009, consultation with Treaty 8 Tribal Association led to its submission of a document including 97 questions regarding the Project, which were answered by BC Hydro in October of 2009.

To conclude Stage 2, BC Hydro prepared a final report summarizing the outcomes of the Project Definition and Consultation Phase. Through the consultation process, the Treaty 8 Tribal Association requested an opportunity to provide input directly into the final report. The parties agreed that a submission from the Treaty 8 Tribal Association would be appended to BC Hydro's final Stage 2 Report. The appendix drafted by the Treaty 8 Tribal Association outlined several concerns, primarily in regard to the timing of the Stage 2 Report and BC Hydro's accompanying recommendation to the provincial government that the Project be moved into Stage 3, the Regulatory and Environmental Review stage. In the fall of 2009, BC Hydro released the report, which was entitled "Peace River Site C Hydro Project, A Potential Source of Clean, Renewable and Reliable Power for Generations. Stage 2 Report: Consultation and Technical Review, Fall 2009". This document reported on the consultations, including a specific section regarding consultation with Aboriginal groups that had been undertaken between 2007 and 2009 and highlighted key findings.

In summary, BC Hydro began consultation with Aboriginal groups in regard to the Project in late 2007 and prior to any decision to advance the Project to an environmental assessment. During the course of Stage 2, which ended in the spring of 2010, BC Hydro engaged with 41 Aboriginal groups, with which BC Hydro conducted over 140 meetings, and exchanged over 2500 emails, 300 letters, 550 telephone calls, and other communications in regard to the Project.

9.2.3.3.2 Stage 3: Consultation (Spring 2010 to present)

In April of 2010, BC Hydro advised Aboriginal groups by email that the Government of B.C. had announced that the Project would move forward to Stage 3, the Regulatory and Environmental Assessment Stage. The email also provided a link to the Project website where the final "Stage 2 Project Report: Consultation and Technical Review" and 35 appended studies and reports were available online. Printed copies of reports and other documents were provided to Aboriginal groups upon request.

Objectives

During Stage 3, the Regulatory and Environmental Assessment Stage, BC Hydro's objectives evolved as consultations were advanced to a greater level of detail. To date, consultation has involved ongoing information sharing and input, but has generally involved a greater focus on effects assessment, and on identifying and considering strategies or measures to mitigate and/or otherwise accommodate any potential adverse effects of the Project. Since the beginning of the Regulatory and Environmental Assessment Stage in 2010, BC Hydro's objectives have been to:

- Continue to consult and engage Aboriginal groups
- Provide information about the Project and identify interests, concerns, and issues
- Seek input regarding ongoing baseline studies
- Continue to consult regarding required authorizations and permit applications for exploratory work
- Negotiate consultation agreements where appropriate
- Acquire, consider, and incorporate traditional land use information
- Facilitate participation in the environmental assessment process
- Ensure that the requirements for consultation with Aboriginal groups set out in the EIS Guidelines, issued in September 2012, have been met
- Gain further understanding of asserted Section 35 (1) rights, and identify and consider strategies or measures to mitigate and/or otherwise accommodate potential adverse effects of the Project, as necessary
- Negotiate impact benefit agreements, where appropriate

Consultation Agreements

Early in the Regulatory and Environmental Assessment Stage, BC Hydro continued to build on the working relationships established during Stage 2 and reached 13 consultation agreements with groups representing 16 Aboriginal groups as follows:

- Duncan's First Nation (July 12, 2010)
- Blueberry River First Nations (September 2, 2010)
- Saulteau First Nations (September 30, 2010)
- Kwadacha First Nation (November 26, 2010)
- Horse Lake First Nation (December 27, 2010)
- Tallcree First Nation (February 23, 2011)
- Mikisew Cree First Nation (March 31, 2011)
- Treaty 8 Tribal Association (representing Doig River, Halfway River, Prophet River, and West Moberly First Nations) (April 21, 2011)
- Deninu K'ue First Nation (November 16, 2011)
- McLeod Lake Indian Band (December 20, 2011)

- Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (March 30, 2012)
- Dene Tha' First Nation (March 30, 2012)
- Fort Nelson First Nation (September 19, 2012)

Although each of the consultation agreements reflects the unique priorities of each Aboriginal group, all of the agreements provide a framework for consultation and the identification of any potential effects of the Project on Section 35(1) rights. Generally, the agreements call for joint community meetings, joint technical briefings and, in some cases, consultation regarding permit applications as well as input from Aboriginal groups on key regulatory submissions.

All consultation agreements provide funding to facilitate Aboriginal participation in the consultation process. As of the end of November 2012, and dating back to 2008, BC Hydro has provided approximately $8.5 million in capacity funding to Aboriginal groups, including $1.3 million to support traditional land use studies. All consultation agreement funding is subject to financial reporting submitted to BC Hydro on an ongoing basis. Typically, consultation agreements contain two types of funding: general and defined consultation funding.

General funding is intended to cover the costs associated with the implementation of the consultation agreements, including participation in consultation meetings and/or technical briefings with Chief and Council or staff representatives, legal, negotiation, or administrative support, and travel costs. Consultation agreements include a provision that allows for the amount to be reviewed on an annual basis to reflect any increase or decrease in the level of consultation activities anticipated by the parties.

Defined Consultation Funding is provided for specific deliverables or initiatives that fall outside the scope of activities covered under General Funding and that are agreed to by both parties. Examples of activities funded under Defined Consultation Funding may include review of investigative permit applications, thirdparty technical review of engineering or environmental studies, specific community engagement activities, etc.

In addition to the formal consultation agreements outlined above, BC Hydro also reached letters of understanding to support funding and joint work plans with respect to the Project with:

- Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society (April 26, 2012)
- Métis Nation British Columbia (June 3, 2012 and a supplemental agreement signed November 20, 2012)
- Kelly Lake Cree Nation (July 30, 2012)

BC Hydro also tabled consultation agreements with an additional five Aboriginal groups on the dates below; however, agreements have not yet been finalized as of the submission of the EIS:

- Tsay Keh Dene Band (tabled June 18, 2010 and substantive agreement reached in the fall of 2010; however, to date, the Tsay Keh Dene Band has not ratified the agreement)
- Little Red River Cree Nation (tabled September 23, 2010)
- Smith's Landing First Nation (tabled September 23, 2010)

- Salt River First Nation (tabled January 14, 2011)
- Beaver First Nation (tabled June 9, 2011)

Traditional Land Use Information

Another major focus of work during the Regulatory and Environmental Assessment Stage was gathering traditional land use information and, where possible, traditional knowledge. Since December 2009, BC Hydro has negotiated Traditional Land Use Study (TLUS) agreements with those Aboriginal groups located immediately downstream of the Project or who may exercise rights within the area that is now defined as the Project activity zone. Additional information regarding the traditional land use information made available to BC Hydro, as well as how this information has been considered and integrated in the EIS, is available in Volume 3 Section 19 Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes and in the Volume 5 Appendix A Asserted or Established Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements Supporting Documentation.

Formal agreements to complete TLUS reports were concluded with:

- Treaty 8 Tribal Association (representing Doig River, Halfway River, Prophet River, and West Moberly First Nations) (signed an agreement to negotiate a TLUS Agreement on December 18, 2009; the final TLUS Agreement itself was finalized on December 16, 2010, and the parties later entered into a related TLUS Amending Agreement on October 4, 2011)
- Duncan's First Nation (July 12, 2010)
- Saulteau First Nations (July 20, 2010)
- Blueberry River First Nations (September 2, 2010)
- Horse Lake First Nation (December 27, 2010)
- Dene Tha' First Nation (August 16, 2012)

Each of the TLUS agreements is unique and reflects the interests of both parties. Generally, however, the agreements set out provisions dealing with TLUS methodology, reporting and deliverables, confidentiality provisions, and funding to support the required work. Each TLUS agreement includes a map outlining the TLUS study area in relation to the Project.

As of the filing of the EIS, all of the TLUS reports referenced above have been completed and shared with BC Hydro, including technical staff responsible for conducting the Wildlife Resources, Vegetation and Ecological Communities, Fish and Fish Habitat and Heritage Resources effects assessments. BC Hydro and McLeod Lake Indian Band have agreed that McLeod Lake Indian Band will carry out a TLUS that will be provided to BC Hydro in early 2013.

BC Hydro also reached agreements with the Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, Métis Nation British Columbia, Fort Nelson First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Mikisew Cree First Nation, and the Deninu K'ue First Nation to provide funding to allow for existing traditional land use information that is applicable to the Project to be assembled and shared with BC Hydro. As of the filing of the EIS, BC Hydro has received traditional land use information from all of these groups with the exception of the Deninu

K'ue First Nation which is expected to provide BC Hydro with this information in early 2013.

BC Hydro engaged Traditions Consulting Services to review the completed TLUS reports and related materials, and to consider where additional information would be beneficial. BC Hydro responded to the Aboriginal groups with specific questions, clarifications, or requests for additional information. Traditions Consulting Services prepared Aboriginal Land and Resource Use Summaries (see Volume 5 Appendix A01-A29, Part 4) for consideration as baseline information in the effects assessment carried out pursuant to Volume 3 Section 19 Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes, and the assessment of impacts to asserted or established Aboriginal or treaty rights in Volume 5 Section 34.

Consultation on Permits for Geotechnical Investigations

Throughout Stage 2 and 3 of the Project, Project Area Aboriginal Groups, as defined in Section 9.2.1.1, were consulted on the permits required from the Province for BC Hydro to complete geotechnical investigations for the Project. Such consultations were generally led by relevant provincial agencies, with support from BC Hydro technical staff and consultants.

