

***"...for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow..."***

**Treaty No.8**

DECLARATION on this 17<sup>th</sup> day of September 2010

of the  
Doig River First Nation  
Halfway River First Nation  
Prophet River First Nation  
West Moberly First Nations

Concerning the Proposed Site C Dam on the Peace River, British Columbia

Wqchiigfi Yededze? Dane Gqđineh Yq t'a dqđ ááh? kaa

WHEREAS we, the Dunne Zaa/Dane zaa people of the Doig River First Nation, Halfway River First Nation, Prophet River First Nation and West Moberly First Nations are the original indigenous Nations of northern British Columbia who have a unique historical, spiritual and cultural link to the land:

- We have occupied the Peace River Valley and its tributaries, the Athabasca and Mackenzie watershed region since time immemorial ; and continue to occupy this land;
- Our ancient, sacred sites and graves of our ancestors are found throughout the Peace River Valley and its tributaries;

AND WHEREAS we have inherent, constitutional rights to continue our way of life in the Peace River region:

- We are signatories to Treaty No. 8, a peace and friendship Treaty between the Crown and each of the signatory First Nations.
- We are stewards of the land, who face industrial devastation to the land; and
- In Treaty No. 8, the Crown and First Nations agreed that the First Nation signatories "have the right to continue with our way of life for as long as the sun shines, the grass grows and the rivers flow" without forced interference as though never entered the treaty; and

The rights provided for in Treaty 8 are constitutionally recognized and affirmed by section 35 of the *Constitution Act*, 1982;

AND WHEREAS the Province of British Columbia proposes to construct and operate a major hydroelectric dam project (the "Site C Dam") on the Peace River that eliminates our ability to continue our way of life and exercise our Treaty-protected constitutional rights to hunt, trap, fish, harvesting and carry out traditional practices on the land. Construction and operation of the proposed Site C dam will, among other things, have direct and cumulative impacts that (but not limited to):

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- Disrespect and destroy the graves of our ancestors
- Eliminate critical warm lowlands where both predators and prey survive harsh northern winters;
- Demolishes habitat and disrupts migration routes for bull trout and other fish species at the top of the Peace River aquatic food chain and cause them to become contaminated with mercury that poisons the traditional foods of First Nations, as happened already behind the Bennett Dam already impacting our homeland;
- Annihilate the islands in the Peace where cow moose deliver their calves Submerge key ungulate calving grounds for moose, mule deer, and elk;
- Eliminate regionally rare and important ecosystems, including old growth deciduous and mixed wood forest of the Peace, Halfway, and Moberly Rivers, riparian forests important to furbearers, habitat for red and blue listed neo-tropical migrant birds, and traditional and medicinal rare plant communities;
- Destroy more than 7000 acres of class one and class two farmland and along with it the opportunity for food security in northeast BC and other lands eliminated by erosion;
- Together with the reservoirs created by the two existing dams, create a cumulative barrier to fish and wildlife, especially grizzly bear, movement at the narrowest waist of the continentally important Yellowstone to Yukon wildlife corridor;
- Exacerbate the negative environmental impacts caused by the first two upstream Peace River dams to the Peace-Athabasca delta and other wetlands down the Peace, Athabasca and Mackenzie river watersheds through Alberta and the Northwest Territory all the way to the Arctic Ocean;
- Add 147,000 tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere as a result of this dam project which this government has dared call green and clean; and
- Eliminates the very land upon which our people hold annual cultural camps to maintain the heritage of our relationship between our Elders, our youth and the land that is our duty to pass on to future generations in a healthy vibrant state.

AND WHEREAS the proposed Site C Dam will have harmful environmental effects that will impact on First Nations, and all residents in the Peace River region or downstream;

AND WHEREAS it is in the interests of all British Columbians that the Peace River and its tributaries be preserved for future generations;

AND WHEREAS We, the Chiefs of the four First Nations, gathered with affected First Nations located downstream of the proposed Site C Dam, along with several environmental organizations and concerned residents of the Peace Region, at a Summit on September 16 and 17 in Fort St John, British Columbia;



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WE, THE UNDERSIGNED CHIEFS AND SUPPORTERS, ON BEHALF OF OUR RESPECTIVE FIRST NATIONS, CALL UPON THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT WHO HAS A FIDUCIARY OBLIGATION TO ALL THE FIRST NATIONS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED BY THE PROPOSED SITE C DAM TO PROTECT AND SAFEGUARD THEIR INHERENT INDIGENOUS RIGHTS AND WAY OF LIFE;

