



Nechako Watershed Water Engagement Initiative

Rio Tinto BC Works is hosting a Water Engagement Initiative, a collaborative and open process to improve water management. The process will be led by independent facilitators, and supported by objective, technical specialists to identify changes to better address multiple interests related to Rio Tinto's operations.

Scope

The scope of the Water Engagement Initiative will be determined by the interests brought forward by participants. As a starting point, the scope will include spillway water discharge schedules, ramping rates, reservoir levels, downstream flow targets, water temperature targets, fisheries and environmental monitoring programs, research, and infrastructure improvements.

Regulatory context

The regulatory and legal context related to Rio Tinto's operations sets an important context for the Water Engagement Initiative. Historical and regulatory considerations include:

- 1950 Agreement and associated conditional water license
- The 1987 Settlement Agreement and associated flow schedule for the Nechako River
- The 1997 Agreement and associated Final Water License

The Water Engagement Initiative is a voluntary process that may require regulatory approval, particularly decisions affecting public safety, environmental interests, and Indigenous interests.

Guiding principles

The Water Engagement Initiative is intended to be an inclusive process, where the diverse range of stakeholder and Indigenous community interests can be understood and considered in Rio Tinto operations. The Water Engagement Initiative adheres to the following principles:

- Respect existing legal and constitutional rights and responsibilities
- Support collaboration, cooperation, and inclusiveness
- Recognize that trade-offs / choices may need to occur
- Embody science and continuous learning
- Focus on issue resolution and long-term benefits
- Adapt to changing conditions

Main participation group

Individuals participating in the Water Engagement Initiative represent multiple interests, including Indigenous communities, stakeholders and government. The role of the main participation group is to share interests, review information, develop options, and ultimately select viable management options.


The main participation group is also responsible for sharing information about the process, specific issues being considered, and decisions made with the broader community.


Technical advisory group


The main participation group is supported by a Technical Advisory Group. The Technical Group is responsible for analyzing issues at the request of the main participation group, and providing guidance regarding the potential impacts of management options. The Technical Group is also responsible for investigating options that may meet the stated interests of the main participation group.

For more information:

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