As the investigative nature of the work often did not allow BC Hydro to include precise information on the scope, timing, or location of specific activities in the permit application, BC Hydro worked in cooperation with the Integrated Land Management Bureau and the Treaty 8 Tribal Association and developed a process that allowed for continued consultation following the issuance of the permits, ensuring that, as details about proposed work became available, Aboriginal groups input and concerns could be considered or incorporated throughout the investigative process.

Beginning in 2011, BC Hydro secured the services of Golder Associates (Golder) to provide environmental management and monitoring for the geotechnical investigations. Golder developed and provided Project Area Aboriginal Groups with Environmental and Archaeology Management Plans (EAMPs) and weekly environmental and archaeological monitoring reports containing information on the progress of investigative work, any environmental or archaeological issues encountered, and the protective measures recommended or implemented on site.

Consultation on Environmental Field Studies

Since 2009, BC Hydro has provided Project Area Aboriginal Groups with regular information on the Project's environmental program. Information provided included proposed study outlines for planned work, status updates for ongoing work, and study summaries for completed work. In each case, Project Area Aboriginal groups were invited to review the information and provide input.

In addition to providing the above study summaries to Project Area Aboriginal groups, BC Hydro also sought input from Aboriginal groups located downstream of the Project specifically in regard to studies and reports related to the physical environment. These include the examination of water level and flows, water temperature and ice, sediment transport, microclimate, noise, air quality, and contaminated sites (Volume 2 Section 11 Environmental Background), and greenhouse gases (Volume 2 Section 15).

Commencement of the Environmental Assessment Process

On May 17, 2011, BC Hydro advised Aboriginal groups that a Project Description Report had been submitted to the BCEAO and the CEA Agency. Telephone and/or letter notifications, as well as an email containing an online link to access the full text document, were provided to Aboriginal groups.

On August 2, 2011, the CEA Agency and the BCEAO sent an introductory letter regarding the Environmental Assessment of the Project. The letter indicated that capacity funding would be made available to interested Aboriginal groups, and that the CEA Agency and the BCEAO would take a coordinated approach to consultation. A follow-up letter was sent again, on September 2, 2011, that included an invitation to attend an introductory meeting in Fort St. John on October 5, 2011. The introductory meeting attendees included federal, provincial, and territorial government agencies (including those of B.C., Alberta, and the Northwest Territories), Aboriginal groups, and local governments that had been identified as having an interest in the Project. Although open to all invited Aboriginal groups, the meeting was attended by representatives from the Dene Tha', Driftpile, Kapawe'no, McLeod Lake, Prophet River, Saulteau, and West Moberly First Nations, as well as the Treaty 8 Tribal Association and the Métis Nation British Columbia.

On September 30, 2011, BC Hydro advised Aboriginal groups that the federal and provincial governments had announced a draft harmonization agreement that would refer the Project to a Joint Review Panel. BC Hydro noted that the regulators would be inviting written public comments on the draft agreement and provided website links to the CEA Agency and BCEAO websites. Following input from Aboriginal groups and the submission of approximately 85 comments, a Joint Agreement was finalized by the federal and provincial Ministers of Environment of the CEA Agency and the BCEAO and posted online in February 2012.

Consultation Regarding Project Components

In 2011 and 2012, a major focus of consultations with Project Area Aboriginal Groups and other interested Aboriginal groups involved specific components of the Project. BC Hydro asked each Project Area Aboriginal Group to provide BC Hydro with their topics of interest to ensure that the information provided by BC Hydro through the consultation process was relevant to each Aboriginal group's unique areas of interest.

Presentation materials were discussed at a variety of venues (Chief and Council meetings, community meetings, and/or with technical representatives) and provided to multiple Aboriginal groups upon request. Presentation topics included:

- Transmission options
- Worker accommodation options
- Highway 29 realignment options
- Reservoir clearing options
- Proposed reservoir road access
- Reservoir impact lines
- Options for sourcing off-site construction materials

- Alternative dam site locations (alternative means of project delivery)
- Alternatives to the Project (BC Hydro Integrated Resource Planning process)
- Hudson's Hope shoreline protection options
- Agriculture
- Archaeology and heritage program
- Reservoir recreation options

As information evolved, BC Hydro updated the presentations and offered to provide interested Aboriginal groups with updates as appropriate. BC Hydro has endeavoured to initiate discussions with Aboriginal groups on each of these topics at an early stage in the planning process. Where feasible, BC Hydro has presented options and sought input from Aboriginal groups to contribute to the analysis.

In each case, BC Hydro endeavoured to present these materials in a comprehensive way that was accessible to non-technical audiences. This was achieved using layperson terminology and through a variety of means including the use of videos, customized maps, diagrams, PowerPoint presentations, pictures, and interactive tools such as Google maps simulations. In some cases, BC Hydro provided Aboriginal groups with funding, available through consultation agreements, to provide for third-party technical support services, if required. BC Hydro requested that the Aboriginal groups provide input regarding the materials presented either verbally or through written follow-up. In instances where BC Hydro received feedback from Aboriginal groups on any of the project components, BC Hydro considered the input and responded in writing regarding how the input was considered and/or incorporated into the Project and/or BC Hydro's assessment.

In addition to topics requiring input from Aboriginal groups, BC Hydro has followed up on suggestions from Aboriginal groups to provide basic information to increase the level of knowledge regarding a variety of topics. For example, BC Hydro developed a presentation, accessible to a non-technical audience, called "Dams 101, How to Build a Dam", which outlined the construction sequence and basic structures of a typical dam. BC Hydro also prepared a similar presentation called "Highway 29 101".

BC Hydro facilitated consultation meetings regarding project components and prepared the relevant technical experts responsible for each component to present the materials directly to the various Aboriginal groups. This approach ensured that issues and concerns brought forward by Aboriginal groups would be heard first-hand by the subject matter experts within the project team responsible for considering the issue.

Select presentations were also posted on the BC Hydro's secured file transfer website for access by all Aboriginal groups.

<u>Consultation Regarding the Need for, Purpose of, and Alternatives to the Project through the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP):</u>

Volume 1 Section 5 outlines the need for, purpose of, and alternatives to the Project. The proposed Project is a resource addressed within the BC Hydro's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) to meet future electricity needs over the next 20 years and, as such, is a topic of consultation in the development of the IRP. The consultation undertaken as part of the IRP informs the discussion of the need for and alternatives to

the Project discussed in Volume 1 Section 5 Need for, Purpose of and Alternatives to the Project.

In developing the IRP, BC Hydro consulted with First Nations in the Province, including those located in proximity to the Project. A more detailed description of the First Nations consultation process on the IRP, including the issues brought forward by Aboriginal groups is documented in the BC Hydro Integrated Resource Plan First Nations Consultation Report (September 26, 2012), which is posted on BC Hydro's website at www.bchydro.com/irp.

BC Hydro notified all B.C. First Nations about the development of the IRP. There were opportunities to provide input into the development of a draft IRP, and to provide feedback on it, via two rounds of consultation in March 2011 to April 2011 and June 2012 to August 2012, as described below.

Beginning in January 2011, BC Hydro invited First Nations, Tribal Councils, and First Nations organizations to participate in the development of the draft IRP through a province-wide consultation process. The invitations included background information on the development of the IRP. In March 2011, BC Hydro hosted nine one-day workshops in regional locations around the province and invited Aboriginal groups to provide written comments by the end of April 2011. Blueberry River First Nations and the Treaty 8 Tribal Association participated in the workshop in Fort St. John. The McLeod Lake Indian Band, Tsay Keh Dene Band and the Kwadacha First Nation participated in the workshop in Prince George.

BC Hydro's presentation at the March 2011 regional workshops included a description of the IRP, an overview of how an IRP is developed, and information on six planning topics related to development of the IRP. To elicit input on electricity generation options, three example portfolios of resources were presented at the workshops: a renewable mix of run-of-river hydro and wind without the Project, a renewable mix of run-of-river hydro and wind with the Project, and a renewable mix of run-of-river hydro and wind with the Project and gas-fired generation (within the 7% non-clean *Clean Energy Act* target). The purpose was to explain what portfolios are and to explore the nature of portfolio trade-offs such as cost, greenhouse gas emissions, and the number of jobs created.

In May 2012, BC Hydro wrote to B.C. First Nations to provide the draft IRP and request feedback on the draft, including the IRP's recommended actions. Between June 26 and July 13, 2012, BC Hydro hosted eight one-day workshops, and written comments were invited by August 13, 2012. West Moberly First Nations and the Treaty 8 Tribal Association participated in the workshop in Fort St. John.

During the second round of workshops, BC Hydro sought input from B.C. First Nations on the complete set of draft recommended actions, including a draft recommendation specific to the Project: "Build Site C to add 5,100 gigawatt hours of annual energy and 1,100 megawatts of dependable capacity to the system for the earliest in service date, subject to environmental certification and fulfilling the Crown's duty to consult and, where appropriate, accommodate Aboriginal groups."

On November 5, 2012, BC Hydro wrote to B.C. First Nations to inform them that the provincial government had extended the submission date for the IRP from December 3, 2012, to August 3, 2013. BC Hydro will continue to consider the input it has received to date on its draft IRP as it works to finalize the Plan.

