



For Immediate Release

Opinion: BC Hydro needs inclusive model for Site C construction

Vancouver – March 3, 2015 - If the goal is to jeopardize the Site C Clean Energy project, then the building trades unions deserve credit.

Site C is a province-building opportunity that is a key asset in an increasingly competitive global economy. It will produce firm power for more than a century; contribute \$3.2 billion to B.C.'s GDP; generate approximately 10,000 direct jobs and an additional 23,000 indirect jobs. B.C. can't afford self-interest groups standing in the way.

Not surprisingly, the building trades unions (BTU) are putting their self-interests ahead of British Columbians. And, they are putting their interests ahead of construction workers who for the past 30 years have worked together on numerous projects regardless of their labour affiliation.

Truth be told, the construction industry has been a model of labour peace and stability. In fact, the majority of British Columbia's major infrastructure projects have been built without a hitch using an inclusive approach to labour. Projects like construction for the 2010 Olympic Games venues, the Port Mann Bridge, the Sea to Sky Highway, the Canada Line and the Gibraltar and Copper Mountain mines were delivered on time, on budget and everyone worked side by side regardless of whether or not the worker had a union card.

BC Hydro's inclusive approach is no different. It's not a new model. It's the preferred model of construction that allows BC Hydro to tap into the entire B.C. construction labour pool. In fact, BC Hydro is maximizing the benefits to British Columbians by including training requirements, local hires and First Nations participation. Overall, this approach is the best for British Columbia because it encourages everyone to participate, not a select minority as the building trades unions want.

Let's not forget, today, the building trades unions represent a mere 20 per cent of the construction industry. They want an exclusive labour deal which means workers are forced to join its unions in order to work on a project. The BTU want to recreate an antiquated model that may have worked 60 years ago, but is out of touch with today's reality.

In fact, relying today on the old building trades unions project agreement model has proven to be a dismal failure if the Rio Tinto expansion in Kitimat is any indication. Rio Tinto has blamed labour for cost overruns and delays on that project which is subject to

the type of building trades unions project agreement proposed by Tom Siguardson and his colleagues among the other building trades unions.

If the BTU leadership really cares about the success of Site C then they should stop crying wolf about a by-gone era and turn their attention to more productive pursuits on behalf of their members and get ready for the work ahead by negotiating competitive collective agreements.

The Site C project will welcome them along with all others capable of doing the work.

B.C. needs all hands on deck and can't afford self-interested groups getting in the way.

<http://www.vancouversun.com/opinion/op-ed/Opinion+Hydro+needs+inclusive+model+Site+construction/10858766/story.html>

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