Site C Project

Staying safe on and around the new reservoir

MAY 2024

When BC Hydro fills the reservoir, which is targeted to begin in late summer 2024, there will be new hazards on the water and shoreline.

For at least the first year, the newly formed reservoir will be hazardous to boaters and those recreating on the shoreline. We'll monitor for safety and slope stability.

BC Hydro boat launches will be closed for at least one year. We ask the public to be extremely cautious and not access the reservoir until it's safe to do so.

Hazards on the water

Hazards on the water will be most common during reservoir filling and the following year. This is why access to the reservoir is discouraged and BC Hydro boat launches will be closed during this time.

Strong currents and undertow

Closer to the dam, there will be strong currents and undertow near the approach channel as water is drawn into the underwater intakes of the powerhouse.

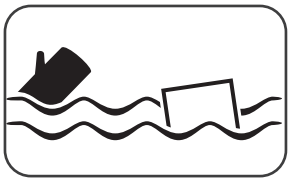
Submerged hazards

During reservoir filling, submerged hazards could be dangerous for boaters as water levels rise. These include causeways, riprap, and concrete or steel structures. Once the reservoir is within its normal operating range, these objects will be fully submerged and no longer present a hazard.

After reservoir filling, other submerged hazards remain along the shoreline in shallow-water areas including shoals, vegetation, and wood debris.

Waves

There may be waves on the reservoir caused by wind or slope instabilities, as sections of shoreline respond to the reservoir during the filling process. In rare cases, the waves could run up onto the opposite shore. Hazards will be greatest during high flows and following extreme weather.



Floating wood debris

During reservoir filling, wood debris will float to the surface. The debris includes logs, saplings, bushes, and plants. It may also include vegetation that could not be safely removed during clearing. Wood debris that floats downstream will be caught and removed by a boom. We ask boaters to avoid this area and obey all signage.

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Hazards on land

Hazards on land will be most common during reservoir filling and the following year, while the land and shoreline stabilizes. This is why all public recreation areas will be closed during this time, and we ask you to use extreme caution when close to shore, particularly when near steep slopes.

Unstable shoreline and erosion

There will be erosion and slope instability, with impacts varying in different locations.

Steep embankments and slopes are particularly prone to sudden slides, which may trigger waves on the reservoir. After the reservoir is filled, erosion will speed up in some areas, and new slides may occur.

Erosion is more likely to occur after high wind and rainstorms. Please use caution when near the reservoir, look for signs of active erosion and slope movements, and maintain a safe distance from these areas.

Monitoring

BC Hydro has developed an extensive program to monitor and assess the reservoir shoreline and slopes. This program will take place throughout reservoir filling and in the following years.

There are many ways of monitoring slope stability and shoreline erosion:

- Ground inspections of slopes, using instruments and visual surveys
- Periodic and area-specific aerial inspections
- Annual aerial surveys before the start of boating season
- Satellite monitoring to measure slope displacements in near real time

The monitoring data can point to slope movement, groundwater changes, or shoreline erosion. BC Hydro's geotechnical engineers will interpret all the monitoring data to assess shoreline stability.

After spring freshet in 2026, the monitoring data will be evaluated to determine when it's safe to re-open the boat launches.

How to stay safe

1. Stay off the water and away from the reservoir until it is deemed safe
2. Obey all signage
3. Visit **sitecproject.com/reservoir** for the latest conditions

Emergency Response

Call 911 if you see someone in danger on the reservoir.

911 operators respond to all types of emergencies, including those on the water. Emergency responders will coordinate with BC Hydro, if needed.

In the unlikely event there is an emergency at the Site C dam, BC Hydro will activate its emergency response plan which includes notification to Indigenous Nations, as well as municipal and regional governments. Each local government will notify their communities.

For continued updates, check your local government's website or local media. We will also post updates on **BCHydro.com** and our social media channels.