In addition to the consultation process associated with the IRP described above, the Treaty 8 Tribal Association requested additional consultation regarding alternatives to the Project. A summary of these supplemental consultations is included in Volume 5 Appendix A Asserted or Established Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements Supporting Documentation. The issues, interests, and concerns raised by the Aboriginal groups outlined in Table 9.1 through the IRP consultation process, as well as through supplemental consultations undertaken with the Treaty 8 Tribal Association regarding the need for, purpose of, and alternatives to the Project, are provided in Volume 1 Appendix H Aboriginal Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation.

Consultation Regarding Potential Effects of the Project

Following the submission of the EIS to the BCEAO and CEA Agency, BC Hydro will continue consultations with Aboriginal groups regarding BC Hydro's effects assessment in key areas of interest. As of November 2012, BC Hydro had initiated consultation regarding potential effects of the Project on the following topics:

- Fish and fish habitat
- Vegetation and ecological communities
- Wildlife resources
- Heritage resources

Copies of presentations in regard to all of these topics were made available on the secured file transfer website for access by Aboriginal groups, and BC Hydro has made technical staff available to meet and review the presentations with Aboriginal groups upon request.

Consultations with Aboriginal groups on potential effects of the Project focused on the following:

- Reviewing the results of baseline studies
- Seeking to integrate traditional knowledge as made available to BC Hydro, including through the TLUS reports
- Reviewing and seeking input from Aboriginal groups into BC Hydro's preliminary effects assessment
- Requesting input from Aboriginal groups regarding potential impacts to the exercise of Aboriginal and treaty rights
- Requesting input from Aboriginal groups on potential mitigation strategies

With respect to potential effects of the Project on fish and fish habitat, BC Hydro conducted meetings with Chief and Council, community meetings, and technical workshops with representatives of the Treaty 8 Tribal Association, Blueberry River First Nations, and Saulteau First Nations, beginning in the summer of 2012. BC Hydro has also made approximately 39 studies and reports related to Fish and Aquatics available through the secured file transfer website for Aboriginal groups, including reports regarding Peace River fish community indexing, Peace River and tributaries fish and habitat inventories, fish radio tracking studies, and reports related to mercury.

Beginning in the spring of 2012, BC Hydro conducted meetings with Chief and Council, community meetings, and technical workshops regarding the potential effects of the Project on wildlife resources, vegetation, and ecological communities with representatives from the Treaty 8 Tribal Association, Blueberry River First Nations, Saulteau First Nations, and Kwadacha First Nation. In October 2012, BC Hydro provided Project Area Aboriginal Groups, as well as Duncan's First Nation, Fort Nelson First Nation, and Horse Lake First Nation, with a report entitled "Peace River Valley Ungulates Study Program, Final Report" for review. BC Hydro has also made approximately seven baseline inventory surveys and reports related to vegetation and wildlife available through the secured file transfer website for Aboriginal groups.

BC Hydro also met with representatives from the Saulteau First Nations and the Treaty 8 Tribal Association regarding the potential effects of the Project on heritage resources. Through the secured file transfer website for Aboriginal groups, BC Hydro provided reports regarding archaeological site reconciliation and heritage resources data gap analysis. Additional information on how Aboriginal groups were engaged as part of the Archaeological Field Program is available in Volume 4 Appendix C Heritage Resource Assessment Report.

In addition to the consultation led by BC Hydro and described above, in March and April of 2012, both the CEA Agency and the BCEAO wrote to Aboriginal groups outlining their preliminary understandings regarding potential effects of the Project and the potential impact on Aboriginal rights.

<u>Consultation Regarding Potential Changes to the Downstream Conditions</u>

With respect to the Project's potential changes to downstream conditions, including the surface water regime, thermal and ice regime, fluvial geomorphology, and sediment transport, BC Hydro focused on consulting with interested Aboriginal groups primarily located downstream of the Project. Consultations were guided in large part by two reports. The first report, titled Stage 2 Review of Potential Downstream Changes from Site C Operations – Preliminary Findings was released in 2009 and was based on the results of studies completed up until that time, including studies on expected changes in flows and water levels, ice regime, and sediment movement in the Peace River. A subsequent Potential Downstream Changes Report was released in 2012. This report superseded the 2009 report and presented the results of updated studies completed on the same topics.

In 2008 and 2009, BC Hydro met with Aboriginal groups including the Athabasca Chipewyan, Beaver, Dene Tha', Deninu K'ue, Duncan's, Horse Lake, Little Red River Cree, Mikisew Cree, Salt River, Smith's Landing, and Tallcree First Nations, as well as the Fort Chipewyan Métis Association, North Peace Tribal Council, Northwest Territory Métis Nation, and Paddle Prairie Métis Settlement, to seek early input regarding interests, issues, and concerns related to the Project, particularly as they related to BC Hydro's preliminary understandings regarding the potential changes to downstream conditions.

In March of 2011, BC Hydro provided Aboriginal groups with a summary of the preliminary report (Stage 2 Review of Potential Downstream Changes from Site C Operations – Preliminary Findings) and offered to meet to discuss the contents. BC Hydro also provided Aboriginal groups with study outlines that provided a summary of work conducted to date as well as ongoing work in relation to the following studies:

- Water Levels and Flows Assessment
- Flood Forecasting Network Review
- Water Temperature and Ice
- Sediment Transport Studies and Monitoring
- Groundwater Studies

The purpose of the studies was to characterize existing baseline environmental conditions. BC Hydro explained that the baseline data would be used to inform the assessment of potential environmental effects associated with the Project. BC Hydro sought input from Aboriginal groups regarding the studies summarized, and indicated that they could be changed or revised in scope or timing on the basis of input from the Aboriginal groups.

On February 10, 2012, BC Hydro sent a letter to Aboriginal groups to provide an update on the progress towards completing an updated report regarding the potential downstream changes expected with the Project. The letter provided an overview of the work carried out to date, a description of the scope of the current analyses, and some preliminary study results. BC Hydro offered to meet with Aboriginal groups to review the interim results or upon completion of the updated report.

In May of 2012, BC Hydro provided Aboriginal groups with the updated report (titled "Potential Downstream Changes Report") and requested input regarding the results. BC Hydro offered to arrange meetings between interested Aboriginal groups and the subject matter expert in hydrology to discuss the report's findings. Consequently, beginning in the spring and summer of 2012, BC Hydro conducted meetings with the representatives of Athabasca Chipewyan, Beaver, Dene Tha', Deninu K'ue, Duncan's, Horse Lake, Mikisew Cree, and Smith's Landing First Nations, as well as the Kelly Lake Métis Settlement Society, Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 6, and the Northwest Territory Métis Nation. A copy of a PowerPoint presentation regarding the potential downstream changes was also provided through the dedicated website specifically for Aboriginal groups.

<u>Consultation Regarding the EIS Guidelines</u>

BC Hydro Consultation Agreements included capacity funding to support consultations with Aboriginal groups throughout the environmental assessment process, including the review of both the EIS Guidelines and the EIS. In addition to funds made available to Aboriginal groups by BC Hydro, funding was also provided by the CEA Agency under the Aboriginal Funding Envelope for the Project. The CEA Agency funding review committee recommended that a condition of any funding allocation be that the applicants provide input to the environmental assessment through comments on the EIS Guidelines, the EIS, and a written submission or oral presentation at the Joint Review Panel hearings during the Joint Review Stage of the environmental assessment process (Volume 1 Section 8 Assessment Process).

In late fall 2011, BC Hydro prepared the first draft of the EIS Guidelines based in part on a consideration of issues, concerns, and interests raised by Aboriginal groups through the consultation process.

The Working Group (defined in Volume 1 Section 8 Assessment Process) provided Aboriginal groups with the opportunity to provide input into the EIS Guidelines prior to its

public release. The members of the Working Group were provided with copies of the draft EIS Guidelines and asked to submit comments between January 31, 2012 and March 15, 2012. Following the comment period, BC Hydro responded to over 500 comments, suggestions, and requests submitted by Aboriginal groups. BC Hydro either incorporated the input into the draft EIS Guidelines, or where BC Hydro did not agree with a proposed change suggested by an Aboriginal group, BC Hydro provided a rationale and explanation as to why.

The first meeting of the Working Group was held on March 1, 2012 in Fort St, John and included representatives from the following Aboriginal groups:

- Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation
- Dene Tha' First Nation
- Deninu K'ue First Nation
- Duncan's First Nation
- Kwadacha First Nation
- Fond du Lac First Nation
- Fort Chipewyan Métis Local 125
- Fort Nelson First Nation
- Little Red River Cree First Nation
- McLeod Lake Indian Band
- Métis Nation of Alberta – Region 6
- Mikisew Cree First Nation
- Prophet River First Nation
- Saulteau First Nations
- Sucker Creek First Nation
- Swan River First Nation
- Treaty 8 Tribal Association
- Woodland Cree First Nation

During this meeting, BC Hydro presented the first draft of the EIS Guidelines, including an overview of the EIS's proposed content as follows:

- The Project components and activities
- Need for, Alternatives to, Purpose of, and Alternative Means of Carrying out the Project
- Project Benefits
- Assessment Process
- Information Distribution and Consultation

- Environmental Assessment Methodology (including the scoping process, selection of valued components, spatial and temporal boundaries, effects assessment, and cumulative effects assessment)
- Technical Data, Environmental Background
- Environmental Valued Components and Effects Assessments
- Economic Valued Components and Effects Assessments
- Land Use Valued Components and Effects Assessment
- Social Valued Components and Effects Assessment
- Health Valued Component and Effects Assessment
- Heritage Valued Component and Effects Assessment

In addition to participation in the Working Group, Aboriginal groups were able to submit additional input into the draft EIS Guidelines during the public comment period, which ran from April 17, 2012 to June 1, 2012. On June 26, 2012, BC Hydro submitted responses to the public comments on the draft EIS Guidelines, including responses to over 300 additional comments, suggestions, and requests submitted by Aboriginal groups.

