



**Comprehensive Study Report – Cover Document**  
**Hart Water Supply Improvement Fishtrap Island Collector Well Project**  
**City of Prince George**

The City of Prince George is under consideration for funding from the Canada/British Columbia Infrastructure Program for the Hart Water Supply Improvement/Fishtrap Island Collector Well Project.

Western Economic Diversification Canada (WD), as the federal body delivering funding for the project is a Responsible Authority (RA) under Section 5 (1)(b) of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (the *Act*), and is responsible for ensuring that an environmental assessment is completed in the early stages of the proposed project. Infrastructure Canada is also considered a Responsible Authority as it is providing the federal funding that is being delivered by WD.

The proposed project involves the development of a groundwater production well to provide potable water. As the proposed infrastructure supports the extraction of groundwater in excess of the threshold identified in the *Comprehensive Study List* of the *Act* (i.e., 200,000 m<sup>3</sup>/annum) WD has determined that the proposed project is subject to a Comprehensive Study.

The purpose of the proposed project is to provide an additional supply of potable water to the city of Prince George for their existing collector well water system, and allow the decommissioning of the current well and another back-up well. The additional well will also supply water to approximately 15,000 people in communities north of the Nechako River.

The scope of the proposed project includes the development of a collector well and pump station. The collector well consists of an approximately 30m deep caisson, approximately 6m in diameter with 24 and 36 lateral well screens projected outwards into the aquifer, from the base of the collector well, up to 46m from the caisson perimeter. Other components of the project include the installation of a 1.9 km long, 750 mm diameter water transmission main to areas south and east of Fishtrap Island and installation of a disinfection (i.e., chlorination) and fluoridation system. Sentinel wells will be set up to serve as monitoring points for potential sources of ground water contamination. An electrical power supply line leading from the existing BC Hydro power line to the collector well will also be required and access roads will be developed for construction and operation of the facility.

The scope of the factors and environmental effects considered in the Comprehensive Study include:

- Impacts on the local hydrogeology including potential draw down of the water table, which might affect nearby wells as a result of operation of the new well;

- Impacts on the hydrology of the area surrounding the Nechako River as a result of construction and operation of the well;
- Impacts on fish and aquatic/wetland habitat and resources from construction or impacts related to draw down of the water table and operation of the well;
- Disturbance of wildlife and habitats as a result of site preparation and construction;
- Impacts on vegetation resulting from land clearing or from the lowering of the water table; and
- Impacts on cultural resources including archaeological and First Nation traditional uses.

The following mitigation and compensation plans have been developed to address potential impact concerns and will be implemented in order to minimize the potential impacts to biophysical and cultural resources:

- Wellhead and Aquifer Protection Plan
- Well Closure Plan
- Fish and Aquatic Habitat Protection Plan
- Sediment and Erosion Control Plan
- Wildlife and terrestrial Habitat Protection Plan
- Landscaping and Revegetation Plan
- Emergency Response and Spill Prevention Plan
- Environmental Construction and Monitoring and Management Program
- Post-Construction Monitoring Program

On October 8, 2002, pursuant to the Regulations Respecting the Coordination by Federal Authorities of Environmental Assessment Procedures and Requirements, WD declared itself a Responsible Authority (RA) under the *Act* and determined that a Comprehensive Study would be required before funding could be provided for the project. At that time, WD circulated the project description to Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Natural Resources Canada. Each of the Federal Authorities indicated that they had specialized information and advice to offer with respect to the project with the exception of Natural Resources Canada who indicated that they had no interest in the project.

At the request of WD, a Comprehensive Study was undertaken by the proponent, in consultation with the above-mentioned federal departments. After taking into consideration the Comprehensive Study report and any comments and feedback from the public and agencies regarding WD's conclusion and recommendations, the Minister of the Environment will make a decision whether to allow the project to proceed. WD has letters from each of the Federal Authorities indicating that their interests and concerns have been adequately addressed (see attached).

It is the opinion of Western Economic Diversification (WD) that the Comprehensive Study report addressing the environmental impacts for the City of Prince George Hart Water Supply Improvement Fishtrap Island Collector Well project has been prepared in

accordance with the requirements of Section 16(1) and (2) of the *Act* and the “Guide to the Preparation of a Comprehensive Study”.

The funding for this project is contingent on compliance with the mitigation measures outlined in the Application for Environmental Assessment Certificate/Comprehensive Study report and additional requirements indicated by the expert Federal Authorities. As such, WD will monitor activities associated with the planning, construction and post-construction (monitoring/follow-up) phases of the project in order to ensure that mitigation measures are implemented. The key mechanism to assist with monitoring of the implementation of mitigation measures will be Quarterly Progress Reports submitted by proponents that receive funding from the Canada/British Columbia Infrastructure Program. The Quarterly Progress Reports require project proponents to report on construction progress and the implementation of environmental mitigation. Where appropriate, site visits and dialogue with the project proponent will be undertaken to augment the Quarterly Progress Reports.

With respect to follow up program implementation, WD will regularly review reports from the project proponent, identified in the Comprehensive Study report, with respect to post-construction monitoring (i.e., project site remediation and re-vegetation) and results from the ground water monitoring well program.

Based on the information provided in the Comprehensive Study report, and taking into account the specific mitigation measures attached therein, and the feedback from federal authorities, WD has determined, as per the requirements of the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, that this project is not likely to cause significant adverse environmental effects.