



**Columbia River Treaty**  
**Learn about our past.**  
**Think about our future.**

**COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY**  
**INFORMATION SESSION SUMMARY**  
**NEW DENVER**

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*This report, compiled by Columbia Basin Trust (CBT), provides background information and summarizes the format and discussion that took place at a 2012 Columbia River Treaty (CRT) information session. The purpose of the information session was to raise Basin residents' understanding and awareness around the CRT. Consultation on the CRT is a provincial responsibility. CBT is not consulting or gathering views and values on the CRT; therefore, this document is not a consultation summary, nor a summary of views and values. The discussion themes summarized in this document originated with Basin residents attending the information session and do not necessarily reflect the opinions of CBT staff and management and, where applicable, have not been reviewed for accuracy.*

## BACKGROUND

The 1964 Columbia River Treaty (CRT) is an international agreement between Canada and the U.S. to coordinate flood control and optimize hydroelectric energy production on both sides of the border.

The CRT has no official expiry date, but has a minimum length of 60 years, which is met in September 2024. Either Canada or the U.S. can terminate many of the provisions of the agreement effective any time after September 2024, provided written notice is filed at least 10 years in advance (2014).

While no decision has been made by either Canada or the U.S. on the future of the CRT, given the importance of the issues, and the approaching date of 2014, both countries are now conducting studies and exploring future options for the CRT.

In 1995, Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) was created to benefit the areas most adversely affected by the CRT. CBT's primary role in regard to the CRT is to act as an information resource for Basin residents and local governments. CBT is not a decision maker on the future of the CRT, and CBT's role is not to consult with Basin residents on the future of the CRT—consultation is a provincial responsibility.

In anticipation of a potential decision in 2014 regarding the future of the CRT, CBT is engaging Basin residents with the objective of increasing their understanding of the basic framework (content and structure) of the CRT and helping them prepare to effectively engage in any provincial CRT consultation processes. To reach this goal, CBT, in partnership with local governments and the CRT Local Governments' Committee, hosted a series of public information sessions and three online information sessions between June 2011 and February 2012 to:

- increase the level of understanding and awareness of Basin residents around what the CRT is and how it works;
- update Basin residents on potential changes to the CRT currently being considered by Canada and the U.S.; and
- provide an opportunity for residents to have a conversation and share their perspectives around the future of the CRT.

Local knowledge and community networks were essential to successful planning and delivery of the CRT information sessions. For each session, a Local Organizing Committee (LOC) was formed and included representatives from local governments, chambers of commerce, groups and organizations. The LOCs helped refine local publicity tactics and ensured the session was tailored to meet its community's needs. CBT thanks the LOC volunteers for helping to plan, organize and advertise the CRT information sessions.

## NEW DENVER INFORMATION SESSION

The information session in New Denver took place on February 21, 2012 and followed the agenda outlined below.

Students from Lucerne Elementary and Secondary School, grades 5 to 12, attended the afternoon open house. Elementary students received a short presentation on the Columbia River Basin, while secondary students received information about the CRT. All students took the CRT quiz and were encouraged to share their "top-of-mind" thoughts before leaving.

<p>Afternoon</p>	<p>Open House staffed by CBT.</p> <p>Displays: CRT overview, downstream power benefits, flood control, key CRT dates, future of the CRT, changes in water management, pre- and post-dam images, historical photos depicting lifestyles, landmarks and landscapes prior to the CRT.</p> <p>Documents: fact sheets and brochures.</p> <p>Multimedia: video on CRT basics, Google Earth flyover of local dam/reservoir, DVDs of CBT-produced CRT videos.</p> <p>Maps: local community map and 3D map of the entire Basin in Canada.</p>
<p>Dinner</p>	<p>Free dinner and ongoing open house.</p>
<p>Evening</p>	<p>Presentation and discussion with residents, CBT and resource people.</p>

Approximately 70 people attended the evening session, chaired by Paul Peterson, CBT Board Member and Director, Regional District of Central Kootenay. Peterson noted the purpose of the session was to educate and inform residents about the CRT and that this was not a consultation; that is a responsibility of the provincial government.

Walter Popoff, Director, Regional District of Central Kootenay, welcomed participants and introduced Karen Hamling, Co-Chair, CRT Local Governments' Committee (LG Committee) and Nakusp Mayor. Karen told participants that local governments from across the Columbia Basin (Canadian portion) have formed a committee to help Basin residents and elected officials build their understanding of the CRT.