BC Hydro participated in agency-led consultation as part of the environmental assessment process, including six open houses during the public comment period for the draft EIS Guidelines in May 2012. Although the open houses were not specifically targeted at Aboriginal groups, approximately 60 Aboriginal people, including members from the West Moberly, Doig River, and Halfway River First Nations, attended the Open House in Dawson Creek, where they had the opportunity to express concerns directly to the CEA Agency, the BCEAO, and BC Hydro.

In May of 2012, BC Hydro sent a letter to Aboriginal groups regarding the identification of valued components and spatial boundaries for the environmental assessment and expressed its desire to consult further on these issues. The letter explained the process and rationale used to identify valued components in the draft EIS Guidelines, and attached a graphic representation of the valued components identification methodology. The letter also explained the process of defining spatial boundaries for each valued component. The letter expressed BC Hydro's interest in receiving feedback from Aboriginal groups regarding the proposed valued components and related spatial boundaries.

On September 21, 2012, BC Hydro sent a letter to Aboriginal groups to inform them that the EIS Guidelines had been finalized by the CEA Agency and the BCEAO and provided a link to where the document was available online. In the letter, BC Hydro highlighted the areas of the EIS Guidelines that specifically addressed the incorporation of information from Aboriginal groups. BC Hydro requested any additional information such as mapping of traditional territories; traditional knowledge; concerns regarding potential for adverse effects on the various components of the environment, as identified by each Aboriginal group; current land use information, including reasonably anticipated future use of lands and resources; current use of lands and resources for hunting, fishing, and trapping; and current use of lands and resources for activities other than hunting, fishing, and trapping. BC Hydro advised Aboriginal groups that it would like to continue to receive information with respect to any asserted or established Aboriginal rights and treaty rights of the

community that may be adversely affected by the Project, and in particular, information concerning hunting, fishing, and trapping. BC Hydro expressed interest in understanding how the environment was valued by the community for the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes, including activities conducted in the exercise of asserted or established Aboriginal rights and treaty rights, and how current use may be affected by the Project. BC Hydro invited Aboriginal groups to continue to identify any interests the community may have had with respect to potential social, economic, health and physical, and cultural heritage effects of the Project.

On October 25, 2012, BC Hydro sent a follow-up letter requesting that Aboriginal groups provide BC Hydro with any additional information required to support the preparation of the EIS, as outlined in the previous letter dated September 21, 2012.

Consultation Regarding the EIS

The Public and Working Group review period will provide Aboriginal groups with the opportunity to provide input respecting the EIS directly to the BCEAO and the CEA Agency. BC Hydro will support this Agency-led consultation process with working group members by providing technical support at working group meetings and by responding to information requests raised through the public and working group comment period.

Following the submission of the EIS and prior to it being finalized for submission to the Joint Review Panel, the EIS will be the focus of ongoing consultation between BC Hydro and Aboriginal groups. The baseline studies and assessments respecting key valued components, and BC Hydro's assessment respecting impacts on the exercise of any asserted or established Aboriginal and treaty rights will form the basis of consultation. Prior to finalizing the EIS, BC Hydro will update the document with any additional issues, interests, and concerns raised by Aboriginal groups resulting from the consultation process regarding the potential effects of the Project.

Since entering into consultation with Aboriginal groups in 2007, BC Hydro has consulted in regard to the Project with all 29 Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1 and in Section 20.1 of the EIS Guidelines. During the course of this consultation, BC Hydro conducted over 350 meetings, and exchanged over 9000 emails, 1400 letters, 1800 telephone calls, and other communications in regard to the Project.

9.2.3.4 Key Issues and Concerns Raised by Aboriginal Groups

BC Hydro has tracked the issues, concerns, and interests identified by Aboriginal groups through the consultations described above. A summary of these issues, concerns, and interests, and BC Hydro's corresponding consideration and response are provided in an issues tracking table in Volume 1 Appendix H Aboriginal Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation. The table provides (a) a Summary of the Issue, Concern or Interest, (b) the Source of Input, and (c) BC Hydro's Consideration and/or Response.

Volume 3 Chapter 19 Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes and Volume 5 Chapter 34 Asserted or Established Aboriginal Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements, Volume 5 Section 35 Summary of Environmental Management Plans, and Volume 5 Section 37 Requirements for the Federal Environmental Assessment also address many of the issues, concerns and interests raised by Aboriginal groups.

9.2.4 Process for Resolving Outstanding Issues Raised by Aboriginal Groups

Volume 5 Section 34 Asserted or Established Aboriginal Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests and Information Requirements includes a description of the potential adverse impacts on asserted or established Aboriginal and treaty rights that have not been mitigated and or otherwise accommodated as part of the environmental assessment and associated consultations with Aboriginal groups.

It is BC Hydro's intent to continue to work with Aboriginal groups to identify both potential adverse effects of the Project on the current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes and any impacts of the Project on asserted Aboriginal or treaty rights. In some cases, Aboriginal groups have raised issues, concerns, or interests that, at time of filing of the EIS and in the view of BC Hydro, have not been fully addressed. After the filing of the EIS, BC Hydro will continue the consultation process described above. During the Panel Review Stage, particular attention will be given to resolving outstanding concerns, and this may result in further improvements to the Project as the environmental assessment process continues. BC Hydro will continue to engage in the consultation process with Aboriginal groups as a means of identifying and considering outstanding issues.

The nature of the consultation process will be in accordance with existing Consultation Agreements and/or other processes established between the parties. Generally, BC Hydro will seek to address outstanding issues by:

- Continuing consultation respecting the Project with the Aboriginal groups identified in Table 9.1
- Creating opportunities for traditional knowledge to inform project planning or operations as appropriate
- Continuing to answer questions from Aboriginal groups relating to the Project, and by making appropriate in-house expertise available to attend community meetings
- Continuing to seek input and engage in dialogue regarding the EIS and the Project, and to answer questions and address issues, interests, and concerns from Aboriginal groups by identifying appropriate mitigation measures and/or other appropriate means by which to address or resolve potential impacts
- Working closely with the CEA Agency and the BCEAO to carry out any reasonable requests of the Crown with respect to consultation
- Providing copies of the EIS and facilitating access to any relevant and reasonably available supporting documentation/studies that may be of interest to specific Aboriginal groups
- Continuing to keep Aboriginal groups informed in relation to the scope, potential effects, timing and progress of the Project
- Communicating any potential employment, contracting, or related opportunities associated with the Project, including ongoing engagement with the Aboriginal business community regarding economic opportunities

In addition to the consultation process, BC Hydro is prepared to engage with Project Area Aboriginal Groups who may have outstanding issues or concerns related to Section 35 (1) rights that may be adversely affected by the Project in ways that cannot

be fully mitigated or otherwise accommodated. In such cases, outstanding issues and concerns may be addressed as part of impact benefit agreement negotiations. Additional information regarding impact benefit agreements is available in Volume 5 Section 34 Asserted or Established Aboriginal Rights and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests, and Information Requirements.

9.2.5 Construction Communication

BC Hydro is committed to ongoing dialogue with Aboriginal groups who have expressed interest in the Project. Aboriginal consultation will be guided by the information gathered during the consultation process to date and the evolving nature of the Project.

This section describes BC Hydro's proposed approach to continuing engagement with Aboriginal groups, should the Project proceed to construction, including any consultation required in relation to the issuance of permits and other required authorizations. This section will also describe BC Hydro's proposed approach for tracking and reporting regulatory issues and concerns raised by Aboriginal groups during project construction and operations.

Following the submission of the EIS, BC Hydro is committed to seeking input from Aboriginal groups regarding the approach to construction stage communication.

9.2.5.1 Objectives

BC Hydro will continue to consult with Aboriginal groups on issues of interest, should the Project proceed to construction.

Construction stage consultation objectives include:

- Continue to facilitate a two-way exchange of information regarding the Project and activities occurring in the Project activity zone
- Negotiate and implement the terms of any impact benefit agreements reached with Aboriginal groups in regard to the Project
- Negotiate and implement the terms of any other agreements, such as communication protocol agreements that may apply
- Communicate economic opportunities to Aboriginal groups
- Continue to consult with Aboriginal groups on permits and other authorizations as required

9.2.5.2 Activities

In addition to activities proposed in Section 9.1.4, Construction Phase Communications and Community Relations, the following is an outline of expected activities to support the consultation with Aboriginal groups during the construction and operation of the Project.

Interested Aboriginal groups will continue to receive written notification of major project milestones throughout the construction stage. BC Hydro will remain receptive to meeting with any Aboriginal group to discuss the Project during the construction stage. Information shared may include construction schedules, traffic, pertinent access issues, safety, and economic or business opportunities associated with the Project.

Throughout the construction stage, Project Area Aboriginal Groups may need to be consulted regarding provincial permits and authorizations required to build the Project. Consistent with the process undertaken to date, such consultations would be led by the relevant provincial agencies with support from BC Hydro technical staff and consultants, as required.

In order to fulfill the objectives outlined above, BC Hydro may pursue communication protocol agreements with Project Area Aboriginal Groups where more in-depth or structured communication may be required. To date, BC Hydro has engaged in preliminary discussions with some Aboriginal groups regarding the establishment of one or more advisory committee(s), including representatives from interested Aboriginal groups, as a means of establishing a structured process for exchanging information and addressing issues, interests, and concerns during the construction and or operations stages. Further discussions with Aboriginal groups would be required prior to finalizing an approach.

