

**DeSmog Canada**  
Research Factum

*Methodology: Results are based on an online study conducted from October 27 to October 30, 2016, among 821 adult residents of British Columbia. The data has been statistically weighted according to Canadian census figures for age, gender and region in British Columbia. The margin of error—which measures sample variability—is +/- 3.5 percentage points, nineteen times out of twenty.*

**The Government of British Columbia wants to build a new \$9 billion hydro dam, called Site C, on the Peace River. How familiar are you with this project?**

Three-in-five British Columbians (59%) are “very” or “somewhat” familiar with Site C, including 71% of those in Northern BC and Vancouver Island, and 68% of those aged 55 and over.

**According to BC Hydro’s annual reports, British Columbia’s energy consumption has remained flat for the last 10 years. Thinking about this, do you support or oppose undertaking construction of the Site C dam at this time?**

British Columbians are split on the project, with 39% saying they support it (11% “strongly”) and 44% saying they oppose it (21% “strongly”). Opposition is strongest among women (48%), British Columbians aged 18-to-34 (47%), those living in Vancouver Island (53%) and Northern BC (49%). Support is highest among men (49%) and those aged 55 and over (also 49%).

**BC Hydro’s projections indicate that the province will not need new power until 2028 at the earliest. The panel that reviewed Site C called for the demand case and cost to be examined in detail by the province’s independent regulator. Thinking about this, do you support or oppose each of the following ideas?**

More than four-in-five British Columbians support implementing energy efficiency measures across the province to reduce future power demand (85%) and investigating other alternatives, such as solar, wind and geothermal, to avoid flooding 83 kilometres of the Peace Valley (84%). In addition, almost three-in-four British Columbians (73%) support sending the Site C dam for an independent review of both costs and demand.

**The panel appointed by federal and provincial governments to review the Site C dam found that the province had failed to investigate alternatives to building the dam, such as geothermal, which taps into the earth's heat to create energy. According to BC Hydro's own estimates, geothermal energy could replace two-thirds of the power that could be generated by the Site C dam. Assuming that both projects carry the same cost, do you support or oppose investing in geothermal energy instead of building a large hydro dam like Site C?**

Across the province, 77% of residents support (40% "strongly") investing in geothermal energy instead of building a large hydro dam, while 11% are opposed and 12 per cent are undecided.

**If demand for more electricity in British Columbia does arise in the future, do you support or oppose each of the following ideas?**

More than nine-in-ten British Columbians support investing in energy efficiency measures (92%) and adding more wind, solar and geothermal power to the grid as needed (also 92%) to meet future demands for more electricity in the province. Three-in-four British Columbians (76%) are in favour of reducing the amount of energy we currently sell to the United States, while just over a third (37%) favour building large hydro dams.

**Construction on the Site C dam started about a year ago and is expected to take at least eight years. Next, we're going to list some circumstances that could lead the Government of British Columbia to pause or halt construction on the Site C dam. Do you support or oppose each of the following?**

Seven-in-ten British Columbians support pausing construction of Site C if an independent review finds the province will lose more money by continuing to build the dam than by stopping now (71%) and pausing construction and investigating alternatives to meet future power demand (70%).

More than three-in-five British Columbians support halting construction if the courts find First Nations rights have been infringed upon (63%) and pausing construction while court cases by First Nations and landowners are heard (61%).

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