

John Hart Dam Seismic Upgrade Project – Community Construction Report #22

May – June 2026

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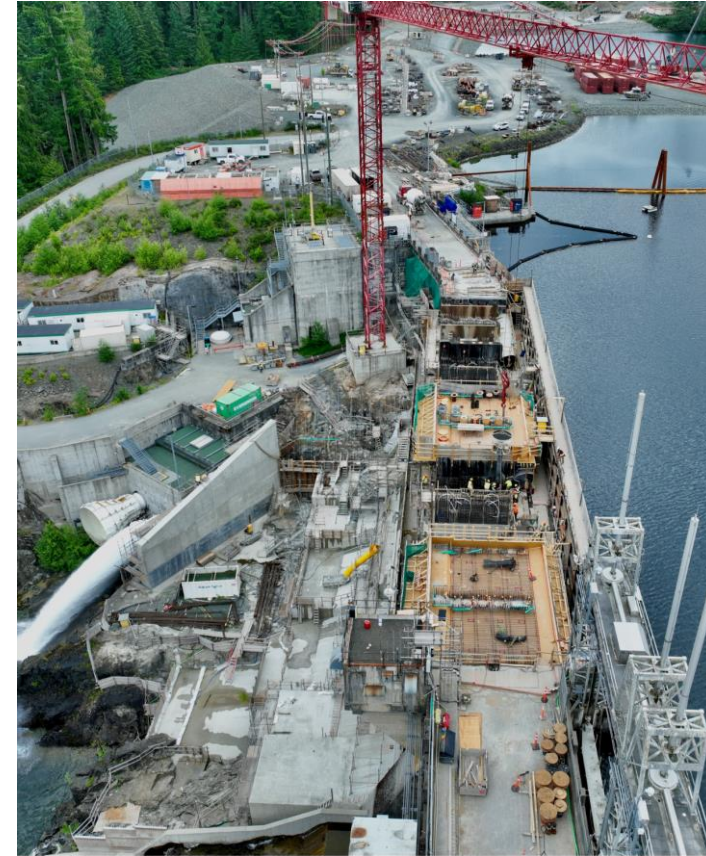
Drew Reicheld, left, from AEGP, and Bill Wright, BC Hydro, celebrating over a million hours of work without a lost time incident.



Project status and schedule

June 15: Concrete Main Dam and forming of road deck.

- We are very proud of these project milestones:
 - **Safety:** As of May 31, our Aecon EBC General Partnership (AEGP) contractor has had 1,020,514 hours of work without a lost time incident. Over one million hours of work without a lost time accident is a major achievement and safety remains a continued focus.
 - **Silt curtain removal:** the double-silt curtain at the Middle Earthfill Dam was successfully removed in May and June. The safe protection of water quality for domestic water supply and fish habitat during our three years of earthfill seismic upgrade work was a major achievement.
- Ongoing work on a new drainage channel connecting the Middle Earthfill Dam drainage system to the Old Intake Dam drainage system and weir by the Elk Falls Park.
- Flood protection across all structures commenced along the top of the earthfill dams.
- Work continues on the Concrete Main Dam improvements, including overflow spillway under the road deck and anchoring the dam to the bedrock below.
- The new permanent trail through the old penstock corridor, to get to and from the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge, was opened on June 16.



Construction photos: Old Penstock Corridor

June 15: The day before the change to the pedestrian trail that travels through the old penstock corridor to the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge within the Elk Falls Provincial Park. The green-arrowed route became the permanent trail route on June 16.



Elk Falls Suspension
Bridge Parking lot.

Elk Falls

Blue arrow: Truck and equipment access to the construction laydown area for future gravel placement projects for fish habitat within Elk Falls Canyon.

Green arrow: New permanent and more direct trail route to and from Elk Falls.

Orange arrow: decommissioned temporary trail route during berm construction and soil storage from dam safety civil work.