9.2.5.3 Tracking and Reporting Regulatory Issues and Concerns

Should the project proceed to construction and operation, BC Hydro will continue to consult with Aboriginal groups in regard to the Project and liaise with government as appropriate. BC Hydro will continue to use the Consultation and Agreement Tracking Software (CATS) described in Section 9.2.3.2 to track and report regulatory issues and concerns raised by Aboriginal groups.

9.3 Agency Information Distribution and Consultation

This section describes BC Hydro's information distribution and consultation activities undertaken with federal, provincial, and territorial governments prior to and during the environmental assessment process. Information distribution and consultation with local governments is described in Section 9.1. Information was distributed and consultation took place with agencies prior to commencement of the environmental assessment through the Technical Advisory Committees process. Once in the environmental assessment process, consultation and information distribution took place during the Pre-Panel Review stage during the preparation, review, and finalization of the EIS Guidelines. A description of these consultative processes, key discussions or issues raised, and how the input was considered by BC Hydro is described below.

9.3.1 Consultation Prior to Entering Environmental Assessment Process

In 2008 and 2009 BC Hydro consulted with provincial, federal, and municipal government agencies and First Nations to seek their input on potential environmental and socio-economic issues and on identifying information that would assist in assessing the potential effects of the Project on the biophysical and human environments. Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) were developed for Fish and Aquatics; Wildlife and Vegetation; Land and Resource Use (Agriculture, Oil & Gas, Mines, Forestry, Parks, and Conservation Lands); Recreation and Tourism; Community Services and Infrastructure; Heritage; and Greenhouse Gas.

The role of each TAC was to provide a forum for BC Hydro to present information and materials regarding environmental and social issues, studies, and options, and for participants to review, discuss, and comment on information that was provided. Participants were encouraged to seek input from others within their organization and to

share the input with BC Hydro and the other participants, subject to confidentiality considerations.

Through the TAC process, participants were invited to, and did, provide BC Hydro with any existing agency or regulatory requirements, management objectives, legislation, bylaws, or other guiding materials related to the topic.

The objectives of each of the TACs were to:

- Scope and identify potential issues (impacts and benefits) of the Project
- Review the assessment methodology for determining the potential effects of the Project
- Identify information requirements and review proposed study programs
- Consider and evaluate preliminary mitigation options (where sufficient information was available at the time) to minimize or avoid potential adverse effects or to enhance beneficial effects of the Project

Each TAC met between three and five times between September 2008 and March 2009 in a workshop format. Meetings were held primarily in Fort St. John, with some meetings taking place in Vancouver.

The exact approach taken by each TAC to address the objectives varied according to the nature of the topics, the status of available information, or participant preferences. In general, however, the structured dialogues of the meetings were consistent with the generic steps followed in an environmental assessment process, as summarized in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2 TAC Discussions of Generic Environmental Assessment Steps

Typical Environmental Assessment Steps Discussed	TAC Focus Area
Identify Project Components – These are discrete physical components or activities of a project and/or stages of its implementation.	Project components and activities
Identify Endpoints – Also called valued (ecosystem or social) components (VCs), these represent key issues and considerations when assessing the effects of the project. For each endpoint, one or more “measures” were to be defined. Measures may be quantitative or qualitative, but were intended to represent a concise way of summarizing the effects of the project on the endpoint of concern.	Issues/VCs and rationale
Identify Potential Effects Mechanisms – Sometimes called “potential interactions” or “impact hypotheses”, mechanisms link project components and endpoints, and describe the pathways or mechanisms by which the endpoints could be affected, positively or negatively.	Potential interactions
Establish Scope of Assessment – Effects were to be generally characterized at multiple scales, including the local effects in the direct project area, and an assessment of the regional significance of these effects. An appropriate geographic scope of analysis was to be defined for each endpoint.	Scope questions
Assess Baseline Conditions – This was to involve establishing the baseline condition (pre-project) of the endpoints and measures that were to have been identified.	Current baseline studies/information
Assess Effects – This was to involve predicting the effect of the project on valued components (ecosystem or social) compared with either pre-project (baseline) conditions or a predicted future state without the project (base case). The analysis will generally characterize the direction, magnitude,	Methods for assessing potential effects

Typical Environmental Assessment Steps Discussed	TAC Focus Area
duration/frequency, and probability of effects.	
Identify Limiting Factors – Where negative effects were to be projected to occur, an analysis was to be conducted to identify the factors that are limiting the endpoints (e.g., particular habitat types).	Fish and aquatics, wildlife habitat/life stage limiting factors
Identify Mitigation Options – Based on the assessment of effects and limiting factors, mitigation options to reduce adverse effects or enhance positive ones (e.g., alternative designs or management actions) were to be identified.	Preliminary mitigation areas
Assess Residual Effects – This was to involve estimating the net effects of the project including proposed mitigation measures.	Deferred to Stage 3

Input from these TACs informed the scope of baseline studies for these technical disciplines. These TACs facilitated the likelihood that early and multi-year environmental and social programs would meet anticipated regulatory principles, including consideration of Aboriginal and government agency interests, identification of the approach for determining and evaluating of potential project effects, and identification and evaluation of preliminary mitigation measures.

Invitations to participate in the TAC process were sent from BC Hydro to senior levels of potential participating agencies, and First Nations. While all B.C. Treaty 8 First Nations and the Horse Lake First Nation were invited to participate, only the Blueberry River First Nations participated in the TAC process. A separate technical advisory review process was established for the Council of Western Treaty 8 Chiefs, which is described in Section 9.2.3.3.1.

Membership in the TACs is shown in Table 9.3

Table 9.3 Technical Advisory Committee Membership

Technical Advisory Committee	Members
Fish and Aquatics	▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment – Fisheries and Science Section ▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment – Section Head Fish and Wildlife ▪ Blueberry River First Nations ▪ Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Science Branch, Vancouver ▪ Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Major Projects, Vancouver ▪ Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Fish Habitat Biologist ▪ District of Taylor ▪ Fisheries and Oceans Canada – Habitat Protection Engineer, Central Region ▪ Transport Canada – Senior Environmental Officer ▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment – Environmental Quality Regional Manager ▪ BC Hydro
Wildlife	▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment, Ecosystem Section Head (Fort St. John) ▪ B.C. Ministry of Forests – Stewardship and Range. ▪ District of Taylor ▪ Blueberry River First Nations ▪ Canadian Wildlife Service ▪ BC Hydro

Technical Advisory Committee	Members
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment – Climate Change Policy Analyst ▪ Environment Canada – Head, Air Quality Science Unit ▪ District of Taylor – Director of Finance ▪ Blueberry River First Nations ▪ BC Hydro
Recreation and Tourism	▪ Transport Canada – Navigable Waters Protection Officer ▪ District of Taylor – Community Services Director ▪ City of Fort St. John – Director of Legal and Administrative Services ▪ City of Fort St. John – Director of Community Services ▪ B.C. Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Art – District Recreation Officer ▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment – Planning Officer, Peace Regional Office ▪ BC Hydro
Land and Resource Use	▪ B.C. Ministry of Forests – Stewardship Forester, Peace District ▪ District of Taylor – Fire Chief and Building Inspector ▪ City of Fort St. John – Director of Planning and Engineering ▪ City of Chetwynd – Chief Administrative Officer ▪ Peace River Regional District – General Manager of Development Services ▪ District of Hudson's Hope – Chief Administrative Officer ▪ B.C. Ministry of Forests and Range – Range Land Officer ▪ B.C. Ministry of Environment – Planning Officer, Peace Region ▪ B.C. Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure – District Manager ▪ Blueberry River First Nations ▪ BC Hydro
Community Services and Infrastructure	▪ Provincial Emergency Program – Regional Managers and Senior Regional Manager ▪ District of Taylor – Public Works Superintendent ▪ City of Fort St. John – Chief Administrative Officer ▪ District of Chetwynd – Economic Development Officer ▪ District of Chetwynd – Chief Administrative Officer ▪ Peace River Regional District – General Manager of Development Services ▪ District Of Hudson's Hope – Director of Works and Protective Services ▪ Blueberry River First Nations ▪ BC Hydro

A summary of key discussions by the TACs is provided in Table 9.4 More detail can be found in the Site C Environmental and Socio-Economic Technical Advisory Committees Process Report, 2008 and 2009, Executive Summary in Volume 1 Appendix I Government Agency Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation.

Table 9.4 Key TAC Discussions

TAC	Key Discussions, Issues or Concerns	BC Hydro Consideration/Response
Fish and Aquatics	1. Identified 31 aquatic species to serve as endpoints (of concern) and suggested how they could be further categorized for study purposes. “Endpoints” include species and communities of interest that could be potentially affected by the project, and are analogous to key indicators of valued components. 2. Developed and reviewed “effects mechanism” (cause - effect) diagrams to identify areas of potential interaction of Site C and the endpoints. 3. Considered possible approaches to assessing effects that might be adopted in an EA process, with the goal of understanding the implications for information requirements. These included habitat-based and biodiversity/biomass-based approaches. 4. Based on the effects diagrams, reviewed existing information and identified information gaps in consideration of likely future EA needs. 5. Recognized the key role that an explicit set of fisheries management objectives could play in guiding a potential future EA, the TAC reviewed the draft objectives developed by the Ministry of Environment concurrent with (but separate from) the TAC process. 6. Identified opportunities to mitigate or enhance fish outcomes with project design. The most important of these were fish passage and reservoir enhancement opportunities. For these, the TAC provided input on the process and criteria for evaluating these options, as well as associated information needs.	1. Fish species categories were used in aquatic productivity modelling. 2. Effects mechanisms were used to identify interactions with the projects and “key aspects” for the effects assessment. 3. Key indicators and key aspects. 4. Information gaps were addressed in baseline studies. 5. During the meetings, BC Hydro indicated that the TAC needed management objectives and important key species to drive the assessment. The Ministry of Environment followed up with the draft management objectives. 6. Opportunities identified informed the fish passage feasibility assessment, which identified all possible options along with the technically and economically feasible options.

