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July 2023 Newsletter



View looking at the upstream face of LaJoie Dam during Downton Reservoir drawdown (April 28, 2022)

Lessons learned from Downton drawdown

Excerpted from BC Hydro Bridge River Newsletter -Winter 2023

The last time there was a drawdown at the Downton Reservoir with an elevation as low as 699 meters was in the 1990’s. Flash forward to this year, and after months of careful planning and consultation, the LaJoie Dam Improvement project team completed their drawdown this spring.

Many team members were on site to get a first hand view including project manager Zeljko Cecic.

“Because it had never been done like this before, the delivery of the plan had some level of uncertainty. We didn’t know what access was going to be like for monitoring, and what flows would be like. Now that uncertainty has filled itself in.”

A key challenge for Cecic and the project team was establishing safe access within the drawdown area to perform environmental monitoring. While access was not possible to much of the reservoir, St’at’imc consultants identified safe and feasible access options and carried out environmental monitoring and managed impacts. This information will now be used for future drawdowns.

“We had an environmental management plan developed in collaboration with St’at’imc Nation and the Water Comptroller, to monitor and mitigate environmental effects of the drawdown. But even to conduct the monitoring we had to come up with creative solutions such as boats, 4x4 vehicles, helicopters and hiking to collect the information we needed.”

“It’s changed the way we think about how we drawdown, when we drawdown and the impacts of drawdowns at LaJoie. We talk about the impacts, but until you see it, go through the experience in a very real, physical, tangible way, you don’t really understand.”

The work has provided valuable information for the design level of the project, where the team is looking at options that could minimize the number and duration of drawdowns during construction.

As a result, there is a better understanding about priorities when it comes to environmental monitoring, where and how they can get access, and managing flows when the reservoir operates at lower levels.

The drawdown lasted 10 days with the reservoir reaching its lowest level in April. Three weeks later it was back at typical seasonal levels. Drawdowns during construction are expected to last longer.

Design work and studies for the project continue into 2023 and 2024, with the recent drawdown informing the work ahead.

Looking back, Cecic knows it was hard, but worth it. “It was successful in that we learned a lot. None of it was easy. But I am so glad we did it, because it has shone a different light on the project, potential drawdowns, and where to deploy our efforts.”

For more information visit www.bchydro.com



A view down to the Bride River from the Quarry site.

Capital Planning

The Accommodations and Logistics Study being done by the KGS Group attended a meeting with the LaJoie Technical Working Group (LTWG) and the Community and Culture Forum (CCF) in June. They also held community open houses in Lillooet and Goldbridge to get firsthand feedback on what is important to St’át’imc and to communities. This information will be integrated into the study that is targeted to complete in early 2024.

The LTWG and CCF members, BC Hydro and KGS also visited the LaJoie site and the quarry. BC Hydro has already offered three main opportunities for the LaJoie Dam Improvement project, accommodations, quarry development and operation and

access roads and laydown areas. The KGS study will provide critical information that informs the scope of the work on all three opportunities.



LTWG on the crest of the LaJoie dam



Accessway to intake tower



Powerhouse and Bridge River from the crest of the LaJoie dam

Explore project related information at your own pace by accessing information on SharePoint.

Here is a small sample of what you can find on the [St'át'imc SharePoint Information Portal](#):

- Reports on the [Reservoir Archaeology Program](#) and the [Seton Lake Environmental Mitigation Project](#)
- [List of the BC Hydro projects](#) in St'át'imc Territory
- Copies of the [BC Hydro project opportunities](#) that have been provided to St'át'imc businesses
- Materials and notes on the [Quarterly Capital Planning Meetings](#)
- A [glossary of commonly used project and system terms](#)

The St'át'imc SharePoint Information Portal access now requires Multi-Factor Authentication – an instruction sheet has been sent out on how to set this up. The instructions also provide a way to contact tech support should you have a problem. If you did not receive the instructions, please call Sherry Kane at SGS (778.771.5903)



Áma nscwákekwmíntsina!
Congratulations
to our 2023 St'át'imc graduates.

We are so proud of all of the St'át'imc youth who have graduated from elementary, secondary and post secondary school.



ST'ÁT'IMC

Opportunities to work with us

Please visit our website where we keep updated information about work and training opportunities.

<https://statimc.ca/about/working-at-sgs/>



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