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED CHIEFS AND SUPPORTERS, ON BEHALF OF OUR RESPECTIVE FIRST NATIONS, CALL UPON THE PREMIER AND THE GOVERNMENT OF BRITISH COLUMBIA TO:

- Support and adequately fund a full, independent comprehensive cumulative assessment with a pre-industrial baseline of the proposed Site C Dam on the Peace River region and the Athabasca and MacKenzie Delta, including a full environmental and cultural assessment of the impacts of the two previously constructed upstream dams, and how and will continue to impact and affect will affect the Treaty rights and interests of the First Nations;
- Support and adequately fund a full, independent study of all viable alternative options for the production of electricity for the Province's needs;
- Halt any and all efforts of the proposed project until the completion of these full, independent studies;
- Re-instate the authority of the BC Utilities Commission to examine the true economic impacts to the people of British Columbia of constructing the Site C Dam; and
- To allow formal participation by First Nations in the decision making process concerning the proposed Site C Dam and to agree that where no agreement can be reached on the proposed Site C Dam to agree to appoint together with First Nations an impartial decision maker.

AND, FURTHERMORE, IN RECOGNITION OF THE IMPACT THAT THE PROPOSED SITE C DAM WILL HAVE ON THE LOCAL ENVIRONMENT, OUR WAY OF LIFE AND OUR ABILITY TO EXERCISE OUR TREATY RIGHTS,

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED CHIEFS AND SUPPORTERS, ON BEHALF OF OUR RESPECTIVE FIRST NATIONS, DECLARE THAT:

- We are opposed to the proposed Site C Dam;
- We vow to use all lawful means to stop the Site C Dam from proceeding; and
- We assert that the proposed Site C Dam is not “green or clean.”

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SIGNATORIES:

Chief Norman Davis, Doig River First Nation



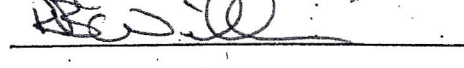
Chief Ed Whitford, Halfway River First Nation



Chief Lynette Tsakoza, Prophet River First Nation

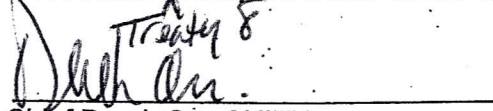


Chief Roland Willson, West Moberly First Nations



FIRST NATIONS JOINED IN OPPOSING SITE C.

OTHER B.C. FIRST NATION CHIEFS:



Chief Derek Orr, CHIEF  
McLeod Lake Indian Band

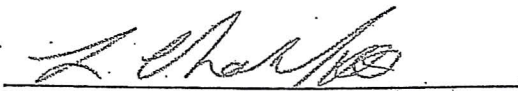
TREATY 8 CHIEFS FROM ALBERTA:

VERBAL ASSENT

Danny Bellerose, PROXY  
Driftpile First Nation

VERBAL ASSENT

Matthew Willier, PROXY  
Sucker Creek First Nation



Leon Chalifoux, CHIEF  
Swan River First Nation

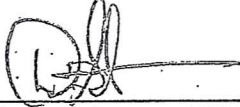
VERBAL ASSENT

Gus Loonskin, Chief  
Little Red River Cree Nation

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VERBAL ASSENT  
Don Testawich, CHIEF  
Duncans First Nation



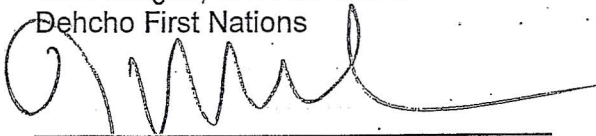
Dilbert Salopree, PROXY  
Dene Tha' First Nation

VERBAL ASSENT  
Rupert Meneen, CHIEF  
Tall Cree First Nation

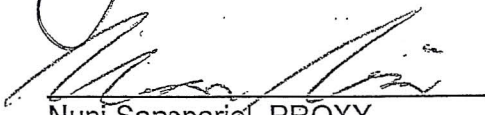
VERBAL ASSENT  
Vyola Goodswimmer, PROXY  
Sturgeon Lake Cree First Nation

THE FOLLOWING FIRST NATIONS ARE IN SUPPORT OF THIS DECLARATION:

VERBAL ASSENT  
Sam Gargan, GRAND CHIEF  
Dehcho First Nations



James Marlowe, PROXY  
Lutsel'k'e Dene First Nation



Nuni Sanspariel, PROXY  
Yellowknives Dene First Nation