TAC	Key Discussions, Issues or Concerns	BC Hydro Consideration/Response
Wildlife	1. Recommended additional baseline data surveys for a number of additional species or species groups (referred to as 'guilds' by the TAC), including northern goshawk, northern harrier, yellow rail, Nelsons sparrow, American bittern, Le Conte's sparrow, fisher, grouse, woodpeckers, swallows, and dragonflies. Work on other species, such as that for Stone sheep based on input from Blueberry River First Nations, was integrated into ongoing work for the remainder of 2008/09 season. 2. Reviewed and generally supported the definitions of proposed local and regional study areas. 3. Agreed with the individual methodologies for the field studies already initiated and underway for establishing baseline data. In some cases, it was noted that main data gaps existed not with data collection in the local study area, but rather with the ability to understand that information in a regional context. 4. Participants were unanimous in their strong preference for the full decommissioning of any new temporary access roads in the south bank of the river to avoid facilitating access by recreational users and associated degradation of wildlife values.	1. In 2009, added species-specific studies and expanded technical study area based on TAC recommendations; EIS: 14 Wildlife Resources. 2. EIS: 14 Wildlife Resources. 3. Baseline data collection was expanded to gain regional context. 4. The number of new roads required for Project construction has been minimized through the use of existing roads or placing new roads within existing corridors. Construction of temporary access roads in ungulate winter range will be minimized. All temporary access roads will be deactivated when no longer required for project construction.

TAC	Key Discussions, Issues or Concerns	BC Hydro Consideration/Response
Recreation and Tourism (Hunting and Guide Outfitting; Fishing; Public Recreation; Tourism; Navigable Waters)	1. Discussions related to the collection of baseline information, which included support for BC Hydro's ongoing recreation and angler surveys. 2. Transport Canada outlined to BC Hydro and participants the regulatory requirements related to the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*, including how the current recreation use survey should consider detail on water craft usage. 3. Discussions about access issues and priorities between recreation and wildlife conservation interests on the south bank of the Peace River and the Peace River Boudreau Lake proposed protected area; this raised the need for the Ministry of Environment to clarify its potential management objectives for this area.	1. Baseline data for Section 25 Outdoor Recreation and Tourism and Section 24 Harvest of Fish and Wildlife Resources includes recreation and angler survey data. 2. Recreation use survey data used in Section 26 Navigation. 3. Considered in Section 25 Outdoor Recreation and Tourism. Wildlife issues addressed (see Wildlife TAC discussions above). Section 22 Oil, Gas, and Energy considered the Peace River Boudreau Lake proposed protected area. Section 24 Harvest of Fish and Wildlife Resources does not consider the Peace River Boudreau Lakes proposed protected area, as the activities allowed in this new protected area would likely include hunting.

TAC	Key Discussions, Issues or Concerns	BC Hydro Consideration/Response
Land and Resource Use (Forestry; Agriculture; Powerhouse Access Bridge; Transportation (highways); Minerals and Aggregate; Oil and Gas; Land Use Planning; Trapping; Traditional Use Activities)	1. Land being altered or converted from its current use. For example: o Loss of agricultural land, or the conversion of land away from agricultural purposes, including fragmentation of farm land. o Loss of timber from the timber harvest land base and an associated potential change to the annual allowable cut, and possible pricing and market distortions to the regional forestry industry associated with project clearing activities (i.e., merchantable timber). 2. Impeding access to or alienation of resources. 3. Potential "public use" of the powerhouse access bridge – any future decision to allow "public use" of the powerhouse access bridge would increase the study area for assessing project effects on land and resource use, due to increased access to south bank land and resources, and a possible shift in regional travel and access patterns. 4. Local government future development areas – understanding any direct or indirect project effects or constraints to local government planning boundaries (e.g., would it be more difficult for local governments to withdraw areas from the ALR). 5. Regional land use planning clarifying the future base case against which project effects would be compared, including the Peace River Boudreau Lake proposed protected area. 6. The importance of including a cumulative effects assessment associated with other land use activities and developments was raised.	1. Land being altered or converted from its current use o Considered in Section 20 Agriculture o Considered in Section 21 Forestry 2. Land and resource use effects assessments consider impediments to or alienation of access (agriculture, forestry, minerals and aggregates, oil, gas, and energy). 3. Project design was updated and no longer includes a permanent powerhouse access bridge. 4. Existing regulatory processes are in place to address this concern. 5. The Peace River Boudreau Lake proposed protected area is included in the baseline conditions for the land and resource use effects assessment. 6. Cumulative effects assessment is described in Section 10.5 Cumulative Effects Assessment.

TAC	Key Discussions, Issues or Concerns	BC Hydro Consideration/Response
Community Services and Infrastructure (Labour Market; Housing; Community Infrastructure; Education; Health Services; Solid Waste Management; Government Finances – Economic Development; Lifestyle and Recreation; Public Safety)	1. Local labour market effects associated with the potential project construction phase. 2. Need to understand the potential implications of temporary and permanent construction worker housing requirements, and worker housing alternatives, including the location and size of any worker camps. 3. Demographic and population changes in host communities, if people move to the area in response to employment opportunities. 4. Any requirements by the project for community services (e.g., education, health, or recreation) or infrastructure (e.g., sewer, water or waste). 5. The lead time necessary for local or provincial governments to plan for and implement any services or infrastructure programs after a decision has been made to proceed with the project. 6. The limited capacity of current regional solid waste management facilities to accept project waste. 7. The inter-community effects between northern communities associated with the potential project.	1. Considered in Section 17 Labour Market 2. Described in Section 4 Project Description and considered in Section 29 Housing 3. Considered in Section 28 Population and Demographics, Section 17 Labour Market, and Section 18 Regional Economic Development 4. Considered in Section 30 Community Infrastructure and Services 5. Considered in Section 30 Community Infrastructure and Services 6. Considered in Section 30 Community Infrastructure and Services 7. Considered in Section 28 Population and Demographics and Section 18 Regional Economic Development.
Heritage	1. Changes in the condition or integrity of an archaeological site, 2. Changes in access to a site for future scientific investigation or research, 3. Spiritual value or importance of a site, 4. The ability to use the site for social and traditional use purposes, 5. Appropriate approach for carrying out an archaeological inventory and a general framework for guiding a sampling program was agreed to.	1. Considered in Section 32 Heritage Resources 2. Considered in Section 19 Current Use of Lands and Resources for Traditional Purposes and Section 34 Asserted or Established Aboriginal and Treaty Rights, Aboriginal Interests, and Information Requirements 3. Considered in Section 32 Heritage Resources 4. Considered in Section 32 Heritage Resources 5. Considered in Section 32 Heritage Resources

TAC	Key Discussions, Issues or Concerns	BC Hydro Consideration/Response
Greenhouse Gas Emissions	1. To enable comparison of Site C to other generation technology options, consistent methodologies should be used if possible (e.g., life cycle emissions accounting). 2. Project emissions should be cumulative over the project lifespan. 3. Maintain an ongoing understanding of policy and modelling methods (e.g., Western Electricity Coordinating Council, Province of B.C., and international). 4. Update the estimate to include greenhouse gases (GHG) aspects of project construction, including fuel consumption and materials such as cement. 5. At a later date, consider including GHG aspects of road and highway use changes, pending final decisions regarding regional roads. 6. Preliminary discussion of GHG mitigation strategies included: o Use of a conveyor belt (as used at W.A.C. Bennett Dam) to move material o A biomass energy plant (thermal only or cogeneration) to combust wood waste o Use of “clean” equipment in the construction of the dam site o Use of Best Available Proven Technology (BAPT) o Purchase of carbon credits	1. Considered in Section 5 Need for, Purpose of, and Alternatives to the Project 2. Considered in Section 15 Greenhouse Gases. 3. Considered in Section 15 Greenhouse Gases. 4. Considered in Section 15 Greenhouse Gases. 5. No changes in regional road utilization to include in model update. 6. Preliminary discussion of GHG mitigation strategies o Conveyor belt incorporated into updated Project design o Wood waste will be available to local biomass consumers; discussed in Volume 1 Appendix A Vegetation, Clearing, and Debris Management Plan and Section 15 Greenhouse Gases o Subject to procurement and contract terms o Subject to procurement and contract terms o Other mitigation alternatives favoured

The information provided by the TACs has been incorporated into the environmental assessment in a number of ways:

- "Endpoints" identified by the Fish and Aquatics, Wildlife Resources, and Greenhouse Gas Emissions TACs have been taken into account in the identification and selection of valued components and/or their key indicators
- Values identified in the Community Services and Infrastructure, Recreation and Tourism, and Land and Resource Use TACs have been carried forward as valued components in the environmental assessment
- Baseline studies, field programs, and methods used have been directly informed by the TAC process
- Local and Regional Assessment Area boundaries for some valued components were informed in part using information gained from the TACs

Consultation with the Province of Alberta and the Northwest Territories

In addition to consulting with communities and Aboriginal groups, the BC Energy Plan also indicated that the Province and BC Hydro needed to consult with the Province of Alberta. Subsequently, the provincial government provided direction to include the Northwest Territories in interprovincial consultation. BC Hydro has played a supporting role to these initial discussions, as it is the provincial government that took the lead on any interprovincial consultation involving other governments.