Kindy Gosal, CBT Director, Water and Environment, led the presentation acknowledging the past and encouraging people to think about building a better future. During the presentation, Gosal emphasized:

1. The purpose of the CRT is to coordinate flood control and optimize hydroelectric energy production in the Basin on both sides of the border.
2. The CRT has no official expiry date, but 2024 is the earliest some provisions can be terminated by either Canada or the U.S. (provided either country gives a minimum of 10 years' written notice).
3. In 2024 the Assured Annual Flood Control provision expires and the current On Call Flood Control provision changes to a Called Upon operation, if and when requested by the U.S.
4. The Canadian Entitlement—\$150 – 300 million US/year—stays in place as long as the CRT is in place. However, if the CRT is terminated, the Canadian Entitlement ends.
5. At this time no decision has been made by either country to terminate, renegotiate or modify the terms of the current CRT. Given the importance of CRT issues, both the Canadian and U.S. entities are completing ongoing studies.
6. CBT's primary role in regard to the CRT is to act as an information resource for Basin residents and local governments.

The following three resources, which can be found at [www.cbt.org/crt/resources.html](http://www.cbt.org/crt/resources.html), summarize much of the information presented:

- Video: [Columbia River Treaty: Learn About Our Past and Think About Our Future](#)
- Video: [Columbia River Treaty: The Basics](#)
- PowerPoint: [Columbia River Treaty Overview Presentation](#)

It was also noted that the completion of the Grand Coulee Dam in 1941 eliminated salmon in the upper Columbia River, long before construction of the CRT dams. The loss of salmon was both a cultural and spiritual loss to local First Nations, which remain committed to returning salmon into the river.

## New Denver Discussion and Top-of-mind Themes

Following the presentation, Kindy Gosal and Richard Paisley, CBT Water Advisory Panel member, answered questions from Basin residents in plenary. The discussion, including “top-of-mind” comments provided on sticky notes by participants before leaving the information session, focused on the following themes. The themes are organized alphabetically. No ranking is intended and themes do not necessarily reflect consensus.

### Benefits and Negative Impacts:

What are benefits of continuing or terminating the current CRT? What benefits accrue to the U.S. as a result of the current CRT? What are impacts of the CRT on fish and wildlife?

### Climate Change:

How will climate change impact flows in the future? Can the Basin sell carbon credits and use those funds to steward watersheds?

### Community Engagement:

How will local input be used in decision making on the future of the CRT? What public process is happening in the U.S.?

### Compensation:

The region should be compensated for impacts, including forestry.

### Downstream Power Benefits:

Where does the Canadian Entitlement of \$150 – 300 million US/year go? More of the benefits should come to this region. What does the U.S. do with power benefits?

**Fish:** Bring salmon back to the upper Columbia River.

### Flood Control:

What are Canada's flood control obligations if the current CRT is terminated? If it continues? When flood control changes to an “on call” operation post-2024, what will that mean for operations, water levels in reservoirs and flow regimes? Will it be possible for BC to generate more power due to “on call” flood control operations? What is the value of the flood control that Canada provides to the U.S.?

### First Nations:

Include First Nations in the process and acknowledge their issues and concerns.

### Operations:

How much do water levels in the Arrow Lakes Reservoir fluctuate? Will Libby Dam be part of the CRT in the future?

### Negotiations:

What is the incentive for the Province to incorporate local values into the CRT in the future? What are the main issues to be negotiated? Will more dams be added to the system in the future? What is the U.S. position?

### Power Rates:

Will power rates go up if the CRT continues? Is terminated?

### Roles and Responsibilities:

What is the role of the Canadian entity (i.e., BC Hydro)? What is the role of U.S. entities in negotiations?

**Water Supply:** Water is a valuable resource that should be used wisely. Protect domestic water supply and include water and ecological values in any future CRT.

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

Further discussion of themes is available in CBT's *Columbia River Treaty 2011 Engagement and Education Summary Report*, located at [www.cbt.org/2011CRTSummaryReport](http://www.cbt.org/2011CRTSummaryReport). Answers to frequently asked questions are posted at [www.cbt.org/crt](http://www.cbt.org/crt), along with the Speakers' Corner video "[Voices from Arrow Lakes Reservoir](#)," which captures CRT ideas and comments from Basin residents.

To learn more about the CRT, visit [www.cbt.org/crt](http://www.cbt.org/crt). Also visit the site to subscribe to CRT email updates.



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