

**Name:** Randal Hadland

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Site C Panel of the BCUC

Mr. Patrick Wruck

BCUC Secretary,

David Morton

Chair of the site C Inquiry

Thank you to the Site C Panel for including the public in this examination of the options available to BC at this point, or at least developable by the time we might need them.

The reason why we initiated, helped organize and sat on the Conservation Potential Review Collaborative was to try and begin an appreciation for the size of the resource first recognized at the 82/83 Site C Hearings before the BCUC panel. That message, that appreciation, was apparent in the course that the province took in the years from 1992 through 2007 but like all learned lessons that can be forgotten, despite having repetitive messages sent, as in the more recent CPRs, it was set aside, mislaid, forgotten. I want to speak to the portfolios not from a technical point of view, but as a request that this conservation potential review be re-initiated, and that BC Hydro have a developed goal of achieving our conservation potential, as far as possible given technological, social, economic and environmental opportunities that present themselves, and that Hydro continue into the future with the stated goal of minimizing the impact on our finances and the various social and physical environments of our energy future.

One aspect of the portfolios mentioned, at no. 11 of the Commissions assumptions, is that the cost of conservation is mainly covered by the consumer with only incentives being offered by BC Hydro. I disagree with this approach but I recognize that within Hydros current limited mandate this is one of few options open to us. It is entirely possible though in a renewed BC Hydro to treat Conservation in the way that an old Power Smart button put it, 'Conservation; Works like a Dam,' or several dams for that matter. The expertise and resources and direction that Hydro can bring to bear on conservation, as a massive resource that needs indepth and intricate management, will be needed. In order to reach that goal a study of the best available means of achieving it is required. For example, BC Hydro and the Province will optimize conservation energy returns and our existing system value when each consumption unit considered, either house or apartment building, or office tower, or strip mall, is approached as an energy resource to be developed to its maximum.

In relation to Site C for example, even though the generating station might be a cheaper component of the construction of that energy source you would not put the generators in place with out the main civil works also being built. The same with a house, you wouldn't put in low energy lighting without improving window insulation. Using the same example you wouldn't use the price of the energy from a dam as being the cost of the main civil works, because it takes all of the components of the engineering to achieve the desired result.

You would not expect a dam contractor for our crown corporation to build a dam on 15 % incentive and expect him to do a thorough job.

Hydro can optimize our recovery of wasted energy by paying for it through grants to seniors and low income residences, buildings going on the market, etc, where Hydro recoups their expenses by not having to build additional generation, or if done well, through recovery of a portion of the renovated house sale price.

And finally you would not set a limit on a value for an apartment building in Vancouver of its construction cost, if the proposal to build the apartment was for the inside edge of Stanley Park. In some way the licensing board would look at the proposal and make some calculation of social and environmental impact which would show the value that would be lost to the city and Province if the building got approval. This is a significant part of the reason why land in the downtown core has the value it does have. This is also why the energy we can conserve has more value than just the cost of technical fixes for conservation.

Our environment has huge value to the Province and that value can be recognized in our attempts to stop destroying river valleys by conserving electricity. Whether that value is reflected in Hydros costs of DSM programs for physical upgrades to efficiency, or reflected in an education program aimed at getting people to adopt the lifestyle and behaviour changes that represent a possible 15,000 Gwhs that is possible to recover doesn't matter. On the other hand that 15,000 Gwhs would be a lot cheaper, would leave money out of the financing black hole, save customers, Hydro, and taxpayers a bundle of cash, and save the environment.

One aspect then of the assumptions made concerning DSM in the Commissions portfolio that I would disagree with would be the economic life of 15 years for DSM. If we can transfer the recognition of the value inherent in our environment into some choices that we can all make, to minimize our impact on that environment and sustainability, then there is no reason to believe that it can't be a lifelong learning, and with a little luck and education it could carry on to the following generations. I recommend an economic life for this DSM as being 100 years.

And I think we should get this on the road right away rather than risk having the idea die again without the examples, that show it can be done, visible to everyone.

Thank you for your consideration

Randal Hadland

