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# COLUMBIA River Treaty

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**To:** Columbia Basin government elected officials  
and local government CAOs

**Date:** March 12, 2024

**From:** Linda Worley, Chair  
Columbia River Treaty Local Governments Committee

## **Subject: Update on CRT Local Government Committee Activities**

Since the update memo that was sent to you in December 2024, the Committee has worked intensely and almost exclusively on the implementation of the Columbia River Treaty (CRT) Agreement-in-Principle (AIP) that was reached in July 2024. The Committee has held five virtual meetings, and virtual meetings with CRT negotiation delegation representatives as well as with CRT First Nations representatives.

The U.S. has paused negotiations with Canada on an amended Columbia River Treaty and with the potential for a federal election in the near future we expect that the Committee's work on treaty modernization processes will decline. However we continue to work diligently monitoring implementation of the interim agreements on portions of the AIP and on domestic implementation.

### **CRT Modernization Activities**

#### **Virtual Information Session March 25th**

Please see the attached Information Bulletin from the province announcing a virtual Info Session with Minister Dix as well as MLAs Anderson and Morrisette on March 25th from 6-7pm PT/7-8pm MT. The purpose of this session is to provide an update about the status of the Columbia River Treaty modernization process and answer questions in light of new developments from the U.S.

I encourage you to register for this Info Session at:

[https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_7sv70tIIRJWK1LCD51Mrig](https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7sv70tIIRJWK1LCD51Mrig)

### **Ongoing Engagement and Current Operations**

Since the announcement of the AIP in July we have engaged with the BC CRT Team to advise on community engagement about CRT modernization and to understand the implications of the AIP for regional local governments and residents. The BC CRT Team has developed an extensive [CRT AIP website](#) which includes a [Backgrounder](#), a [Contents](#) document and FAQs as well as a [video](#) explaining the AIP and the recordings of the virtual public info sessions in September and December. The Committee continues to advocate for meaningful public engagement throughout treaty modernization and implementation as stated in our [2021 CRT Recommendations](#).

The announcement of the upcoming virtual information session also notes that the Province will also schedule in-person community meetings in the B.C. Columbia Basin. Those sessions, originally planned for early this year, will be confirmed once there is more clarity about next steps on the path to modernizing the treaty.

Several Interim Agreements were reached between September and November 2024 to implement the changes in flood risk management, the Canadian Entitlement and the transmission responsibilities in the AIP. The agreements and the exchange of diplomatic notes to implement the flood risk management and Canadian Entitlement changes are now posted on a [webpage](#) on the BC CRT website. The Committee continues to request that the Interim Agreement for transmission responsibilities be posted publicly.

The Committee has been reviewing these agreements to understand their implications for hydro operations this year. We have encouraged the BC CRT Team and BC Hydro to clearly explain these agreements to local governments and the public. We understand that this will be included in the annual BC Hydro operations updates in May and June. We will be sure you receive the registration information for these sessions.

The BC CRT Team continues to welcome feedback through their on-line survey at <https://feedback.engage.gov.bc.ca/773486?lang=en>. The BC CRT Team is sharing reports from the on-line survey with the Committee and we are monitoring other sources to understand the views of Basin residents on CRT modernization as much as possible.

There are many more steps to develop and implement a modernized Treaty when the time is right. We encourage you to stay involved as this moves forward.

### **Reaching out to the new Minister and regional MLAs**

The Committee has established contact with Minister Dix as the Minister of Energy and Climate Solutions and the Minister Responsible for the Columbia River Treaty, Columbia Power Corporation and Columbia Basin Trust. He has encouraged us to work closely with MLAs Anderson and Morrisette to bring local government interests forward to him, which we will do.

### **Ongoing**

- ***Integrating socio-economic interests in CRT scenarios*** – The Committee’s Socio-Economic Integration Team continues to work to ensure social and economic interests for the Kootenay and Columbia rivers are being included in river management scenario modelling for CRT modernization. Socio-economic interests that are impacted by reservoir levels and river flows, such as flood risk management, navigation, recreation, tourism, dust generation and others are very important to communities. Performance measures describing the required and preferred reservoir elevations and flow levels for these interests continue to be refined as new information becomes available. These measures are being used in the evaluation of alternative hydro operations scenarios to inform the selection of operations to implement the new Canadian flexibility in the modernized Treaty. The Team is also participating in these evaluations. Other groups are working on performance measures for ecosystem function (learn more [here](#)), which are also very important to Basin residents, Indigenous cultural values and power generation.

