

CANADA:

Stand up for the rights of Indigenous peoples

George Desjarlais, a Dane-Zaa man from the West Moberly First Nations in northeast British Columbia, is in training to be a spiritual leader for his people.



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When the time is right, George will carry out a sacred ceremony on a small island in the middle of the Peace River known as Vision Quest Island.

However, if the provincial government completes construction of the massive Site C dam, Vision Quest Island and many other place of vital importance to Indigenous peoples in the region will be lost.

The \$8 billion plus hydroelectric dam would flood more than 100 km of the Peace Valley and its tributaries. The flooding would submerge hundreds of cultural and historic sites, and destroy vital wildlife habitat and lands where the Dane-Zaa, Cree, and Métis peoples hunt, trap, and gather berries and medicines.

The federal and provincial governments approved construction of the dam even though their own environmental review process concluded that flooding the valley would “severely undermine” the ability of Indigenous peoples to carry out hunting, fishing, and other traditions protected by treaty, the Canadian Constitution and international law.

The two governments have claimed that the need for electricity “justifies” these harms. However, the province has pushed ahead with the dam without properly considering less harmful alternatives - or even if the electricity is really needed.

The West Moberly and Prophet River First Nations have challenged the dam in court, arguing that their treaty rights have been ignored. Even though the case is still before the courts, the provincial government has pushed ahead with construction.

“The damage that this Site C is going to do, I don’t even know how to explain it,” George says. “My people, they’ve used that river as a corridor, almost like what you call a major highway, for years and years and years. There are grave sites and graveyards and village areas where they used to camp in the summer or the winter. It’s prime wildlife habitat. It’s a good place to hunt. And now in the last hundred years or so, it’s become prime farmland. So, you know, there’s a lot to be lost there.”

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FOR
RIGHTS**

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To take action, go to the next page.

Unleash your pens and keyboards!

Send your message to

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau
Office of the Prime Minister
80 Wellington Street
Ottawa ON K1A 0A2
Salutation: Dear Prime Minister

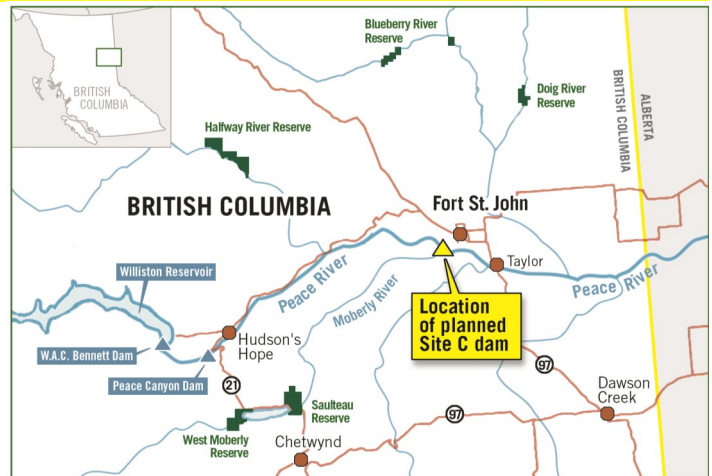
Please also write to

The Honourable Christy Clark
Premier of British Columbia
Box 901, Station PROV GOVT
Victoria BC V8W 9E1
Salutation: Dear Premier Clark

Call for an immediate halt to construction of the Site C dam. Write in your own words and include the following points:

The Site C dam's harmful impact on the lives and well-being of Indigenous peoples in northeast British Columbia is beyond dispute. The joint federal-provincial environmental assessment found that the Site C dam will have serious, permanent impact on the ability of Indigenous peoples to carry out traditional activities like hunting and fishing that are central to the cultural identity and to the health and well-being of their communities. Numerous cultural and sacred sites including graves will be lost.

Indigenous peoples' rights to health, culture and livelihood are protected in both Canadian and international law. These rights require a rigorous standard of protection that has not been met. At the very least, the province should have carefully examined other, less destructive alternatives.



Map by Joss MacLennan Design, adapted from the report of Site C dam environmental impact assessment

Express your solidarity

Find more ways you can help stop Site C and share your solidarity #withthePeaceRiver during Write for Rights: [amnesty.ca/withthepeacriver](https://www.amnesty.ca/withthepeacriver)

The Site C dam is just one example of how human rights have been pushed aside in the rush to develop the energy resources of northeast BC. See Amnesty's new report and take action at [amnesty.ca/sitec](https://www.amnesty.ca/sitec)

Sample Tweet

I'm writing to stand
#WithThePeaceRiver @JustinTrudeau
#HonourTreaty8 protect Indigenous
lands from destruction #NoSiteC
#W4R16 #Write4Rights

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TAKE PART: writeathon.ca