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**B.C. Utilities Commission approves John Hart generating station replacement
*Vancouver Island project to improve reliable power, sustain 400 jobs a year over five years***

CAMPBELL RIVER – The British Columbia Utilities Commission has approved the replacement of the John Hart generating station near Campbell River. The commission determined the project was the most cost-effective option to address the significant reliability, seismic, environmental and fisheries issues associated with the 66-year-old facility.

Since most of Vancouver Island's power supply comes from the Lower Mainland, the John Hart generating facility ensures the province's second largest load centre has reliable power. The project will foster economic development in the region – creating about 400 jobs and sustaining them over five years of construction.

The commission's approval of the project comes after five years of project planning by BC Hydro, feedback from the Campbell River community, and a regulatory review process that lasted close to one year.

Quotes:

Rich Coleman, Minister of Energy, Mines and Natural Gas:

"We are pleased that the British Columbia Utilities Commission has recognized the importance of upgrading an aging facility that has been operating since 1947. Now we can ensure the facility will continue to deliver clean, reliable power to Vancouver Island and create 400 jobs a year over five years."

Chris O'Riley, Executive Vice President, Generation, BC Hydro:

"BC Hydro would like to thank the customer and other stakeholder groups who participated in the regulatory process, government agencies, and local community and business organizations who played a key role in shaping this project. Equally important are the agreements we have with Campbell River area First Nations, which will form the foundation for a long-term relationship based on respect."

Don McRae, MLA, Comox Valley:

"This is wonderful news for people on Vancouver Island who will reap the rewards of more reliable power and the project's economic benefits. The construction jobs and the economic spinoffs will be a huge benefit to central and northern Vancouver Island."

Facts:

- The John Hart Generating Station Replacement project involves constructing a new water intake at the John Hart Spillway Dam by replacing the three 1.8-kilometre long pipelines with a 2.1-kilometre long tunnel; constructing a replacement generating station beside the existing station and building a new water bypass facility.

- There are three main reasons for the project:
 - Safety: the generating station and pipelines may not withstand a low to moderate earthquake.
 - Reliability: the six generating units are in poor condition and their capacity is declining.
 - Environment: an unplanned generating station shutdown and river flow reduction would harm fish habitat.
- Project benefits include:
 - Protecting fish: if the replacement generating station was forced out of service, the new water bypass facility would allow for continued river flow to protect fish and fish habitat.
 - Smaller footprint: reducing BC Hydro's facility footprint by removing the three pipelines that are 3.66 metres in diameter and 1.8-kilometre long.
 - Powering Vancouver Island: ensuring a continuous supply of reliable, clean and cost-effective energy to Vancouver Island customers. After the project is completed, the John Hart power supply will increase by more than seven per cent – from 778 gigawatt hours per year to 835 gigawatt hours or enough power to supply about 80,000 homes.
 - Reducing seismic risk: increasing the seismic withstand of the water conveyance and generating station facilities – reducing the potential environmental, financial, social and safety impacts from an earthquake.
 - Jobs and economic development: fostering economic development with an estimated 400 jobs per year over five years.
- The commission approved a project cost of \$940 million.
- Next steps in the project include obtaining legislative approval of a parks boundary adjustment and choosing a preferred proponent to design and build the project.

About BC Hydro

BC Hydro has been providing **clean, reliable power** to British Columbians for more than 50 years while maintaining among the lowest rates in North America. BC Hydro is a provincial Crown corporation that serves 1.9 million customers and invests in the electrical system and in energy conservation to deliver a safe and reliable supply of electricity for today's customers and **for generations** to come.

For more information please contact:

BC Hydro Media Relations

p. 604.928.6468

w. bchydro.com/media