BC Hydro
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Strathcona Dam Water Discharge Upgrade Project – Community Construction Report #4

May – June 2026

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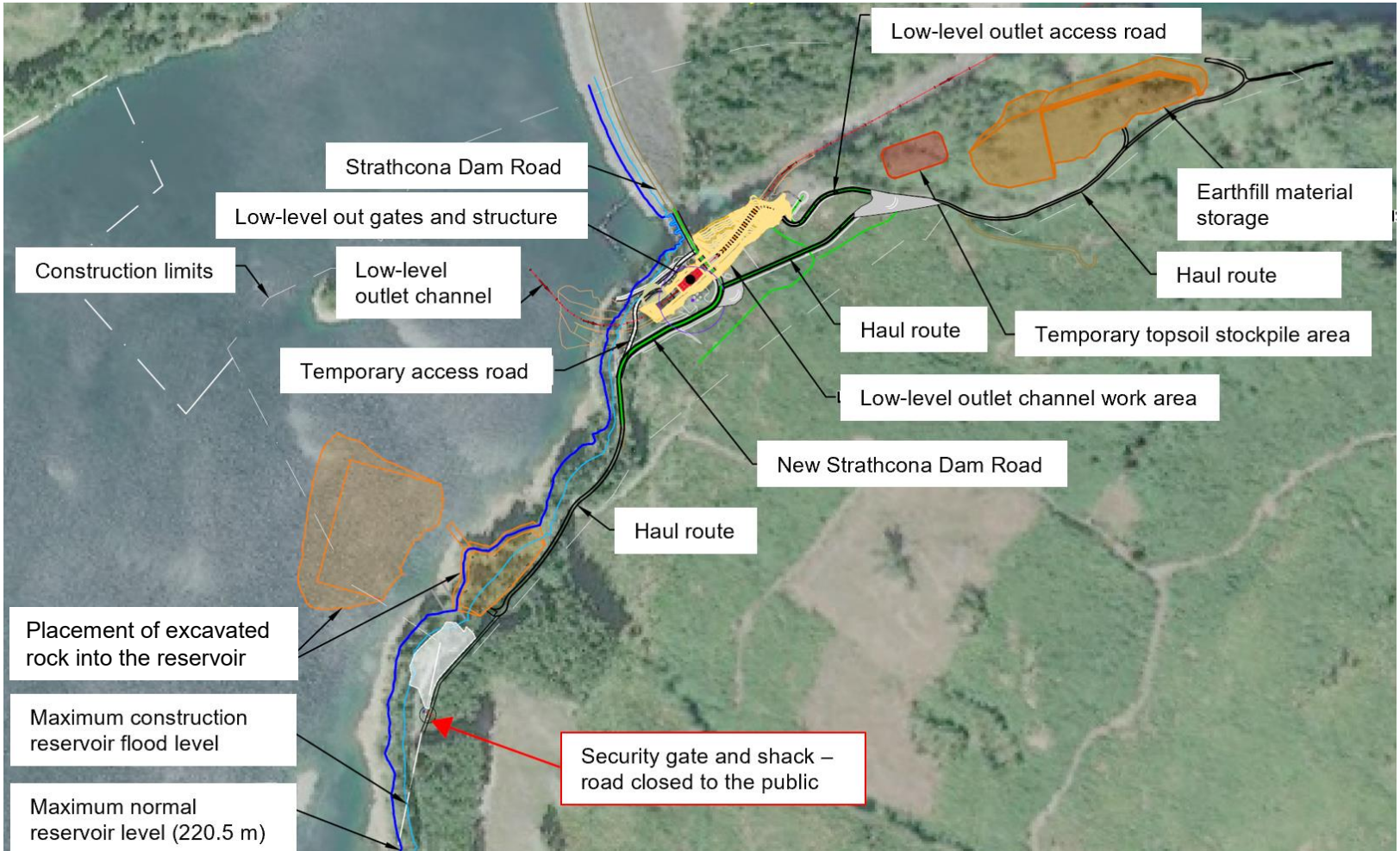
Project status and schedule

- Safety: About 125 people working at the site. As of May 31, our Flatiron contractor has had 100,000 hours of work without a lost time incident.
- Complete: laydown areas and construction access roads essentially established, and office complex and additional parking complete.
- Complete: Realignment of Strathcona Dam Road that has become a haul road.
- Complete: Double silt-curtain installation within Upper Campbell Reservoir for rock placement from the outlet channel and road construction.
- Ongoing: Rock blasting and rock removals for the outlet channel.