9.3.2 Consultation During the Environmental Assessment Process

BC Hydro's Project Description Report was submitted to the BCEAO and the CEA Agency on May 17, 2011. On September 30, 2011, the federal Minister of the Environment and the B.C. Minister of the Environment announced a cooperative environmental assessment of the Project, including the establishment of a Joint Review Panel. The cooperative review process is described in detail in Volume 1 Section 8.3 Cooperative Review Process.

Information distribution and consultation with federal, provincial, and territorial agencies during the Pre-Panel Review Stage of the environmental assessment has been and will continue to be through participation in the Working Group (Volume 1 Section 8.3 Cooperative Review Process). Following submission of the EIS, these consultation activities will continue through the Joint Review Panel Stage.

An introductory meeting of the Working Group was held in Fort St. John on October 5, 2011 as a means of introducing the environmental assessment process and providing an overview of the Project to future Working Group members.

Preparation and Review of the EIS Guidelines

BC Hydro prepared and submitted draft version 1 of the EIS Guidelines for Working Group review in January 2012. The first Working Group meeting took place on March 1, 2012 in Fort St. John, and provided the Working Group with an overview of the content of the EIS Guidelines and an opportunity to ask questions about the draft EIS Guidelines. During the meeting, two issues arose for which BC Hydro subsequently provided further information to the Working Group through the BCEAO and the CEA Agency: electricity power distribution, and spatial study area and assessment boundaries.

During the Working Group review period of January 31 to March 15, 2012, the Working Group provided 26 submissions totalling 1,007 comments, suggestions, and requests to the CEA Agency and BCEAO. BC Hydro received the submissions on March 15, 2012 and provided a response package to the CEA Agency and BCEAO on March 30, 2012. The documents in the package included a covering letter, Topic Summaries on 13 recurring themes, and a table containing the comments and responses (BC Hydro 2012a). The Topic Summaries discussed the following recurring themes:

- Acid rock drainage & metal leaching
- Alternatives to the Project and planning
- Caribou
- Cumulative effects assessment
- Current use of lands & resources
- Dam safety
- Decommissioning
- Impact lines
- Methylmercury
- Peace Athabasca Delta
- Project need and purpose
- Seismic considerations
- Valued component selection & boundaries

Included in the response package submitted to the CEA Agency and BCEAO was a revised draft version 2 of the EIS Guidelines, reflecting review comments provided by the Working Group and BC Hydro's responses.

The CEA Agency and the BCEAO reviewed and considered the documents in the response package and issued draft version 3 of the EIS Guidelines (available for download at http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/55590/55590E.pdf) for public review and comment effective April 17, 2012. During this period of public review, many provincial, regional, and local government agencies provided further comment; some agencies took the opportunity to provide comment during both review periods, with others providing comment in one of the two comment periods. The public review period came to a close on June 1, 2012 with 912 individual submissions, resulting in a total of 1,388 comments received by the CEA Agency and BCEAO.

On June 26, 2012 BC Hydro provided detailed responses (BC Hydro 2012b) to the review comments in tabular format along with a covering letter providing discussion on key topics; three separate tables were submitted in response to comments from Aboriginal groups, the public, and government agencies. In addition, 16 Topic Summaries providing more detailed information on the following recurring themes were issued, along with the three response tables:

- Agriculture (new)
- Acid rock drainage and metal leaching (no changes)

- Alternatives to the Project and planning (updated)
- Caribou (updated)
- Cumulative effects assessment (updated)
- Current use of lands & resources (updated)
- Dam safety (updated)
- Decommissioning (no changes)
- Downstream technical study area boundaries (new)
- Hydroelectric storage and dispatchable capacity (new)
- Impact lines (no changes)
- Mercury (title changed from Methylmercury; no other changes)
- Project need and purpose (updated)
- Public information distribution and consultation (new)
- Seismic considerations (no changes)
- Valued component selection and boundaries (updated)

Topics of interest or concern identified by federal and provincial government agencies during the development and review process of the EIS Guidelines are summarized below at a high level, by agency.

Alberta Environment

Alberta Environment submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- Spatial boundaries should be expanded farther downstream into Alberta and the Northwest Territories
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: fish and fish habitat, wildlife resources
- Environmental assessment methods: fish and fish habitat; wildlife resources; vegetation and ecological communities
- Potential accidents and malfunctions
- Project components: project construction activities and water quality; reservoir operations water management
- Cumulative effects; sediment transport; surface water regime
- Consultation and engagement
- Environmental management plans: reservoir water management

B.C. Ministry of Agriculture

The B.C. Ministry of Agriculture submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- Project benefits
- Alternatives to the Project
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: agriculture; climate change; micro-climate; ungulates
- Potential changes or effects due to the Project: geology, terrain and soils; groundwater regime; economics; labour market; surface water regime; wildlife resources
- Agricultural mitigation and compensation
- Cumulative effects; agriculture; land status, tenure, and Project requirement

B.C. Ministry of Environment

The B.C. Ministry of Environment submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines;

- Potential changes or effects: groundwater; methylmercury; water quality; sediment transport; surface water regime; human health
- Cumulative effects; Project Inclusion List
- Quality of data presented in the EIS

B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

The B.C. Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- EA process: technical working groups; consultation and engagement
- Project benefits
- Project overview and description: project location, GIS shape files; mapping; project construction activities
- Project components; construction access roads; Highway 29 realignment; quarried and excavated materials; reservoir clearing and preparation; worker housing; project decommissioning
- Alternatives to the Project
- Spatial boundaries: fish and fish habitat; harvest of fish and wildlife resources; outdoor recreation and tourism; vegetation and ecological communities; wildlife resources
- Valued component selection: fish and fish habitat; forestry; heritage resources; vegetation and ecological communities; wildlife resources
- Environmental assessment methods: residual effects characterization; greenhouse gases; surface water regime
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: agriculture; fish and fish habitat; vegetation and ecological communities; forestry; harvest of fish and wildlife resources; heritage resources; minerals and aggregates; visual resources; wildlife resources

- Predictive models: geology, terrain and soils; greenhouse gases; surface water; thermal and ice regime; sediment transport; vegetation and ecological communities; visual resources
- Potential changes or effects: forestry; vegetation and ecological communities
- Mitigation and compensation: vegetation
- Cumulative effects: Project Inclusion List; agriculture

B.C. Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation

The B.C. Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Innovation submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- Project overview and description: project location and description
- Project need and purpose
- Project benefits; employment estimates; contractor supply services estimates
- Project costs; capital construction costs; operating costs
- Potential changes or effects: economic; local government revenue

British Columbia Utilities Commission

The British Columbia Utilities Commission provided comments during the Working Group review period. The Commission raised regulatory and permitting considerations in relation to an Application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity, with respect to: project description; comparison of capital costs; project cost estimate; revenue requirements; cost/benefit analysis.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Fisheries and Oceans Canada submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- Technical data being available during review of the EIS
- Alternative means of undertaking the Project
- Spatial boundaries: fish and fish habitat; harvest of fish and wildlife resources; thermal and ice regime; water quality
- Temporal boundaries: groundwater regime
- Valued component selection or attributes: fish and fish habitat VC rationale and key aspects
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: fish and fish habitat;
- Potential changes or effects: fish and fish habitat effects due to changes in mercury, thermal and ice regime; fish passage and entrainment; fisheries related effects on Aboriginal groups
- Mitigation and compensation: fish habitat mitigation and compensation planning
- Cumulative effects; Regional Assessment Area
- Follow-up and monitoring plans

- Post-construction reclamation and site restoration

Environment Canada

Environment Canada submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- EA process: technical working group on ecological flow; consultation and engagement
- EIS content: mapping requirements; technical data availability
- Alternative means of undertaking the Project
- Alternatives to the Project
- Project benefits
- Project need and purpose
- Project overview and description
- Project components; reservoir operations and maintenance activities; reservoir operations water management; worker housing; reservoir clearing and preparation.
- Spatial boundaries: Aboriginal rights (asserted or existing); fish and fish habitat; water quality; surface water regime; air quality; microclimate; current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes; sediment transport; thermal and ice regime; vegetation and ecological communities; wildlife resources.
- Temporal boundaries: microclimate
- Valued component selection: interactions; factors to be considered in VC selection; wildlife resources
- EA methods: interactions ratings; full description and justification of methods
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: construction emissions and air quality; greenhouse gases; groundwater regime; methylmercury; microclimate; water quality
- Predictive models: methods used to develop and validate models
- Potential changes or effects: effects of the environment on the project (climate change); potential contaminated sites; potential greenhouse gas emissions; groundwater regime; surface water regime; water quality; thermal and ice regime; methylmercury; vegetation and ecological communities (including wetlands); acid rock drainage; sediment transport
- Mitigation and compensation: sediment and runoff control during project construction
- Cumulative effects; spatial boundaries; Project Inclusion List; pre-development baseline; climate change and project changes; surface water regime; wildlife resources; microclimate; sediment transport
- Follow-up and monitoring plans: requirements per the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*; incorporation of adaptive management; construction effects on aquatic environment

- Potential accidents and malfunctions; general prevention and mitigation
- Project decommissioning

Government of the Northwest Territories

The Government of the Northwest Territories submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- Project overview and description: reservoir; operations water management;
- Spatial boundaries: government expertise to establish boundaries; current use of lands and resources; methylmercury; sediment transport; surface water regime; thermal and ice regime; water quality
- Valued component selection: effects of past energy projects on the Peace River
- Environmental assessment methods: determination of significance
- Predictive models: water quality; surface water regime
- Potential changes or effects: project construction activities and water quality
- Cumulative effects; pre-development baseline; Project Inclusion List; past energy projects on the Peace River
- Follow-up and monitoring plans

Health Canada

Health Canada submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- EIS content: reference documents; mapping; data, analysis reports
- Spatial boundaries: noise and vibration
- Temporal boundaries: human health
- Environmental assessment methods: human health
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: methylmercury
- Potential changes or effects: air quality and human health; electric and magnetic fields and human health; mercury in fish and human health; noise and vibration; thermal and ice regime and harvest of fish and wildlife resources
- Cumulative effects; human health
- Follow-up and monitoring plans; methylmercury; drinking water quality

Natural Resources Canada

Natural Resources Canada submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines.