The Team also continues to contribute to the new Adaptive Management Subgroup for the new Canadian flexibility operations. This group is developing an adaptive management framework to monitor, learn about and adjust the new operations.

The Committee is very grateful to be included in these processes as this signals the recognition of the value of local government contributions in CRT-related matters. The Committee is grateful for the funding from the Province for this initiative. For more detailed information see the [Committee’s website](#).

- ***Modernized domestic CRT governance*** – The three First Nations involved in the CRT modernization – the Ktunaxa, Syilx Okanagan and Secwepemc Nations – and B.C. are developing a framework for modernized Canadian domestic CRT governance. This initiative recognizes both the role of First Nations in the context of UNDRIP and how Basin communities could have a voice in future decisions regarding aspects of Treaty operations planning.

The Committee has been prepared to engage in this critically important initiative for some time. The Committee will be reaching out to local governments across the Basin once more information is available. The BC CRT Team has committed to providing Basin communities and residents an opportunity for input on potential governance models before decisions are reached.

- **BC Hydro community communications and engagement** – The Committee continues to press BC Hydro for improved communications and engagement with basin communities. We have seen some improvements and will continue to advocate for further improvements to meet the needs of basin communities.

One challenging aspect is in-person community meetings. The Committee continues to advocate for these sessions in communities that prefer this approach, however BC Hydro has not been willing to reinstate these meetings since the COVID lockdowns. BC Hydro has provided the attached contact list as the resource for basin local governments and the public to use to have their questions addressed. We encourage you to share this list with your constituents.

As well, you are encouraged to sign up for weekly updates on Arrow, Duncan and Kinbasket reservoirs, and Kootenay Lake, as well as notifications of river flow changes below Hugh Keenleyside dam by contacting Mary Anne Coules at [maryanne.coules@bchydro.com](mailto:maryanne.coules@bchydro.com).

- **Columbia Basin Regional Advisory Committee (CBRAC)** – CBRAC includes public members who represent the geography and interests across the basin (selected based on their expressions of interest) and appointed members from local governments, First Nations and basin hydro operators. In March CBRAC had a webinar providing an update on the status of CRT modernization. The CBRAC terms of reference, membership and meeting summaries as well as presentations and reports discussed at these meetings are available on the [CBRAC webpage](#).

I encourage you to stay informed about CRT modernization by visiting the [CRT engagement website](#) and signing up for the [CRT e-letter](#). This site will continue to be the source of accurate, updated information as negotiations progress. You can learn more about the Committee at our [website](#).

### Committee Members

RDKB - Linda Worley, LGC Chair, Rural Director and Warfield Mayor Frank Marino

RDEK - Stan Doehle, LGC Vice Chair and Rural Director; and Jane Walter, Regional Director

RDCK – Aimee Watson, Rural Director and RDCK Board Chair; and Aidan MacLaren-Caux, Nakusp Councilor

CSRD – David Brooks-Hill, Rural Director and Golden Mayor Ron Oszust

Village of Valemount – Donnie MacLean, Councilor

AKBLG – Keith Page, Nelson Councilor

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## INFORMATION BULLETIN

For Immediate Release

Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions

2025ECS0009-000191

March 11, 2025

### **Columbia River Treaty negotiations paused, information session will answer questions**

VICTORIA – On Tuesday, March 25, 2025, Adrian Dix, Minister of Energy and Climate Solutions, and Minister responsible for the Columbia River Treaty, will host a virtual information session to provide an update about the status of the Columbia River Treaty modernization process and answer questions in light of new developments from the U.S.

The U.S. has paused negotiations with Canada on an amended Columbia River Treaty. The U.S. administration said it is conducting a broad review of its international engagement.

Dix will be joined by Brittney Anderson, MLA for Kootenay Central, and Steve Morissette, MLA for Kootenay Monashee. B.C.'s lead on the Canadian Columbia River Treaty negotiation delegation will also be on hand to answer questions.