June 15: Work area for the low-level outlet channel.

Strathcona Dam site area

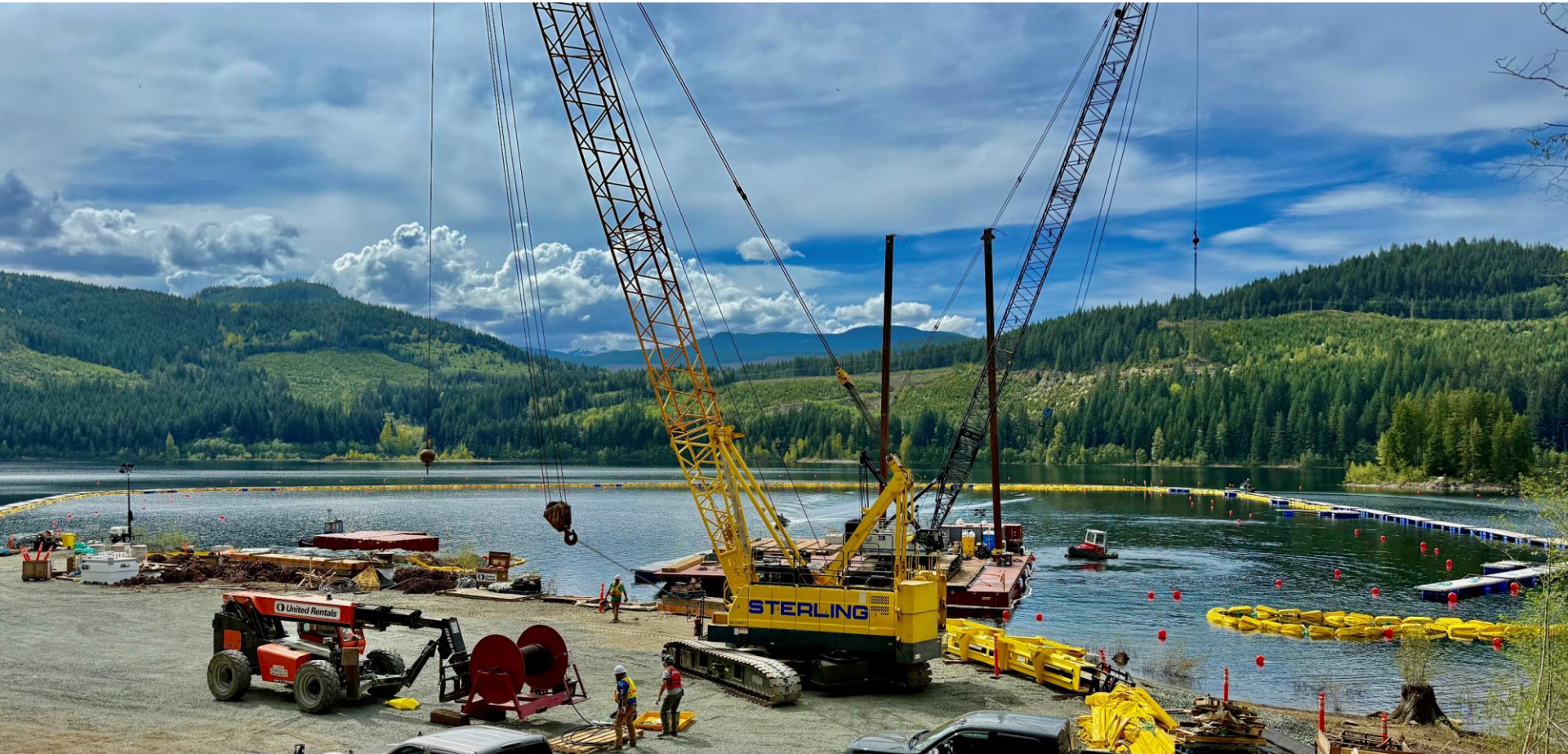


Construction photos: Strathcona Dam

May 1: Installation of the double-silt curtain that hangs from a floating walkway and is sealed to the reservoir bottom (up to 32 m deep).

