

PROPOSAL:

Highway 26 Powerline Options Report

PREPARED FOR:

District of Wells
www.wells.ca

Attention: Donna Forseille, Chief Administrative Officer

PREPARED BY:

Clear Course Consulting Limited
PO Box 1058, Pemberton, BC, V0N 2L0
www.clearcourse.ca

Contact: Veronica Woodruff, Principal & Project Manager
vwoodruff@clearcourse.ca, 604-966-8229

Submitted: July 29, 2022



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We respectfully acknowledge that Clear Course's main office is located within the Liíwatátkwa7 (Lillooet River) watershed which is part of the unceded Traditional Territory of the Státyemc Ucwalmicwts (language)-speaking Liíwa7ul (Liíwat People). Read Clear Course's [Indigenous Pledge](#).

Front page photo of rural power line along BC Highway 26 by Cameron Bevers, www.thekingshighway.ca.

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July 29, 2022

Donna Forseille
Chief Administrative Officer
District of Wells
admin1@wells.ca

Dear Donna,

Please accept this submission from Clear Course Consulting Ltd. (Clear Course) in response to the District of Wells' request for proposal regarding the Highway 26 powerline options report. It would be a pleasure to work on this opportunity with the District of Wells.

As you know, Clear Course is a small consulting company based in Pemberton, BC, that focuses on making meaningful projects a reality. We work on initiatives with local governments, Indigenous governments and organizations, academic institutions, and non-profits located throughout BC. We are a team of seven staff plus we have a range of partnering professional associates including engineers, economists, and biologists.

We have the relevant experience needed to support the engagement regarding the proposed Highway 26 powerline options report including engagement, technical analysis, and strategic assessments. Prior to founding Clear Course, I was a project manager for an environmental consulting company that specialized in environmental assessment, permitting, and long-term monitoring for micro and traditional hydro power projects in BC, including transmission line development. Since founding Clear Course, we have experience working with the joint planning committee (JPC) of BC Hydro and St'át'imc Nations, a group that works collaboratively to mitigate effects of the extensive Bridge-Seton reservoir system. We recently supported BC Hydro, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and the JPC with identifying options for upgrading infrastructure to support a three-phase power connection into the small remote community of D'arcy at N'Quatqua. My technical background enables me to understand the complexities of the Highway 26 powerline options and the intricacies of the environmental assessment process while my experience in engagement and my passion for your beautiful part of the province has me well suited to support you.

We would welcome the opportunity to work with the District of Wells once again, as well as the chance to connect more deeply to the region.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Veronica Woodruff
Principal & Project Manager
604-966-8229, vwoodruff@clearcourse.ca

1 EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS

1.1 Company Profile

Clear Course is a small consulting company founded in 2019 and headquartered in Pemberton, BC. We have seven permanent staff and a range of professional associates we work with including engineers, economists, and biologists. Our team has experience working on rural and remote area projects that are rooted in meaningful engagement and listening to the needs of communities. We have spent thousands of hours collaborating with Indigenous and rural elected officials, government representatives, business owners, special-interest groups, community influencers, Knowledge Keepers, citizens, and rightsholders. Our projects range from multi-million-dollar grant applications and rapid turn-around economic assessments for resource-strapped rural communities, to multi-year strategic management plans for larger regional districts. In addition to the business acumen we can offer, our team also has experience across many sectors.

- Agriculture and Food Security
- Ecosystem Restoration and Climate Change
- Arts, Culture, and Heritage
- Community Infrastructure
- Destination Management and Marketing
- Economic Development
- Emergency Management
- Event Management
- Film and Television
- First Nations Language Revitalization
- Fisheries and Aquaculture
- Forestry
- Government Agencies
- Health and Wellness
- Information Technology
- Local Government
- Small Business Services
- Social Services

1.2 Community Consultation

Clear Course staff have been trained and certified by the International Association of Public Participation (IAP2)¹ and completed Indigenous Consultation and Engagement² training with the understanding that effective engagement is relevant in every aspect of our work. As such, we aim to engage early and often, while ensuring our participants are clear in where their input can influence outcomes.

We have developed a multi-disciplinary approach using all types of engagement tools and activities involving community members, government and non-profit stakeholders, academia, Indigenous rightsholders, and businesses. From one-on-one interviews to large in-person World Café workshops to interactive online workshops and surveys, we have ensured that participation is accessible, tailored to meet the needs of participants, and structured in a way that it is engaging, resulting in thoughtful and meaningful outcomes. We also have experience in using innovative techniques to create safe engagement spaces and developing relationships that lead to valuable dialogue. These techniques are supported by the latest research and innovation in effective community engagement.

