



NEWS RELEASE

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Gitksan Houses sign agreement in support of Northwest Transmission Line

Vancouver – BC Hydro is pleased to announce that an impact benefit agreement has been signed with the Gitksan Huwilp (Houses) of Tenimgyet, Wii Hlengwax and Lelt which will provide training, employment and other economic development opportunities related to the construction of the Northwest Transmission Line (NTL) project.

Once complete, the Northwest Transmission Line will provide clean, reliable power to the Northwest region of B.C., which is currently not part of the BC Hydro electricity grid.

The Gitksan agreement represents another Northwest Transmission Line milestone, as impact benefit agreements have already been signed with the Gitanyow Nation, Kitselas First Nation, Metlakatla First Nation, the Tahltan Nation and the Nisga'a Nation – during the past several months. Negotiations with other First Nations in the region continue.

The NTL is estimated to create up to 840 direct jobs during the three years of construction. According to a 2008 report from the Mining Association of B.C., the NTL also has the potential to attract \$15 billion in new investment and create more than 10,000 jobs over the next few decades.

The Northwest Transmission Line is part of BC Hydro's regeneration strategy, which is renewing and expanding the province's electricity system.

Quotes

Gitksan Chief Art Mathews (Tenimgyet):

"We worked long and hard to reach an agreement with BC Hydro that is both fair and brings benefits to our community. We hope that this agreement marks the beginning of a positive relationship that respects Gitksan rights as construction progresses in our territory."

Hon. Rich Coleman, Minister of Energy and Mines:

"The Northwest Transmission Line will create jobs that families can count on and help lead to future investment in the northwest. By signing this agreement, the Gitksan will benefit through the many employment prospects, contracting and other economic development opportunities a project of this scale brings to a community."

Greg Reimer, Executive Vice-President, Transmission and Distribution, BC Hydro:

"The signing of this impact benefit agreement demonstrates BC Hydro's commitment to building a stronger, trusted working relationship with the Gitksan to ensure their community has access to the many benefits this transmission project has to offer."

Facts:

- To build local skills in advance of the NTL project, BC Hydro recently funded and coordinated skills training opportunities to the Gitksan Nation, other First Nations in the area, and the Nisga'a Nation. BC Hydro will also provide direct employment to First Nations and Nisga'a Nation members in the region with a number of direct awards for NTL project work, such as access road construction and right-of-way clearing work.
- The NTL will be a 344-kilometre, 287-kilovolt transmission line from Skeena Substation, near Terrace, to Bob Quinn Lake. The project will provide a secure interconnection point for clean energy generation projects and supply clean electricity to support future industrial developments in the area.
- Construction of the NTL will begin shortly. The NTL project is scheduled to be in service in December 2013.
- As part of its regenerations strategy, BC Hydro is improving and replacing aging infrastructure originally built primarily between 1950 and 1980. Improvements will range from upgrading dams and generating stations, to building entirely new transmission lines linking existing and new substations.
- For more information on the NTL project, please visit BC Hydro at http://www.bchydro.com/energy_in_bc/projects/ntl.html?WT.mc_id=rd_ntl

About Gitksan

The Gitksan people are governed by hereditary chiefs representing 62 House Groups 33,000 square kilometers of territory managed through an ancient land and fisheries tenure. The Gitksan aspire to self sufficiency for its 14,000 members through a principled approach to sustainable development in accordance with the Gitksan hereditary system, respectful of all Canadians.

About BC Hydro

Fifty years ago, British Columbians turned to BC Hydro to build the clean electricity system they count on to power B.C.'s economy, create jobs in every region, and keep the lights on. Now, BC Hydro is building again for the next 50 years. B.C. continues to grow and so has the need for more electricity. That's why BC Hydro is building and renewing electricity infrastructure, and encouraging conservation to meet today's needs and those of future generations. In 2011, BC Hydro is celebrating 50 years of providing power for British Columbians, and inviting them to help prepare for the next 50 years.

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