Construction photos: silt curtain installation

May 1: Silt curtain installation activities and coordination.



Construction photos: silt curtain installation

May 7: Completed walkway installation.

Construction photos: silt curtain installation

May 21: Fish salvage began on May 21 and last 21 days. A total of 1,545 fish were caught and released into the wider reservoir. The vast majority was sculpins, sticklebacks and some trout, including this larger one below. Crayfish were also salvaged.

Technique: catch and release.

Technique: electrofishing.

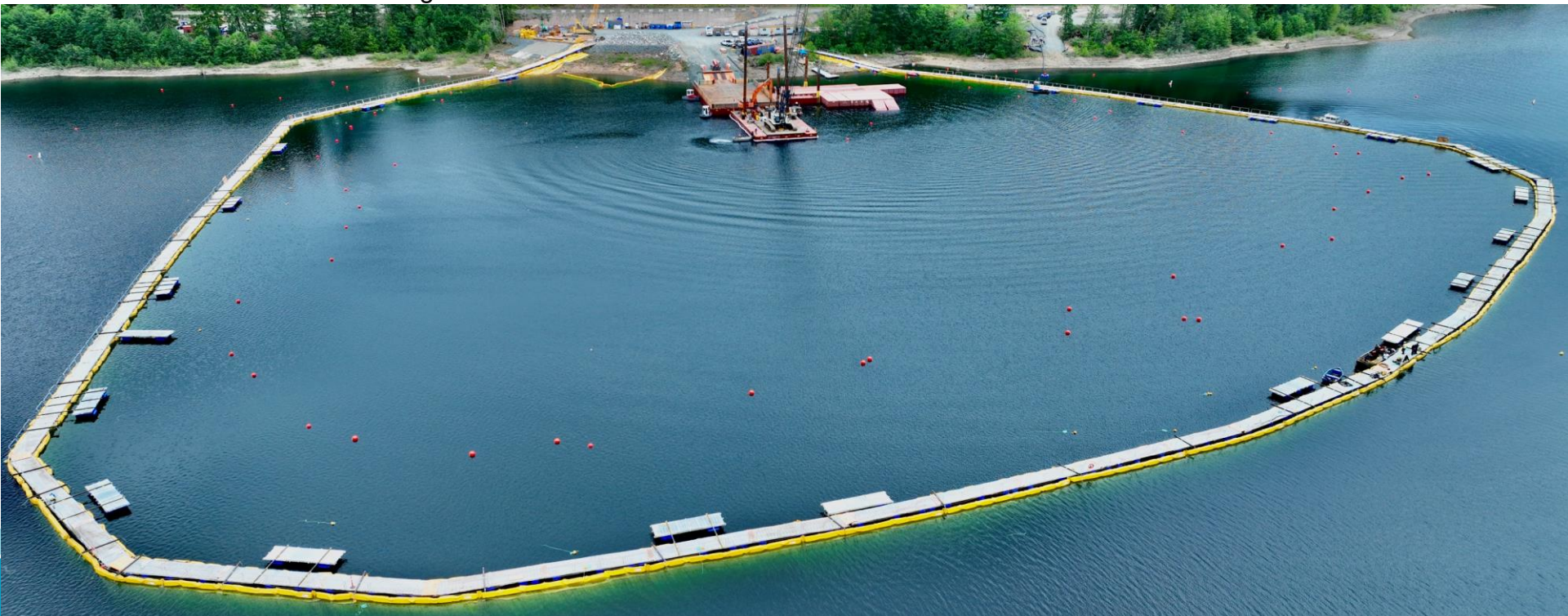
Technique: bait traps.

Construction photos: silt curtain installation

June 15: Completed double silt curtain installation and completed fish salvage. Ready for rock placement.