The session will take place from 6-7 p.m. (Pacific time) on Zoom and a recording will be available afterward. Questions can be sent in advance by Tuesday, March 18, 2025, to [columbiarivertreaty@gov.bc.ca](mailto:columbiarivertreaty@gov.bc.ca).

The Province will also schedule in-person community meetings in the B.C. Columbia Basin. Those sessions, originally planned for early this year, will be confirmed once there is more clarity about next steps on the path to modernizing the treaty.

The virtual information session is part of the B.C. government's ongoing engagement with Basin First Nations, local governments and residents about the agreement-in-principle (AIP) reached between Canada and the U.S. in July 2024.

Information about the AIP is available on the B.C. Columbia River Treaty website, including recordings of two virtual information sessions. In September 2024, the Province launched an online survey for people to share feedback about the AIP, which is helping inform the next steps in the modernization process.

Members of the public are encouraged to continue sharing comments and questions about the treaty and the AIP by emailing: [columbiarivertreaty@gov.bc.ca](mailto:columbiarivertreaty@gov.bc.ca)

### **Learn More:**

To register for the March 25 Zoom session, visit:

[https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_7sv70tIIRJWK1LCD51Mrig](https://ca01web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_7sv70tIIRJWK1LCD51Mrig)

Materials, recordings, survey and guidelines for written feedback about the AIP can be found on the B.C. Columbia River Treaty website:

<https://engage.gov.bc.ca/columbiarivertreaty/agreement-in-principle/>

To keep up with the latest Columbia River Treaty news, subscribe to the newsletter at <https://engage.gov.bc.ca/columbiarivertreaty/sign-up/> or follow the Columbia River Treaty on Facebook (@ColumbiaRiverTreaty).

**Contact:**

Ministry of Energy and Climate Solutions  
Media Relations  
250 920-6388

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Connect with the Province of B.C. at: [news.gov.bc.ca/connect](https://news.gov.bc.ca/connect)

# BC Hydro Community Relations

## Southern Interior Region

### REACH OUT TO THE TEAM

[southern-interior.info@bchydro.com](mailto:southern-interior.info@bchydro.com)

Dag Sharman	Community Relations Manager 250 549 8531 <a href="mailto:dag.sharman@bchydro.com">dag.sharman@bchydro.com</a>
Mary Anne Coules	250 365 4565 <a href="mailto:maryanne.coules@bchydro.com">maryanne.coules@bchydro.com</a>
Susan Edgell	778 694 9386 <a href="mailto:susan.edgell@bchydro.com">susan.edgell@bchydro.com</a>
Dave Cooper	250 549 8581 <a href="mailto:david.cooper@bchydro.com">david.cooper@bchydro.com</a>
Angela Choi	250 668 3083 <a href="mailto:angela.choi@bchydro.com">angela.choi@bchydro.com</a>



### VISIT BCHYDRO.COM

- [Real-time water level information](#) for various locations around our reservoirs.
- Our [Fall 2024 Columbia River Operations Summary](#).
- Details about our [Columbia basin facilities](#) and [Revelstoke Dam Visitor Centre](#).
- Information and updates on the [Columbia River Water Use Plan](#) and [Duncan Dam Water Use Plan](#).
- How we have been managing drought conditions [across the province](#) and in the [Columbia River basin](#).
- Report an outage, find current and planned outages, and tips on how to prepare for outages at [bchydro.com/outages](https://bchydro.com/outages).

### STAY INFORMED

- Request information about operations update meetings and presentations, and sign up to receive weekly water level forecasts by emailing [southern-interior.info@bchydro.com](mailto:southern-interior.info@bchydro.com).
- Listen to river flow and reservoir level information by phoning our toll-free reservoir information line at **1 877 924 2444**. These recorded messages are updated every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday.

### ADDITIONAL PROVINCIAL RESOURCES

- Information about provincial drought conditions and related information can be found on the [B.C. Drought Information Portal](#).
- See the detailed 2023 report from the government of B.C.: [2023\\_ArrowLakesReservoir\\_InfoSession\\_QA\\_Report\\_FINAL.pdf](#).
- Columbia River Treaty information is available from [the government of B.C.](#)
  - On July 11, 2024, Canada and the United States announced an [agreement-in-principle](#) to modernize the Columbia River Treaty.