Construction photos: Old Penstock Corridor

June 15: View from the other direction, with the Elk Falls Suspension Bridge on the left. Inset photo on June 24 shows the new trail and temporary construction fencing.



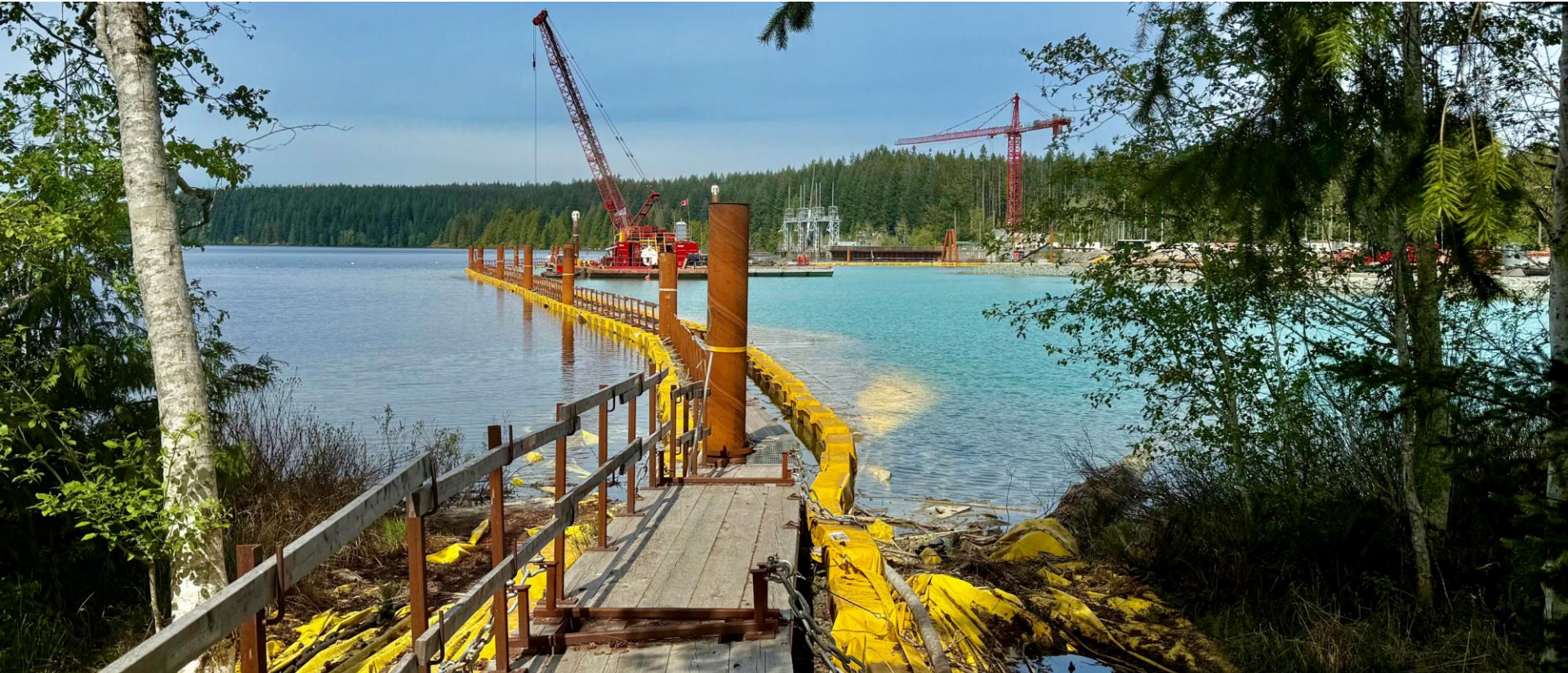
Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

May 1: The two silt curtains were in place to contain turbidity within the now complete work area and protect water quality within the John Hart Reservoir for fish and domestic water supply. Careful thought and planning went into the staged removal of the curtains and infrastructure. This included close communication with the City of Campbell River. Throughout the curtain removal phase we protected water quality at the City intake and at the powerhouse intake.



Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

May 1: Crews beginning to remove metal chains and geobags (bags full of sand) that hold down and seal the inner silt curtain to the reservoir bottom. Water turbidity readings were taken throughout the work.



Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

May 7: Complete removal of the inner silt curtain.



Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

May 7: Inner silt curtain, chains and geobags successfully removed. Water quality within the inner work area was ~3.5 NTU. During construction and the removal of the loose soil material prior to the berm placement, water quality hit as high as ~1,000 NTU. A daily average exceedance of 1 NTU at the City water intake could lead to a community boil water advisory.



Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

June 8: Crews removed the outer silt curtain at both ends near the shore, and away from the City intake, to allow clean water to move in and help slowly decrease turbidity levels within the silt curtain area. Turbidity readings at the two shorelines areas were below 1 NTU.



Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

June 15: Slow and methodical progression of silt curtain removal at top right.



Construction photos: double-silt curtain removal at the Middle Earthfill Dam

June 24: Removal of a geobag for the last section of the silt curtain removal. The curtain was fully removed on June 30.



Construction photos: Middle Earthfill Dam

May 1: Weir work for water collection on the downstream side of the Middle Earthfill Dam.



Construction photos: Middle Earthfill Dam

May 21: Progression of the weir works.



Construction photos: Middle Earthfill Dam

June 15: The weir connection work and the direction of the water flow that would eventually flow into Elk Falls Provincial Park.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

May 1: Work on the overflow spillway including piers to support the new road deck.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

May 7: Ongoing work on the overflow spillway with the curved rebar work, and the piers to support the new road deck.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

May 21: Same area as page 16 with placed concrete and curing process. View down spillway with road piers for the road deck above.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

May 21: Placement of the first section of roadway formwork for the first placement of concrete for the road deck.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

June 8: Work on the overflow spillway and road piers. The blue and green netting beyond the spillway gates are in place to keep swallows from nesting within the work areas.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

June 8: Placing concrete at the base of one of the roadway piers.



Construction photos: John Hart site

June 15: Work on the overflow spillway and road deck.



Construction photos: John Hart site

June 15: Another angle of the work on the overflow spillway and road deck.



Construction photos: Concrete Main Dam

June 15: Downstream view of the overflow spillway and road deck.



Construction photos: John Hart site

June 15: John Hart Dam site. The North Earthfill Dam is in the foreground. The steel anchors (bottom right of photo) are being placed within the drill holes placed earlier through the dam and into the bedrock to anchor the dam and increase the seismic withstand.



People profile – Keanu Billy

Background:

Keanu started as a fisheries technician with A-Tlegay Fisheries Society in 2022 - a fisheries organization made up of five member nations (We Wai Kai, Wei Wai Kum, Tlowitsis, Kwiakah, and K'omoks First Nations). In 2024, he completed the Indigenous Marine Technician Certification Program through Vancouver Island University – providing him with training and certification in Marine Environmental Monitoring, Species Monitoring, Aquatic Ecology and more. He also completed the Field Fisheries Skills Certificate program through NRTG. In December 2025, Keanu joined the team at Laich-Kwil-Tach Environmental Assessments.

Home:

Keanu is from the We Wai Kai First Nation and grew up on his home lands - Quinsam Reserve and Cape Mudge Village, and lives in Campbell River.

Hobbies:

Keanu enjoys fishing, being outdoors and exploring, and has played soccer since he was young.

Project responsibilities:

His responsibility includes overseeing and monitoring environmental and water quality compliance for BC Hydro at the project site. He also takes on these responsibilities at the Ladore and Strathcona projects for BC Hydro.

“It’s really cool to be involved in these projects within my community and so close to home. It’s great to be a steward of the environment and fish populations within the Campbell River Watershed.”