¹ International Association of Public Participation – <https://www.iap2.org/mpage/Home>

² Indigenous Corporate Training Inc. – Indigenous Consultation and Engagement. <https://www.ictinc.ca/training/indigenous-consultation-and-engagement>

To create meaning from our engagement, we always use rigorous analysis methods to appropriately honour our participants contributions to the project. We summarize the results of our engagement in plain language reports that visually represent the outcomes.

Through the pandemic, we have been required to further develop our capacity to complete online engagement. We have tested and honed several techniques to improve engagement outcomes in the virtual space and are comfortable online or in an in-person setting.

1.3 Project Management

Clear Course is proud of its team of project managers who are experienced at effective communication, time management, leadership, technical expertise, risk management, reporting, critical thinking, and problem solving. In our work, we have supported many rural governments, Indigenous communities, and other groups with the implementation of their programs and projects. Often working on tight timelines with limited budgets, we pride ourselves on always delivering results that meet or exceed our client's expectations. We accomplish this through clear communications, deep listening, detailed project administration, and being agile so that we can respond to change. We track all our project components in a comprehensive tracker that is provided to our clients following project completion that allows for seamless project continuation following the contract closing.

1.4 Relevant Projects & References

Relevant Project #1	
Project Name:	Grant Writer Services Program
Organization:	Peace River Regional District (PRRD), BC
Duration/Timing:	March 2021 – current
Project Details:	This project demonstrates our understanding of working with northern communities. Clear Course is currently providing grant writing support to the Peace River Regional District and many community groups within the PRRD. As of July 2022, we have been able to secure \$1.6 million in funding on behalf of the northern communities we work with, with many millions still awaiting funding announcements.
References:	Crystal Brown, Electoral Area Manager, crystal.brown@prrd.bc.ca

Relevant Project #2	
Project Name:	Joint Planning Committee
Organization:	BC Hydro and St'át'imc Nations
Duration/Timing:	March 2021 – current
Project Details:	This project demonstrates our understanding of working with powerline upgrade projects for remote communities. The Joint Planning Committee is a collaborative working group that ensures the interests of St'át'imc are respected during the operation of the Bridge-Seton Generation Facilities aiming to prevent and mitigate negative environmental effects. One of our roles was to investigate the opportunity for upgrading to three-phase power to support the operation of a highly productive sockeye salmon spawning channel and help power the local community. Although it was determined to

	be financially unfeasible, the engagement scope of work was similar to what is being proposed for the Highway 26 upgrade.
References:	Jeff Walker, Project Manager, Jeff.Walker@bchydro.com

Relevant Project #3

Project Name:	Regional Economic Development Strategy
Organization:	Pemberton & District Chamber of Commerce, Pemberton Area Economic Development Collaborative
Duration/Timing:	2019–2021
Project Details:	This project demonstrates our experience in regional planning and consultation with Indigenous communities. Clear Course developed a regional economic development strategy and action plan in collaboration with the Regional Economic Development Collaborative. The Collaborative included representatives from regional communities and organizations, including Liłwat Nation and the Lower St’át’imc First Nations, the regional district and Pemberton. Clear Course, through meaningful engagement, was responsible for identifying specific community goals and objectives to support long-term sustainable development of the area, through the lens of environmental, social, cultural, and economic sustainability. Clear Course was also responsible for building and maintaining relationships with government, community stakeholders, and rightsholders, and with external partners related to tourism, business development, and economic development. The project provided an invaluable opportunity to strengthen regional relationships amongst the participants and leaders.
References:	Natalie Langmann, Executive Director, nlangmann@pembertonchamber.com

1.5 Project Team

1.5.1 Veronica Woodruff – Project Director

Veronica is a project manager with more than 23 years’ experience working for governments, non-profits and the private sector. She has broad experience in project management, engagement, education, environmental assessment, restoration, community stewardship, and capacity building. Prior to co-founding Clear Course, Veronica worked for more than a decade as a project manager for an environmental consulting firm. The company provided safety planning, environmental assessments, construction monitoring, and restoration for technical, remote, and logistically challenging projects throughout the province. Her projects often required her to coordinate resources; manage staff and contractors; liaise with government agencies, Indigenous communities, and stakeholders; conduct assessments and complete analysis; and produce technical reports.

