

Report Says Stopping Site C Could Save Money

By Elaine Macdonald-Meisner

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Prince George, B.C. – A review of the Site C project has concluded ending the project and building renewable wind and geothermal generating systems instead, could save the Province anywhere from \$0.7 billion to \$1.6 billion dollars.

The review from McCullough Research, was commissioned by the Peace Valley Landowners Association which has opposed Site C from the beginning.

Robert McCullough of McCullough Research says it would cost B.C. much less to build a renewable energy portfolio that doesn't include Site C and that such a portfolio would still meet the Province's clean energy goals.

The McCullough report says the savings could be much higher, if Site C is not on time or on budget, as such projects have been known to have significant cost over runs.

The report also says B.C. Hydro's forecast for future demand is vastly overstated, and that the province doesn't need Site C as a back up for times when other sources, such as wind and solar are not available. According to the report, "the Williston reservoir already plays this role and has sufficient capacity to continue doing so for many decades to come. In fact, it has approximately ten times the usable elevation and almost twenty times the usable area of Site C."

While that point may be true, a recent attempt by BC Hydro to lower the level of water in the Williston reservoir was fought strongly by the District of Mackenzie and local industry. Both argued, (successfully) lowering the water level to create more electricity would be disastrous. The Mayor of Mackenzie says reducing the level would result in the community having to spend millions of dollars to get its effluent discharge line to a river while industry would lose access to log dumps and barges would be out of commission for months at a time.

The President of the Peace Valley Landowners Association, Ken Boon says the McCullough report provides all the info the BC Utilities Commission needs to call for an immediate halt to the construction of the Site C dam, "We call on the BCUC to consider the McCullough Report's new findings in preparing its September 20th interim report and its November 1st final report"•