

Comments that are undoubtedly more concerning to the NDP are originating from within their own camp and highlight disagreements between the parties' union and environmental grass roots. Many longtime supporters, volunteers, and donors are flocking to show their dissent for the Site C dam approval. Dr. Steve Gray, chair of the Peace Valley Solidarity Initiative, and NDP member in the riding of Esquimalt-Metchosin, commented on the messages he has received, "we've seen people calling for the termination of the dam, and people saying that they plan to leave the party and stop their fundraising activities if this goes ahead." Gray writes that as this news was breaking and in the months leading up to this decision, "we began to receive copies of letters and realized hundreds, if not thousands of NDP supporters were angry and worried about the Site C dam" . . . "that kind of situation [doesn't] seem very good for the party". Whether these feelings of betrayal will last or if other issues, such as proportional representation, will help the NDP to retain supporters is a question that will be seen in the coming months as the NDP work to promote other initiatives

With geotechnical issues, cost concerns and timeline questions still not definitively answered it is likely that Site C will be an ongoing challenge for the NDP to manage in the months and years ahead. While there is likely to be pain in the near and medium future, Site C's approval has demonstrated that the age of 'province building' and mega projects is not over. Emerging from the figurative shadow of the dam will be an ongoing project for the NDP moving forward.

My personal opinion? Site C will not significantly impact the NDP politically. Few swing voters are likely to see this as the issue that makes or breaks their faith in the NDP and in a region with polling numbers as rough as they have been it will take more than a begrudging approval to earn support. For the NDP faithful currently upset with the government, in time this approval will likely be accepted as an uncomfortable part of being government and forgotten by the next cycle.