- EIS content: regulatory considerations
- Alternative means of undertaking the Project: geotechnical analysis of alternate sites
- Project overview and description: project design criteria

- Project components; reservoir debris clearing and disposal; dam site and generating station; reservoir clearing and preparation; quarried and excavated materials
- Spatial boundaries: sediment transport; vegetation and ecological communities
- Valued component selection: vegetation and ecological communities
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: methylmercury
- Potential changes or effects: seismic considerations and the effects of the environment on the project; acid rock drainage; forestry; geology, terrain and soils; methylmercury; vegetation and ecological communities
- Mitigation and compensation: reservoir clearing and methylmercury
- Cumulative effects; methylmercury; induced seismic activity from hydraulic fracking
- Environmental management plans: seismic considerations; methylmercury; acid rock drainage; vegetation
- Follow-up and monitoring plans; seismic considerations; reservoir slope stability monitoring

Northern Health

Northern Health submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- EA process: consultation and engagement
- Project components: worker housing
- Potential changes or effects: human health; air quality; agriculture and food security; electric and magnetic fields; greenhouse gases; groundwater regime; community infrastructure and services; socio-economic (general); water quality; surface water regime
- Mitigation and compensation: air quality; human health

Parks Canada

Parks Canada submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- Spatial boundaries: regional assessment area should include Peace Athabasca Delta; fish and fish habitat; outdoor recreation and tourism; sediment transport; surface water regime; thermal and ice regime; vegetation and ecological communities
- Temporal boundaries: pre-development baseline within the Peace Athabasca Delta
- Valued component selection: special protected areas; cultural importance of PAD to Aboriginal Peoples
- Environmental assessment methods: residual effects characterization criteria
- Potential changes or effects: current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes; fish and fish habitat; harvest of fish and wildlife resources; outdoor recreation and tourism; vegetation and ecological communities; wildlife resources

- Environmental management plans: ice and water management plans
- Cumulative effects; pre-development baseline within the boundaries of Wood Buffalo National Park

Transport Canada

Transport Canada submitted comments related to the following topics of concern during review of the EIS Guidelines:

- EIS content: consultation and engagement issues; regulatory considerations (blasting, navigation)
- EA process: consultation and engagement
- Project components; Highway 29 realignment; reservoir clearing and preparation and debris management; reservoir filling and commissioning; reservoir operations water management; transmission lines; reservoir filling and commissioning
- Spatial boundaries: Navigation Regional Assessment Area should include Peace Athabasca Delta
- Temporal boundaries: all project phases to be considered in assessment
- Valued component selection: Aboriginal interests
- Environmental assessment methods: cumulative effects; consultation and engagement issues; valued component selection; mitigation and compensation; linkages between technical subject matter and VCs
- Baseline data collection and field survey programs: navigation
- Potential changes or effects: Aboriginal rights (asserted or existing); current use of lands and resources for traditional purposes; resource harvesting; navigation; sediment transport; indirect effects to navigation; thermal and ice regime
- Mitigation and compensation: navigation compensation plan; facilitate transit at dam site; debris management
- Cumulative effects; pre-development baseline; navigation

Following the comment period, a meeting was held on May 17, 2012 in Vancouver, B.C. The issues discussed during this meeting were: 1) downstream spatial boundaries, and 2) the approach to assessing cumulative effects. Participants in this meeting are listed in Table 9.5; the asterisk indicates participation via teleconference.

Table 9.5 May 17, 2012 Meeting Agency Participants

CEA Agency	Linda Jones	Panel Manager
	Analise Saely	Crown Consultation Coordinator
	Phil Seeto *	Analyst
BCEAO	Brian Murphy	Project Director
Environment Canada	Laura MacLean	Head, Environmental Assessment Unit
	Warren Fenton	Guidance and Strategies
	Al Colodey	Sr. Advisor, Water Science and Technology
	Lorna Hendrickson*	Head, Environmental Assessment South
	Leslie Yasul* (Edmonton)	Environmental Assessment Coordinator
	Kathryn Fraser* (Edmonton)	EA Coordinator
	Raimo Kallio* (Ottawa)	Water Resources
	Manon Lalonde* (Ottawa)	Water Resources
	Andrew Robinson	Environmental Assessment, Canadian Wildlife Service
	Liliana Gwizdkowska*	Environmental Assessment and Marine Programs Division
	Barrie Bonsal* (Saskatoon)	Hydrological Process and Modelling Research
	Daniel Peters	Hydrological Process and Modelling Research
	Raimo Kallio*	Integration and Analysis
Transport Canada	Suzanne L'Heureaux	Sr. Environmental Officer
	John Mackie	Navigable Waters Protection Officer
	Colin Parkinson	Navigable Waters Protection Officer
	Jo-Anne Foy* (Winnipeg)	Superintendent, Major Projects Management Office Technical and Environmental Services
	Shannon Vollema* (Edmonton)	Navigable Waters Protection Officer (Coordinator)
Fisheries and Oceans Canada	Brenda Andres	Environmental Analyst, Fisheries and Oceans Canada Environmental Assessment and Major Projects Unit
	Mike Bradford	Research Scientist Cooperative Resource Management Institute
	Wanda Watts*	Senior Habitat Biologist Alberta District - Peace River Office
Parks Canada Agency	John Olyslager	Resource Conservation
	Salman Rasheed*	Resource Conservation
	Steve Oates	Resource Conservation
Natural Resources Canada	Jess Coulson* (Ottawa)	Team Leader Environmental Assessment
	Tim Archer* (Ottawa)	Senior Operational Officer, Western Operations MPMO

Consideration of and Response to Issues Raised during Preparation and Review of the EIS Guidelines

Issues raised by government agencies during both the Working Group and public review of the EIS Guidelines, summarized above, are presented in greater detail in the EIS Guidelines Review Government Agency Issues Tracking Table found in Part 1 of Volume 1 Appendix I Government Agency Information Distribution and Consultation Supporting Documentation. This summary table also describes how the issues were considered or addressed by BC Hydro, either in the information provided in the EIS or in the response documents described above.

From the perspective of BC Hydro, all of the issues raised by agencies during both EIS Guidelines review periods have been addressed through the response packages submitted to the CEA Agency and BCEAO or through information provided in this EIS. The "consideration/response" column of the Government Agency Issues Tracking Table demonstrates how each issue raised was resolved in one of the following ways:

- **IR (&name):** Requests for information/clarification were addressed or responded to directly in the IR response table
- **Topic Summary (&name):** Requests for information/clarification were addressed or responded to by information in the indicated Topic Summary, issued along with the IR response tables
- **EIS (&section):** Requests for changes to the EIS Guidelines that were considered by BC Hydro to be material to the scope of the environmental assessment were either accepted or the change was recommended by BC Hydro to the BCEAO and CEA Agency. Consideration and discussion of the topic can be found in the respective section of the EIS

Requests for changes to the EIS Guidelines that were editorial in nature were often accepted or a recommendation was made by BC Hydro to the BCEAO and the CEA Agency to make the change. These editorial comments are not included in the issues table.

After considering the 2,395 comments made by the members of the Working Group and the public, BC Hydro's responses to the comments, and the discussion on spatial boundaries and cumulative effects, the Executive Director of the BCEAO and the Minister of Environment of Canada finalized and issued the EIS Guidelines on September 7, 2012.

9.3.3 Construction Communication

Should the Project proceed to construction, BC Hydro will communicate with agencies with respect to compliance with permits, authorizations, and regulatory requirements. An overview of the methods to be used to document and report the status of project compliance with respect to requirements and conditions to the CEA Agency, federal authorities, BCEAO, and provincial ministries are described in Volume 5 Section 36 Compliance Reporting.

References

Internet Sites

BC Hydro. 2012a. Site C Clean Energy Project – Response to Advisory Working Group Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines Version 1. Submitted to the BC Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency on March 20, 2012. Main response table available for download at http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/55111/55111E.pdf. Cover letter and 13 topic summaries available for download at http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/55112/55112E.pdf

BC Hydro. 2012b. Site C Clean Energy Project – Response to Public Comment Period on the Draft Environmental Impact Statement Guidelines (April 10, 2012). Submitted to the BC Environmental Assessment Office and the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency on June 26, 2012. Available for download at http://www.ceaa.gc.ca/050/documents/p63919/57624E.pdf