

Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee  
Terms of Reference  
Updated: October 6, 2016

## Background and Purpose

Community involvement in activities that affect the Columbia River Basin has been a long standing tradition for Columbia Basin residents. During Columbia River Treaty (CRT) community engagement activities hosted by Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) in 2011 and early 2012, and Columbia River Treaty Review consultation meetings hosted by the Province's Columbia River Treaty Review Team and the Columbia River Treaty Local Governments' Committee (LGC) in 2012 and 2013, participating Basin residents identified two areas of community interest:

1. Improved understanding of and information sharing with respect to Columbia Basin hydroelectric operations with the goal of better informed operations planning, and
2. Continued engagement of First Nations and communities throughout any future Columbia River Treaty negotiation process.

## Principles

The Local Government Committee (LGC), Ministry of Energy and Mines (MEM), and BC Hydro<sup>1</sup> have agreed to work together to address the two interests by establishing a Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee (CBRAC), a Basin-wide cross-sectoral group, representing a broad range of perspectives, interests and geography. This agreement is based on the following principles:

- *Collaboration* – The LGC, MEM and BC Hydro will work openly and collaboratively together, with distinct and clearly defined roles and responsibilities.
- *CBRAC Collaboration* – CBRAC members will utilize their knowledge and expertise of the Columbia Basin and Basin interests to collaborate in a constructive and productive way to share and disseminate information with the goal of informing Columbia Basin hydroelectric operations planning, and work toward strengthening the related community awareness and knowledge.
- *Advice* – CBRAC members will advise BC Hydro on matters that are regionally important and that should be taken into consideration in BC Hydro's operation planning. BC Hydro will take this advice under consideration when balancing multiple interests in operations planning and provide feedback on its ability to accommodate the advice in operations.

---

<sup>1</sup> See Roles and Responsibilities on page 4.

- *Reasonable commitment of time and resources* – Information sharing and engagement mechanisms will be selected that do not unreasonably burden the resources, or make unrealistic demands on participants.
- *Realistic expectations* – The activities of the CBRAC will respect and not alter the responsibilities, rights and obligations of BC Hydro and other hydroelectric facility operators to make planning and operational decisions, considering the advice and input provided.
- *Adaptive approach* – This initiative will start small and build on activities as and when needed, based on learning which activities are most effective.

## Membership

Members are expected to be able to take a broad perspective and work collectively to contribute positively and constructively to discussions on Columbia Basin issues and concerns, including the future of the Columbia River Treaty and Columbia Basin hydroelectric operations planning. Members will have interest in, knowledge and/or experience with hydroelectric operations planning and/or will be recognized in Columbia Basin communities (of interest or geography) as knowledgeable in one or more key areas of interest identified by Basin residents during the CBT, LGC or the Province's Columbia River Treaty Review processes. The goal is to involve representatives from each of eight to ten impacted areas who collectively span the range of interests.

Membership will consist of 30-35 members who include, but are not limited to, geographically and interest balanced representation from:

- A wide range of Columbia River Basin municipalities and regional districts;
- Columbia River Basin First Nations;
- Basin businesses and economic development agents;
- Basin recreation, environmental, tourism, business, agricultural or community organizations;
- Columbia Basin Trust;
- Ministry of Energy and Mines;
- BC Hydro and other Columbia Basin hydroelectric facility owners<sup>2</sup>.

In order to develop a legacy of knowledge about hydroelectric operations and planning in the Columbia Basin, younger representatives are encouraged to become members of the CBRAC.

Member selection will be conducted as follows:

- Each of the four regional districts in the Basin will designate two local government representatives from impacted areas. The Village of Valemout will designate one representative.
- Each Basin First Nation is invited to designate two representatives.
- A public invitation will be made for interested citizen representatives from business, Chambers of Commerce, economic development, recreation, environmental, tourism, business, agriculture and

---

<sup>2</sup> Other Basin-based hydro owners including FortisBC, CPC, Teck, and Nelson City Hydro could also be involved.

community organizations, to apply to become a CBRAC member. MEM will evaluate applications and select CBRAC members based on clearly defined criteria.

- Agencies will appoint their representatives.