Veronica leads Clear Course’s projects with a focus on clear strategic visioning, community engagement, and action-planning. She applies her expertise in ecosystem protection and restoration to all Clear Course’s projects. Her deep connection to nature paired with her community connections has resulted in new and innovative approaches to projects in infrastructure, arts, language, food security, tourism, and economic development.

Veronica is an experienced facilitator and public speaker and is certified through International Association for Public Participation (IAP2). Throughout her career, Veronica has demonstrated her ability to act as a

connector, finding collaborative opportunities for government agencies, academia, industry, non-government organizations, and the public to work together to achieve a common goal. Her innate ability to mobilize people and resources has resulted in her founding three non-profit organizations, leading the restoration of hundreds of square meters of habitat for a wide range of species, developing the One Mile Lake Nature Centre, and managing a range of other cooperative projects.

She is a part-time faculty member at British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT) teaching in the Fish, Wildlife, and Recreation program. She teaches a Parks and Recreation class about managing humans in nature. The challenges explored in her course—regarding over-tourism, environmental impacts, planning, and effective communication—have applicability for all communities in the province. Finally, she is nearing completion of her Master of Arts in Leadership at Royal Roads University, where she received a scholarship to work on her thesis exploring the importance of cross-collaboration in addressing climate change-induced natural hazard risk.

1.5.2 Christine Weber – Project Manager

Christine is a motivated, conscientious, and accountable project manager with experience working with diverse stakeholder groups in rural and remote communities, including Indigenous communities. She uses her strong facilitation, communication, and engagement skills to thoughtfully and strategically understand and collaborate with stakeholders and Rightsholders, ensuring communication is uniquely tailored to each group.

Christine brings clarity to complex projects using effectual methods of tracking, documentation, coordination, and communication; she is also thorough in her research, data collection, and analysis so that she can translate findings into meaningful action.

1.5.3 Vanessa Carrington – Strategic Communications Specialist

Vanessa has more than 25 years of experience working as a strategic communications specialist and information designer. Her extensive writing and communication skills, personal experience working with small communities, and her pragmatic style have earned her a reputation for creating real-world, practical solutions that don't end up on the shelf collecting dust. A sampling of her work includes environmental management plans, community strategies, government policies, technical training guides, engagement plans, and public communications tools.

1.6 Capacity

We would assign a team of three staff to this project—Veronica Woodruff (project director), Christine Weber (project manager, engagement lead), and Vanessa Carrington (communications, information design, engagement support). Although we are currently working with several clients on a variety of projects, we have the capacity to work on this project's accelerated timeline. Additional Clear Course staff and associates are available as needed.

1.7 Insurance & WorkSafeBC

Clear Course holds \$3,000,000 in commercial general liability and is in good standing with WorkSafeBC. A clearance letter can be independently viewed through account #200131931.

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Assumptions

As per the request for proposal, we understand that this project is to complete engagement to determine the feasibility of aligning a transmission line planned for the Cariboo Gold Project along Highway 26, from Quesnel to Barkerville. The Highway 26 alignment was one of the options explored in the initial project assessment and would be an alternate alignment to the one currently chosen by the proponent, Barkerville Gold Mines Ltd. (BGM)/Osisko Development. By installing the line along Highway 26, this would provide much a needed power upgrade to the residents, businesses, and communities located along the corridor. We understand that this engagement must be completed in an expeditious manner to ensure there are no delays to the gold mine project.

As part of its Environmental Certificate, BGM/Osisko Development will spend an estimated \$32 million to build a transmission line along a corridor north of Highway 26 to directly serve the multi-billion-dollar Cariboo Gold Project in Wells, BC. At the completion of the Cariboo Gold Project, the line may be removed. As stated in the Detailed Project Description (2020)³, a document that outlines how engagement informed project decisions and design:

Transmission Line: a new 69 kilovolt (kV) transmission line, approximately 72 km in length, from Barlow Substation, near Quesnel to the Mine Site that follows a corridor north of Highway 26, along forest service roads or other disturbed areas where possible (Northern Transmission Line Route). This route will replace the previously identified 69 kV transmission line ... which was approximately 69 km in length and followed a corridor along Highway 26 from Barlow Substation to the Mine Site.

The District of Wells is requesting assistance with gathering information and feedback from communities and partners to inform discussions about a possible realignment of the new transmission line along Highway 26. It is anticipated that realigning the transmission line will have multiple benefits, including the provision of 3-phase power to the project and additional power to communities in need along the route. It is envisioned that the Highway 26 line would be a legacy project and remain in place following the closer of the Cariboo Gold Project.

