

Paddle for the Peace buoyed by optimism this year

By Joe Foy – National Campaign Director – Wilderness Committee



Happy defiant paddlers at the 12th annual Paddle for the Peace

From the moment I set foot on the riverbank of the mighty Peace I could feel something was up. People were excited and laughing. There was a sense of defiance in the air. You could tell by people's body language that they were feeling mighty powerful. Maybe it was because of the great pancake breakfast that the cooks from the West Moberly first Nation were serving people – but more likely it was the recent win of the NDP Green government who have promised to put the Site C dam project before the BC Utilities Commission – where it will surely drown in a sea of its own red ink.



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I was in the Peace River Valley for the 12th annual Paddle for the Peace event. I had been invited to MC the gathering, giving me a front row view.



West Moberly Chief Roland stirs up another batch of pancakes



From left to right: Grand Chief Stewart Phillip - President UBCIC, Chief Bob Chamberlain - Vice President UBCIC, Chief Roland Wilson of West Moberly First Nation, Joan Phillip and elder George Desjarlais with their signatures on a symbolic "stake in the Peace".

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Federal Green Party leader Elisabeth May addresses the crowd before the start of the paddle.



George Desjarlais sends off the paddlers with his drum and song.

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Hundreds of paddlers launch into the Halfway River, where it joins with the Peace



Multigenerational fun appeared to be the theme of this year's paddle.

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Hundreds of people out on the Peace River for the paddle.



On the shore the big White Elephant makes the point that the proposed Site C dam is a massive waste of money.

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Joan Phillip speaks to the crowd after the paddle



Grand Chief Stewart Phillip addresses the crowd about the terrible Site C dam project.

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To see the rest of the photos that I took at this year's Paddle for the Peace [go to this link.](#)