Construction photos: silt curtain area

June 15: The design allows the double silt curtains and walkway to move 6 metres in either direction, from winds, and move 8.5 metres vertically with the water storage levels changing within the Upper Campbell Reservoir. The silt curtains are containing 300 million gallons or 1,135,623 cubic metres of water volume. That's enough to fill 454 Olympic-sized swimming pools. To BC Hydro's knowledge it is the largest silt curtain by water volume in the world. The water pumps on land can pump up to 8 cubic metres of water per minute. As the removed rock is placed into the silt curtain area, the pumps remove water to maintain volume balance. Removed water will be treated before discharged to land or reservoir

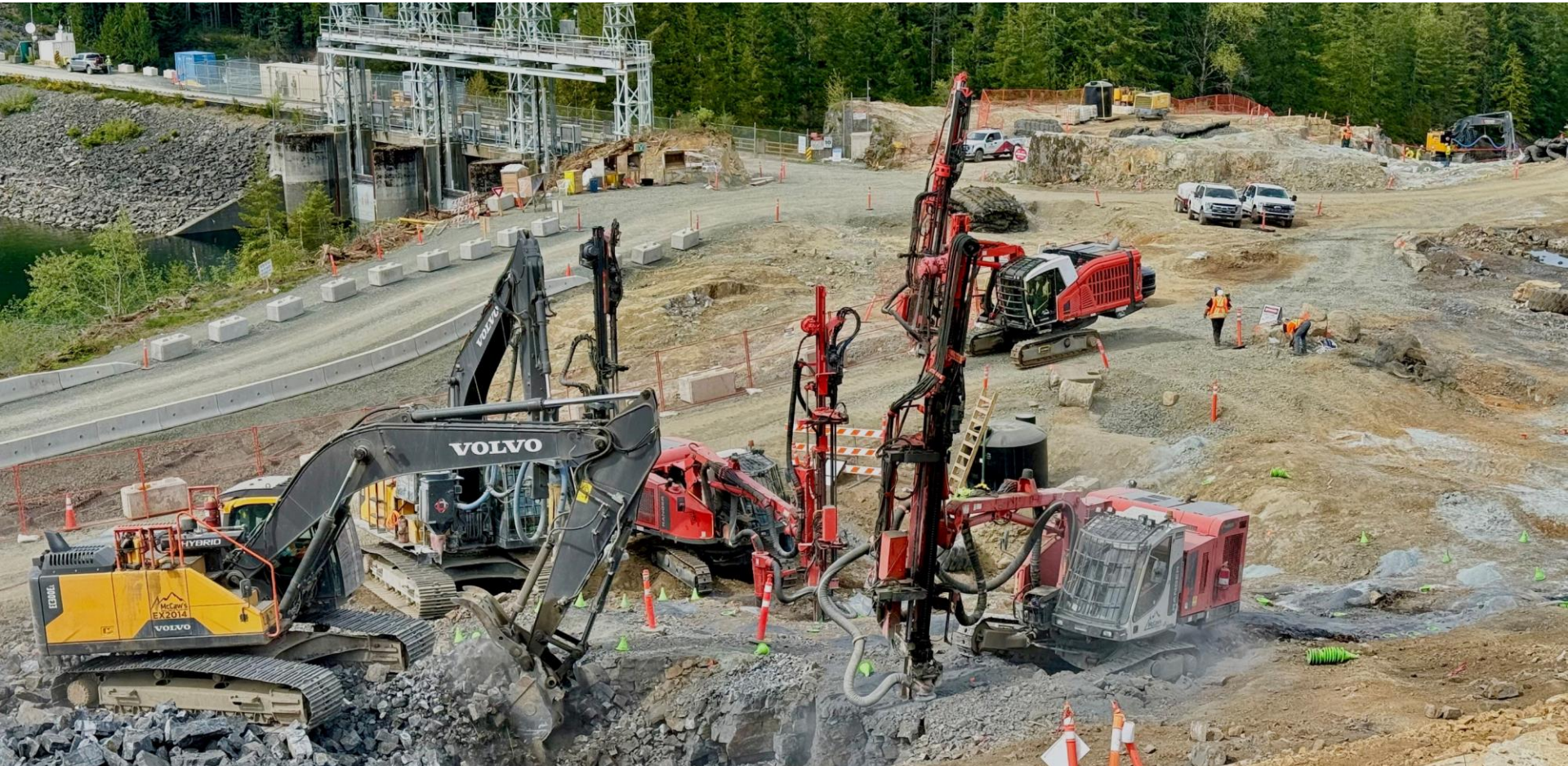


Construction photos: rock placement begins within silt curtain area

June 24: Rock placement within the reservoir contained by the double silt curtains.

