



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

COLUMBIA RIVER TREATY
INFORMATION SESSION SUMMARY
TRAIL

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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 2011 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 11 face-to-face information sessions (an open house and dinner followed by a presentation and discussion), one school-based open house, 12 small-group presentations and three online information sessions between June 2011 and November 2011 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.

TRAIL INFORMATION SESSION

The information session in Trail took place on October 20, 2011.

Approximately 58 people attended the open house and evening session, chaired by Greg Deck, CBT Board Member. Deck noted the purpose of the session was to educate and inform people about the CRT and that this session was not a consultation; that is a responsibility of the provincial government.

Marguerite Rotvold, Chair, Regional District of Kootenay Boundary, welcomed participants and noted that local governments from across the Canadian portion of the Basin have formed a committee to help Basin residents and elected officials build their understanding of the CRT and bring forward regional views, values and interests to provincial and federal agencies. This is called the CRT Local Governments' Committee.

<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 3-D map of entire Basin in Canada.</p> <p>Speakers' Corner: residents were encouraged to record their CRT thoughts on video to share across the Basin.</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>

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 the following:

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, 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](#)



From left: Neil Muth, CBT President and CEO, with Gord deRosa, Trail City Councillor, who was recognized by CBT for his commitment to the Columbia River and related issues.

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.

Trail Discussion and Top-of-mind Themes

Following the presentation, Gosal and three members of CBT's Water Advisory Panel answered questions from Basin residents.

CBT's Water Advisory Panel Members:

- Ken Peterson, former CEO of Powerex (subsidiary of BC Hydro);
- Josh Smienk, CBT Founding Director and former Board Chair; and
- Marvin Wodinsky, former Acting Consul General of Canada in Seattle.

The discussion, along with top-of-mind comments provided by participants on sticky notes before leaving the information session, focused on the themes shown on the following page. The themes are organized alphabetically. No ranking is intended and themes do not necessarily reflect consensus. For a list of all the themes that emerged, visit this document's Appendix.

Based on post-session participant surveys, 71 per cent learned a lot about the CRT, and another 29 per cent learned a few things. This is in light of the fact that 65 per cent of participants considered themselves somewhat knowledgeable about the CRT prior to attending the session.

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. Answers to frequently asked questions are posted at 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. Also visit the site to subscribe to CRT email updates.

Benefits and Negative Impacts:

Residents need to understand the full range of benefits and negative impacts to ensure compensation is adequate. What are the environmental, economic and other benefits, plus negative impacts, of the CRT?

CBT and CRT: Does the future of the CRT affect the future of CBT?

Climate Change: The future CRT should consider glacial recession and changing water volumes.

Community Engagement: Basin residents need knowledge and information.

Compensation: Upstream compensation is not equivalent to the negative impacts felt in Canada. A greater share of downstream power benefits should come to the Basin.

History of CRT: What is the backstory of the CRT, including other plans and options considered at the time (e.g., the Kootenay Diversion)?

NAFTA: Does NAFTA impact the current or future CRT?

Negotiations: What structural changes to the CRT are likely, if any? What aspects of the CRT can be renegotiated? Residents want to understand the U.S. negotiating position. What is the federal role? What is the provincial role?

Non-Treaty Storage Agreement: Referring to the storage of water in excess of Canada's CRT obligation to store 15.5-million acre feet of water, residents asked for more info on this agreement and how, or if, it relates to the future CRT.

Operations: How do other dams and power facilities, such as Waneta and Libby Dam, factor into the CRT?

Power Generation and Rates: Basin residents should not pay more for power than residents in the Lower Mainland.

Water Management and Values:

There is a need for a broad water management plan for the entire Basin that addresses more than power and flood control. The CRT needs to consider a range of environmental values, plus social and economic values.

APPENDIX: TRAIL THEMES

Each information session had written and oral opportunities for residents to share opinions and ideas and ask questions. In all, CBT was able to collect over 1,000 pieces of input. The Trail themes are summarized below, while the themes from all communities are summarized in the separate document “CRT Information Sessions Summary Appendix: Residents Share Ideas,” located online at www.cbt.org/2011CRTSummaryReportAppendix.

CBT: What is future of CBT if the CRT is terminated? Does CBT get downstream benefits/\$ and is it dependent on it?

Climate Change: What are the impacts of glacial recession and changing water volumes on our commitment to provide water to the U.S.?

Community Engagement: Knowledge/information is power. Work with us for a good CRT.

Compensation: Upstream compensation is not equivalent to the impacts. Need to renegotiate to address inadequate compensation for losses/impacts in Canada. Water from Arrow to the U.S. should be shared equally among other Canadian reservoirs. Who paid for dams built in Canada and how much? Lost valley bottoms; therefore, invest in parks and recreation trails on remaining slope land. Compensation not adequate given the percentage of total power generated on the Columbia River.

Downstream Power Benefits: Where does the money from electricity go in the province and does any come to the Basin? Why don't we get 60 per cent as we lost salmon, homes, land?

First Nations: Where are the First Nations' voices in the CRT?

Impacts: What are the environmental impacts of CRT?

Negotiating Issues: Include recreation, fish, wildlife and other environmental values balanced with social and economic values. What is the role of the North American Free Trade Agreement, if any, in the CRT? What structural changes are being considered? Any chance the geographic scope of the CRT will increase? Economic benefits to the region have not materialized; any new CRT needs to consider this.

Negotiating Team: It is government for the people and by the people.

Negotiating: Manage the Columbia and major tributaries to meet domestic water needs. What is (or is not) negotiable? People/fish and wildlife should account for 60 per cent of negotiating priorities; the remainder should be on power and money. Does the provincial/federal agreement last forever? Who benefits the most today (Canada, U.S. or other)? What is the potential for structural changes such as a new geographic area (Okanagan)? Where are the Americans at? What should we do to prepare for discussions? What are the main concerns of the U.S. for the potential to renegotiate? What corporate interests would want to change the CRT and how?

Outside Operations and Agreements: How does Waneta Dam on the Pend d'Oreille factor into the CRT? Why and when was this dam built? What is the Non-treaty Storage Agreement and is it part of the CRT? What would be the value of the Kootenay Diversion to Canada?

Power Generation/Sales: Where does money go from the sale of power at the three CRT dams in Canada?

Roles and Responsibilities: What is the federal role? Who is the federal negotiator?

Water Management: CBT or another agency should develop a water management plan that is broader than power and flood control. Need Water Use Plan for Kootenay River.



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