

OUR LAND IS OUR FUTURE

UNION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA INDIAN CHIEFS

FOUNDING HEAD OFFICE
209 - 345 Yellowhead Highway
Kamloops, B.C. V2H 1H1
Tel: 250-828-9746
Fax: 250-828-0319



VANCOUVER OFFICE
5th Floor, 342 Water Street
Vancouver, B.C. V6B 1B6
Tel: 604-684-0231
Fax: 604-684-5726
1-800-793-9701
Email: ubcic@ubcic.bc.ca
Web: www.ubcic.bc.ca

NEWS RELEASE

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Site C Plunges Into Harmonized Environmental Assessment Union of BC Indian Chiefs Supports Council of Treaty 8 Chiefs

(Vancouver BC, April 21, 2010) The BC Government has announced its intentions to move the Site C proposal to the next stage of development, the Environmental Assessment process. Recently the B.C. Government and Canadian Government announced their intentions to streamline and harmonize their respective environmental assessment processes. First Nations leaders have responded stating that without significant changes that address First Nations' concerns, any new harmonized process will be a non-starter.

"Here we go again with the Gordon Campbell 'trust-us' approach of the BC Government as they push Site C into the completely inadequate and heavily biased Environmental Review processes in BC which in this case, completely ignores treaty rights of the Council of Treaty 8 Chiefs. This is an amazingly arrogant and risky approach that will destabilize any productive relations with First Nations," said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President of the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. "Without any hesitation, the UBCIC completely supports the Council of Treaty 8 Chiefs and communities directly impacted by Site C."

Grand Chief Phillip concluded "Many First Nations fear the Harper Government will deliberately weaken the Canadian Environmental Assessment process in order to fast-track mega projects. Furthermore, it appears that the BC Government is more than willing to collaborate with the Harper Government to harmonize the BC Environmental Assessment process. If mega projects such as Prosperity/Taseko Mine, Enbridge Pipeline and Site C are approved, it will be at the great expense of the constitutionally protected rights of Indigenous Peoples and the precious environmental legacy that many British Columbians hope to share with future generations."

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Media inquires:
Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, Union of BC Indian Chiefs
Phone: (250) 490-5314