

SPECIAL ADVISORY

LOW WATER LEVELS ON ARROW LAKE RESERVOIR

Hugh L. Keenleyside Dam

February 3, 2015

No. 2015-1

The purpose of this notification is to provide information on BC Hydro's current operations and the current and forecasted levels for Arrow Lakes Reservoir.

CURRENT LEVELS AND FORECAST

As of Tuesday, February 3, the Arrow Lakes Reservoir water level is 424.9 metres (1,394.1 feet). Under the current inflow forecasts and system operations, the reservoir is expected to reach a minimum level in the range of 423.6 metres (1,390 feet) to 421.5 (1,383 feet) by February 28, 2015 before starting to slowly fill in March.

While these levels are unusual relative to recent operations, similar or lower levels occurred prior to and including 2003 and will remain within BC Hydro's water licence range. The normal minimum and maximum water licence levels for Arrow Lakes Reservoir are 420 metres (1,378 feet) and 440.1 metres (1,444 feet). Levels up to (1,446 feet) may be required for flood risk management in Canada and the United States under the Columbia River Treaty.

Please note that as with all system forecasts, this forecast is subject to change if there are significant changes in the projected weather patterns in the Columbia basin, snowpack and runoff patterns in the Columbia basin, BC Hydro's electricity demand requirements, Columbia River Treaty provisions and other variables.

SYSTEM-WIDE OPERATIONS

In order to manage Williston Reservoir levels in advance of major capital work at the W.A.C. Bennett Dam, preference for generation is being given to the Peace system. In addition, this year's unusually mild weather has further reduced opportunities to generate from Kinbasket Reservoir and provide inflows into Arrow Lakes Reservoir. BC Hydro is also required to continue to pass flows from Arrow Lakes Reservoir to meet Columbia River Treaty requirements.

CONSIDERATION FOR STAKEHOLDER INTERESTS

BC Hydro is aware that there are many stakeholders affected by Arrow Lakes Reservoir levels, and we consider these interests when making operational decisions. BC Hydro has taken several steps to keep Arrow Lakes Reservoir levels higher than originally forecasted. For example, we have negotiated the smoothing of Columbia River Treaty water releases across February and March with the U.S. Additionally, we have been utilizing flexibility within our coordination Accounts (e.g. Non-Treaty Storage Agreement) to further reduce releases from Arrow Lakes Reservoir in February.

Under our Columbia River Water Use Plan, BC Hydro is constructing a number of boat ramp projects to improve recreational boat access. The levels expected this February and March will provide an opportunity to advance many of these projects.

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BC Hydro will continue to inform stakeholders of changes to the forecast as operations evolve over the next month.

MORE INFORMATION

BC Hydro is committed to providing updated information about our Columbia facility and water operations.

For current reservoir levels and discharge information, please call **1-877-924-2444**.

To obtain two-day previous water level information for BC Hydro reservoirs across the province search for 'hydromet data' at **bchydro.com**.

To sign up to receive regular updates by email or for more information, please contact:

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