We have assumed the following:

- The District of Wells has already confirmed with BC Hydro and BGM/Osisko Development that a transmission line along Highway 26 is technically feasible.
- Although the Cariboo Gold Project transmission line preferred alignment has already been selected as a backcountry route, this investigation will confirm if there is still an opportunity to align the transmission corridor to support communities along Highway 26. The information gathered and presented to the District of Wells will inform further discussions with the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation, BC Hydro, and BGM/Osisko Development, Northern Development Initiative Trust, and other provincial and federal government ministries, where appropriate.

³ <https://projects.eao.gov.bc.ca/api/public/document/5f9c9327634ae000214bd1b9/download/Cariboo%20Gold%20DPD%20October%202020.pdf>

- The District of Wells and/or BGM has already made initial contact, regarding the project, with each of the communities along Highway 26 regarding this transmission line route.
- The District of Wells will provide Clear Course with all the documentation available to support past consultation and assessments of the Cariboo Gold Project transmission line upgrade options.
- Not all communities will have access to data that supports the economic impact of an upgraded transmission line. Clear Course will engage with these communities to elicit feedback regarding the perceived value using engagement tools such as online surveys and interviews.
- To meet the District's timeline for completion of the final report by November 2022 and address the challenges posed by consultation during the summer (see 2.4.1), partners will have limited time to participate and review the preliminary and final draft reports prior to submission of the final report.

2.2 Approach

We will approach this project in two parts:

1. a review with technical experts to determine the feasibility of an alternative alignment of the 3-phase transmission line along Highway 26; and
2. an economic review to determine the potential impact of the realignment on the communities that the upgraded transmission line will serve.

Partners, stakeholders and Rightsholders that will inform these reviews include:

1. Lhtako Dené Nation
2. Xat'sūll Nation (Soda Creek Indian Band)
3. T'exelc Nation (Williams Lake First Nation)
4. Other Indigenous Nations, as appropriate
5. BC Hydro
6. Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation
7. Barkerville Gold Mines Ltd./Osisko Developments
8. West Fraser Timber
9. District of Wells and business community
10. City of Quesnel and business community
11. Cariboo Regional District and business community
12. Barkerville Historic Town and Park—Barkerville Heritage Trust
13. Province of BC Heritage Branch
14. Troll Ski Resort
15. Omineca Mining and Metals – Wingdam Project
16. Highway 26 Businesses and Private Landowners
17. BC Environment Assessment Office – Cariboo Gold Project
18. Northern Development Trust Initiative
19. Other as identified by the Partners

Clear Course will consolidate and summarize its findings in a report to the District of Wells and its project partners. This report will include recommendations on the re-alignment of the transmission line.

2.2.1 Technical Review

In 2020, BGM released a 2020 Detailed Project Description⁴ to summarize how the findings from early engagement activities, started in 2016, were used to inform project decisions and design. As part of the engagement, the developer explored two alignments for an upgraded transmission line to the mine: (1) along Highway 26, and (2) a corridor north of Highway 26. Feedback from community groups supported a “desire for 3-phase power in Barkerville, Wells, and at locations along Highway 26 to support or encourage economic development” (P. 46). However, although BGM preferred the installation of the transmission line along the existing route (i.e., along Highway 26), “technical challenges arose” and “ultimately it was determined that one 69 kV line would not serve the mine and the community and building along Highway 26 would result in a second right-of-way required alongside the existing right-of-way.”

Clear Course will revisit the documentation regarding the two options, as provided by the District of Wells, and will look to confirm what the benefits and challenges are for both options. Inflation and increased demand for 3-phase power may influence previous determinations.

2.2.2 Economic Review

To inform discussions with the Ministry of Energy, Mines, and Low Carbon Innovation, BC Hydro, and BGM/Osisko Development, Northern Development Initiative Trust, and other provincial and federal government ministries, the Clear Course will consult with project partners (including communities and businesses along Highway 26) to gather data and feedback on the potential economic impact of providing the powerline upgrade along Highway 26. Consultation will primarily be virtual through surveys and interviews; however, we will visit communities in person, as needed, to ensure consultation is meaningful for participating partners in the accelerated timeline.

Clear Course will also review existing documentation from the partners to inform the economic review.

⁴ Clear Course assumes the 2020 Detailed Project Description is the most recent version; more recent information collected by the developer may provide additional insight as to the current alignment of the proposed transmission line.