Construction photos: Strathcona Dam Road

May 1: Drilling and rock removal construction equipment working on the new road alignment.



Construction photos: Strathcona Dam Road

May 21: Progression of the road alignment work and the significant rock removals.

Construction photos: Strathcona Dam Road

May 21 and inset photo June 8: Advancement of the road alignment work.

Construction photos: Strathcona Dam Road

June 15: At centre-right, Strathcona Dam Road that turns into Beaver Tail Road in the distance.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

May 7: Completed section of rock blasting and the rock removals within the outlet channel.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

May 7: Another angle of the rock removal work.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

May 21: Crews inspecting for possible anchor bolt installation to ensure a safe and secure channel wall.

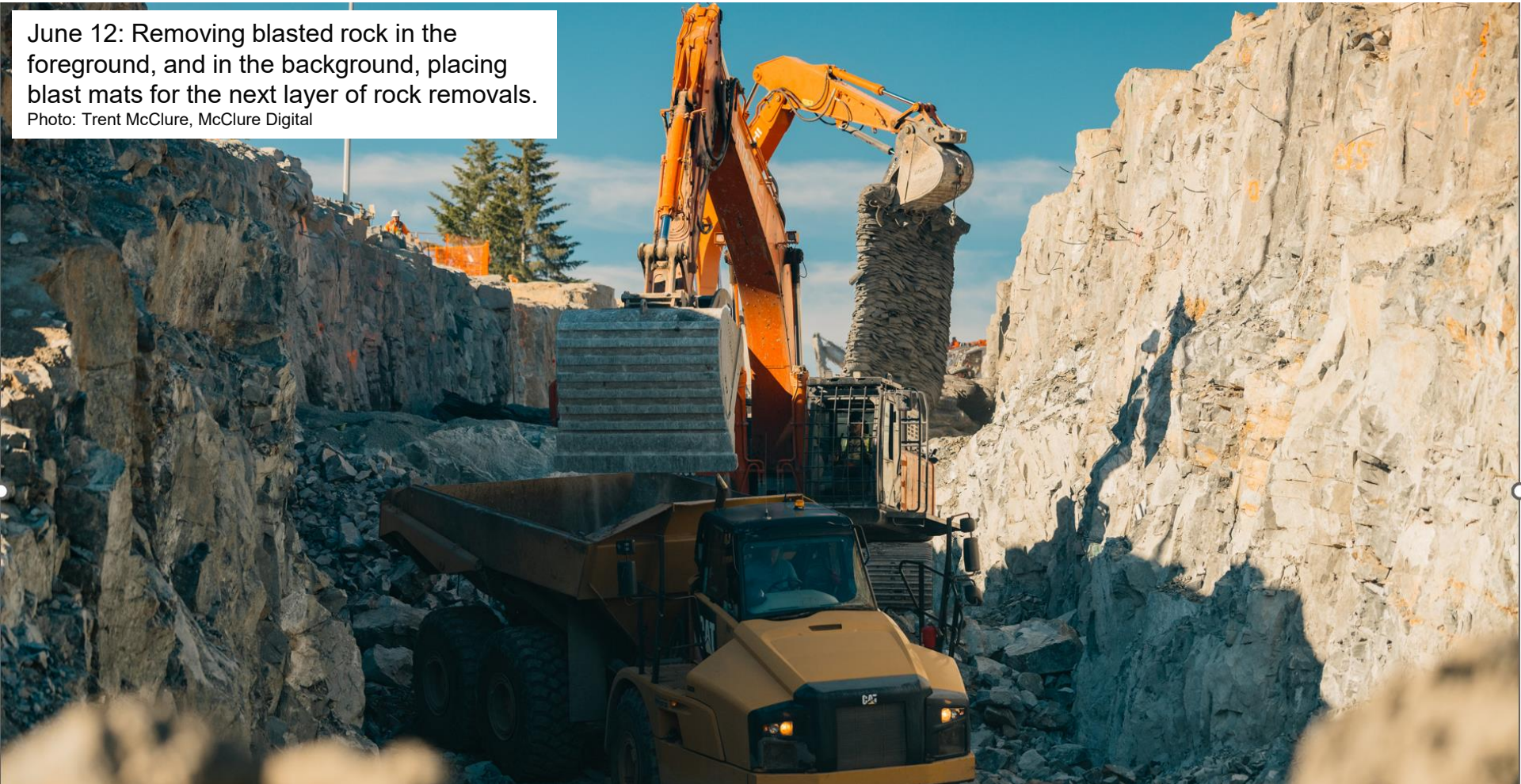
Construction photos: Outlet Channel

June 8: Looking downstream at the channel and the various work activities – rock scaling, rock chipping, drilling work, and blast mats in the background. There are five rock excavation benches, or levels, to remove to complete the outlet channel.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

June 8: Drilling work with the various holes completed to the left, and future holes to be drilled as indicated by the orange dots on the right. Preparation for the foundation for the bridge that will cross the outlet channel to enable continued access across the dam.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel



June 12: Removing blasted rock in the foreground, and in the background, placing blast mats for the next layer of rock removals.
Photo: Trent McClure, McClure Digital

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

June 15: From top to bottom, the office complex and parking area and pedestrian pathway, Strathcona Dam Road and Beaver Tail Road, the outlet channel excavation work, and Strathcona Dam spillway gates and spillway channel.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

June 15: Looking downstream at the channel excavation progress.

Construction photos: Outlet Channel

June 15: Looking upstream at the channel rock removal work. Each rock bench to be removed is about 8 metres high. Crews are currently working through benches 2 and 3. The channel will be 8 meters wide at the bottom and 28 meters deep.

Construction photos: eastern site area