A minimum two year commitment is suggested of members selected to the CBRAC. At the discretion of MEM, members will normally be appointed to serve for an unspecified term. Replacement of members will be from an expression of interest list and will be selected by MEM to ensure equitable representation of geographical and other interests within the region covered by the CBRAC. The CBRAC Steering Committee will conduct a membership review on an annual basis to explore gaps in membership and ensure member requirements are being met.

## **Member Code of Conduct**

CBRAC members commit to following the CBRAC Code of Conduct, approved by CBRAC on March 12, 2015.

## **Duties**

The CBRAC will:

- a) Serve as a forum for dialogue between the participants, hydroelectric facility owners and community interests;
- b) Complement BC Hydro's public engagement in the Columbia Basin region;
- c) Gain community insight and input regarding current and future hydroelectric operational issues, including their impacts on residents, customers, and the environment;
- d) Identify positive ways for responding to community needs and concerns;
- e) Become familiar enough with the realities of BC Hydro and other Columbia Basin hydroelectric facilities owners;
- f) Advise BC Hydro on matters that are regionally important and that should be taken into consideration in BC Hydro's operation planning. BC Hydro will take this advice under consideration when balancing multiple interests and provide feedback on its ability to accommodate the advice in operations; and
- g) Become familiar with the Columbia River Treaty and related activities in Canada and the U.S. and provide input and advice on potential future changes and improvements to the CRT.

## **Meeting Frequency and Compensation**

CBRAC is expected to meet two or three times a year in person and an additional two times (or as needed) via webinar or conference call. Members are expected to attend the equivalent of two out of three activities per year, except in extenuating circumstances. Members are encouraged to attend BC Hydro's and other owner's public operational update meetings and teleconferences.

Meeting agendas will be set 14 days in advance of any meeting. The CBRAC Steering Committee, participants and the Secretariat<sup>3</sup> will jointly propose the content of the agenda and circulate for input prior to the meeting.

Meetings will be held at varying locations in communities in the Columbia Basin. Mileage, accommodations and meals for committee members will be funded by the Ministry of Energy and Mines. Where appropriate and feasible, video-conferencing and teleconferences will be utilized to minimize time commitments for members and travel costs.

## **CBRAC Member Responsibilities**

CBRAC members are responsible for:

- a) Regularly attending scheduled meetings and preparing for meetings;
- b) Actively participating in CBRAC discussions and activities;
- c) Developing a clear understanding of the:
  - I. Principles, purpose and objectives of the CBRAC – it must be clear from the beginning what issues are, or are not, on the table; and
  - II. Member Code of Conduct and Duties
- d) Seeking input and opinion from their communities and/or interested parties and reporting to each meeting of the Committee on relevant issues;
- e) Reporting back to their community or interested parties on Committee discussions and activities;
- f) Developing practical and workable input for Local Governments, MEM, and BC Hydro's consideration;
- g) Respecting confidentiality of certain information as may be required from time to time;
- h) Participating in training that may enhance their abilities to serve on the Committee; and
- i) Submitting an expense claim form, together with applicable receipts, detailing all expenses claimed in support of Committee activities.

## **Roles and Responsibilities**

MEM and LGC will coordinate the work of the CBRAC and consult with BC Hydro as required.

MEM will provide resources for a Secretariat for this group to convene and facilitate activities as agreed by the team.

BC Hydro and MEM will provide staff expertise and actively participate in CBRAC meetings.

The LGC will liaise with local governments when appropriate.

MEM will liaise with federal and other provincial government agencies when appropriate.

Roles and responsibilities may be revised after an initial 2 year period.

---

<sup>3</sup> See Secretariat Roles and Responsibilities on page 5.

## Secretariat Roles and Responsibilities

The Secretariat is responsible for:

- a) Providing CBRAC with adequate background and timely information on relevant issues;
- b) Scheduling regular meetings and ensuring appropriate representatives are present;
- c) Arranging response in a timely manner to CBRAC questions and advice;
- d) Paying all reasonable travel, meals and incidental expenses of the members;
- e) Paying an honorarium to CBRAC members who incur lost income to attend meetings: and
- f) Providing administrative support as required.

## Review

These terms of reference will be reviewed annually, consistent with the principle of implementing an adaptive approach to Columbia Basin initiatives.