



**SPEAKING NOTES – ROB BOTTERELL
BRITISH COLUMBIA UTILITIES COMMISSION SITE C INQUIRY PANEL
COMMUNITY INPUT SESSION
VICTORIA CONVENTION CENTRE – OCTOBER 11TH, 2017**

1. My name is Rob Botterell. I represent the Peace Valley Landowner Association and Peace Valley Environment Association on the Site C Inquiry. 5 minutes is not a long time, but I take some comfort from the fact that as an intervenor one usually only gets 5 minutes before the Supreme Court of Canada.
2. We wish to thank the Panel for its extraordinary efforts to fulfill the terms of reference for this inquiry. You look surprisingly well-rested given your punishing schedule since we met in Vancouver on September 23.
3. British Columbia Order in Council No. 244 (“OIC”) sets out the specific issues to be addressed and questions to be answered by the Panel. Ultimately, however, the fundamental question for the Panel is this:

Before spending another \$7.3+ billion dollars on Site C dam construction over the next 7 years, is there another less costly, viable option?

If the answer to that question is yes, then BC Hydro ratepayers are best served by the cancellation of Site C.
4. We filed our answer to that question earlier today. By terminating Site C and deploying wind power on an as-needed basis, we are very confident the ratepayers of this province will save between \$2.08 Billion and \$4.37 Billion.
5. Now you may have one or two questions on how we arrived at that number. I’m not an energy expert so I invite you to ask the hard questions of internationally respected energy expert Robert McCullough during the technical report presentations on October 13th and 14th.
6. What I do have is personal experience with courage, and that is what I want to share with you today.
7. For personal courage, two moments stand out for me. First, sitting at Ken and Arlene Boone’s kitchen table looking out to the road where BC Hydro chose to monitor the Boon’s movements. The Boons, despite the stress of this random surveillance and other BC Hydro provocations including



threats of driving them from their home of over 30 years well in advance of the need for their land, said to me, 'We will do whatever it takes to speak truth to power and do what's right for British Columbia.'

8. Second, a different kind of personal courage. It was the moment when a husband and wife who had built a beautiful home many many years ago in the Site C flood zone broke down and cried because the 40 year long controversy surrounding the construction of Site C was literally killing them. To save their health, they sold out to BC Hydro and turned their back on their whole life in the Peace Valley.
9. Another moment of courage I recall took place in October 1991, when then Attorney General Colin Gabelman showed great political determination when he confirmed that the new NDP government would proceed with Freedom of Information legislation. The NDP government did not do this to win political points – every government, often to their chagrin, is subject to the same scrutiny under the Act.
10. FOI legislation got done because it was in the best interests of British Columbians, because it supports our democracy - because it was a principled decision – because it was the right thing to do.
11. Making your findings on whether to terminate construction of the most expensive undertaking ever begun by this Province, will also require substantial courage.
12. It will require the courage to make clear unequivocal findings based on the information before you – the courage to make findings that ignore the \$2.1 billion sunk cost in the project – the courage to look to the future rather than be a captive of past decisions. The courage to make findings rather than punting the decision on Site C down the road.
13. November 1st, the date when you deliver your report to government, will be one of those moments etched into your memory and the memories of many others including those in this room tonight.
14. November 1st is the day we will learn whether you, as the Panel charged with protecting the interests of BC ratepayers, have the courage to make findings based on the evidence presented to you.
15. Findings that will be unpopular with some of your friends and colleagues in your professional and private and political lives, but findings that will be in the best interests of BC ratepayers and British Columbia. The most



- significant finding of which will be that it is time to terminate Site C and move on.
16. In demonstrating the courage to make this most fundamental finding, you will be encouraging the government of British Columbia to join the 21st century rather than continuing to be mired in the big dam thinking of more than half a century ago.
 17. Thank you.