

MEETING SUMMARY

Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee Webinar

BC Hydro Draft 2021 Integrated Resource Plan

July 21, 2021, 1pm – 2:30pm Pacific Time via Zoom

The Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee met on July 21, 2021 by Zoom. The main purpose of this webinar was an update on BC Hydro's Draft 2021 Integrated Resource Plan. Gillian Kong, Principal Engineer, Generation System Operations with BC Hydro, joined the last portion of the meeting to answer questions about BC Hydro operations during this very dry summer.

The following summary is based on notes taken during the meeting, and though it is not verbatim, it is meant to reflect the key points of the discussion.

Welcome/CBRAC updates

Brooke McMurchy, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team

- Brooke welcomed everyone and acknowledged the territories of the Ktunaxa, Secwepemc, *Syilx* Okanagan and Sinixt peoples in the Columbia Basin.
- Brooke confirmed the next CBRAC webinar is planned for September featuring a presentation on BC Hydro's dry year operations.
- Looking to the fall, Brooke asked how members felt about meeting in person. CBRAC members in attendance were generally supportive as long as it is safe to do so, and provincial COVID-19 health orders allow it.
- Brooke also raised the idea of offering a series of sessions focused on Indigenous learning – topics such as [the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples](#) and [The Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act](#). CBRAC members were supportive.
- An in-person meeting and Indigenous learning series will be explored, and updates will be provided in the fall.

Columbia River Treaty Update

Kathy Eichenberger, B.C. Columbia River Treaty Team

- June 2021 marked one year since the Canadian negotiating team delivered its proposal to the U.S., outlining a framework for a modernized Treaty. The Canadian team is still awaiting a response.
- In the meantime, the Canadian negotiating team continues work to refine the best approach to seeking improvements within the Treaty, and outside of it. This includes:

- [Modelling](#) a variety of hydro system operations that take into account objectives for ecosystems, Indigenous cultural values, flood-risk management, hydro power, and other social and economic interests, the results of which will inform the Canadian negotiating team’s discussions on how to address ecosystems in a modernized Treaty, and what level of flexibility is needed in B.C. to meet Basin interests;
- Indigenous Nations-led work to [enhance Columbia Basin ecosystems](#), to inform the modelling initiative and Canadian negotiating positions;
- Efforts to explore potential Canadian domestic governance options for a modernized Treaty; and,
- The B.C. Treaty Team’s progress in seeking to address Treaty-related community interests.

BC Hydro Draft 2021 Integrated Resource Plan

Bill Clendinning, Capital Projects Communications Team, BC Hydro

[View presentation](#) for more detail.

- Bill presented to CBRAC in [January 2021](#) as part of BC Hydro’s initial consultation phase on the 2021 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP).
- Feedback received during that phase from Indigenous communities and the general public, including CBRAC, informed the [Draft 2021 IRP](#).
- During this webinar, Bill presented the Draft 2021 IRP, answered questions and invited feedback from CBRAC.
- He started by reviewing some of the [information shared in January](#): the IRP process, the definition of energy and capacity, and BC Hydro’s 20-year forecast for electricity supply and demand. The purpose of the IRP is to determine how BC Hydro will meet customer load for the period under review.
- The main elements of the Draft 2021 IRP are:
 - **Conservation** – keep the current level of energy conservation programs (e.g. Power Smart) and prepare to ramp up; pursue voluntary time-varying rates and supporting demand response programs; target electric vehicle charging.
 - **Renewing existing electricity purchase agreements** – offer market-based renewal options for contracts expiring in the next five years.
 - **Transmission system upgrades** – transmission upgrades to existing lines as an alternative to new transmission lines; advance a first step of upgrades for transmission to the South Coast and prepare for a second step. Undertake early engagement with Indigenous Nations on both.
 - **Future resources** – beyond the elements identified above and after demand-side measures, the plan is to keep options open. BC Hydro heard from British Columbians that they need a diverse mix of options to meet future energy

needs. When BC Hydro looks at the resources available in B.C. to meet future energy demand, it can be a mix of renewing existing purchase agreements, upgrading BC Hydro facilities rather than replacing them, and pursuing clean and renewable sources of power such as wind, geothermal, solar with batteries etc.

- **Small BC Hydro hydroelectric facilities** – evaluate what to do with small generating facilities near or at their end of life on a case-by-case basis – decommission/refurbish/divest.
- **Planning for the unexpected** – contingency plans consider what to do if electricity demand is higher or lower than expected.
- CBRAC members asked questions throughout the presentation to clarify and query:
 - energy and capacity forecast data;
 - the electricity purchase agreement renewal process;
 - what impact electric vehicles and increased use of public transit could have on demand;
 - whether BC Hydro is focused on smaller facilities vs. large projects to meet demand;
 - BC Hydro's two-tier rate system and its effectiveness at influencing conservation;
 - goals for transmission upgrades;
 - whether Duncan Dam is considered as a potential electricity resource; and
 - the impact that climate change could have on the supply and demand forecast, and whether that is factored into IRP decision making.
- CBRAC members were invited to submit their feedback on the draft IRP by completing a survey online at bchydro.com/CleanPower2040. They were also encouraged to submit further questions to the IRP team at cp2040@bchydro.com
- The final IRP is due to be submitted to the BC Utilities Commission in December 2021.

BC Hydro Operations Update

Gillian Kong, Principal Engineer, Generation System Operations, BC Hydro

- Gillian provided a brief update and answered questions about BC Hydro's operations amidst this unusually dry year.
- July is the fifth consecutive dry month this year, with runoff declining in each seasonal update, comparable to the 2016 water year.
- BC Hydro negotiated a summer storage agreement with the U.S. for Arrow Lakes Reservoir and will be able to retain more water in July, with releases deferred to August.
- This summer is an outlier event because the heat dome was so extensive that snowpack melted at an elevated rate. This resulted in inflows never seen before.
- This was quite apparent at Mica, Revelstoke, and Duncan dams, with snow still remaining in June prior to the heat dome.
- Fairly high inflows will continue through the summer, making up for lack of rain.

- Kinbasket Reservoir is higher than this time last year, despite lack of rain and snowpack. BC Hydro believes that this is because the glaciers are melting at a faster rate.
- Duncan inflows were higher than expected. BC Hydro moved water out of Duncan Reservoir, proactively adjusting flows to target one foot from full pool by the end of July.
- Each year, BC Hydro collects information on weather, which is used in hydrology models and operations planning for future years.

CBRAC will receive a full presentation about BC Hydro's dry year operations during a webinar on September 29, 2021.