June 15: Rock and soil storage. There are also construction storage areas, water treatment facilities and settling ponds, and other construction needs. Lower Campbell Reservoir is at the bottom, with the Strathcona powerhouse shown at the far right of the photo.

Fire response – June 17: Crews and boats from the project responded to a fire on Mosaic's timber trestle that crosses Upper Campbell Reservoir. The proactive and efficient response from crews doused the fire and prevented a far worse outcome to the trestle and area given the windy conditions that day.

Environment – May 26: an approximate 700-litre diesel spill, caused by human error, took place at a refueling tank and generator within a small area within the office complex zone. The refueling area was located ~450 metres from reservoir water and in an area where potential spills would not migrate. About 75 cubic metres of impacted diesel soils were removed within sealed trucks and properly disposed. The incident was immediately reported to the Provincial Emergency Program. Lessons learned and process improvements with subcontractors were reviewed and instituted so a spill of this significance will never happen again.

People profile – Bill Chivers

Background:
Bill packed his bags in Ontario and arrived in BC in 1993. He was a chef for several years and then joined PepsiCo as a tractor trailer driver for 19 years. He then had health issues and surgeries and made a career shift. Bill went to university at 46 and received office and bookkeeping training. He's worked for Wacor for six years and tends to be the coordination eyes on the ground at many of their construction sites keeping the crews safe and fills other roles as needed. Bill really enjoys the pace and commitment that construction offers and how Wacor staff look out for each other.

Home:
In 2019, Bill moved to Campbell River and now lives in Courtenay with his wife of 31 years. They have two children.

Hobbies:
Fishing, fishing and more fishing. River, lake and ocean are all on the menu.

Project Responsibility:
Wacor is one of Flatiron's subcontractors and Bill has been at the site since fall 2025. He's a site safety coordinator on the ground keeping everyone and everything moving to the correct places. Bill is a natural fit to help people, machinery and trucks efficiently and safely get to their site destinations. He says patience and radio communication is essential to keep a good and safe flow of traffic on a very congested site.
"Nothing you do on this site today is as important as you and your fellow coworkers going home. BC Hydro, Flatiron, Wacor and all the people on the site have bought into this safety culture and keep each other focused."