2.3 Tasks & Milestones

Tasks & Milestones	Dates*
1. Kick-off meeting	August 15, 2022
2. Progress meetings	Monthly
3. Document Review	August 2022
4. Engagement design – stakeholder list (technical and economic reviews), method confirmation	August 2022
5. Engagement – virtual and in-person	August- Mid-September 2022
6. Draft Findings	Late September
7. Deliver Preliminary Draft Report to partners for input	Early October 2022
8. Edits	Mid-October 2022
9. Deliver Final Draft Report to partners for final input	Early November 2022
10. Edits	Mid-November 2022
11. Deliver Final Report to partners	Late November 2022

*Dates can be adjusted following consultation with the District of Wells.

2.4 Risks & Mitigation

Clear Course recognizes that there may be some risks to the completion of this project. We have identified two risks, with mitigation efforts, but recognize additional risks may be identified during the project kick-off meeting with the District of Wells.

2.4.1 Summer Consultation

Summer is a traditionally a challenging time to complete public consultation due to vacations and school holidays. This is especially true in 2022, with many people taking vacation for the first time following the lifting of all pandemic restrictions. We have proposed to increase the engagement timeline through September. We will complete preliminary project introductions to the listed partners in late August but will aim to schedule all interviews following the start of the school year with the assumption that people will have increased availability at this time. This timeline will allow a draft to be prepared for partner review in early October. This will allow for one month for draft review with revisions to be completed by early November. This way we can still meet NDIT timelines, while ensuring partners have an ample opportunity to provide input to the project.

2.4.2 COVID-19 Restrictions

Although there are currently no provincial health regulations in place in BC, we recognize that there may be ongoing health concerns by individuals, vulnerable populations, businesses, and rural/remote communities in the region. Clear Course will respect any requests to limit in-person consultations using online surveys, virtual meeting tools (e.g., Zoom), and other forms of digital communication (phone, email). Furthermore, Clear Course is well-versed in facilitating project management and consultation remotely and will use their expertise to respond to any unexpected provincial health restrictions, as they occur.

3 ADDED VALUE

3.1 A Rural Focus

Clear Course is a small business that is dedicated to working with rural communities. As residents of small towns, we know the impact that one small idea can have on an entire community. With a passion for turning ideas into meaningful projects—and contributing towards vibrant and economically and environmentally sustainable communities—we opt for a rural focus over pursuing larger, urban initiatives where the results can be less tangible. It's our rural focus and understanding of the challenges facing towns that sets us apart from other consulting firms.

We recognize that we aren't local to the Barkerville Highway area and there may be a perception that we don't necessarily understand the unique people, values, needs, and landscapes of the community. Several of our staff have spent a significant amount of recreational time in the Quesnel and Wells area and Veronica's extended family is from Prince George. We believe that our strong commitment to supporting all communities in BC and our current work in Northern BC will resonate with the partners and communities involved in this project.

3.2 Experience working with Indigenous Communities

Clear Course has extensive experience working with Indigenous communities and we've developed trusted and respected relationships with several BC First Nations. We understand that appropriate consultation is important for Indigenous communities whose Traditional Territory can be impacted by development activities. When we work with non-Indigenous clients who are navigating projects that require consultation with Indigenous communities, we always work to the highest of standards and with utmost respect. We understand meaningful consultation should follow the "nothing about us, without us" principles that are aligned with many Indigenous communities. Furthermore, we use the three Indigenous pillars of what meaningful consultation entails: that we ensure all information is presented in a way that can be accessed by all; that everyone who needs to be in the room is in the room; and that the work is given enough time.

4 BUDGET

The following budget includes project management, document review, consultation, and deliver of the final report. The total estimated cost is \$19,996.50 not including GST.

Component	Task	Total
Project Management	Project initiation and tracking	\$ 1,995.00
Project Management Total		\$ 1,995.00
Background Review	Kick-off meeting with District of Wells	\$ 190.00
	Confirm stakeholder list and contact schedule	\$ 190.00
	Document review	\$ 190.00
Background Review Total		\$ 570.00
Consultation	Consultation design	\$ 950.00
	Stakeholder contact (email/call)	\$ 1,140.00
	Stakeholder meetings	\$ 2,280.00
	Travel	\$ 1,140.00
	Per diem	\$ 330.00
	Travel expenses	\$ 701.50
	Hotel	\$ 250.00
Consultation Total		\$ 6,791.50
Draft Report	Summary	\$ 3,800.00
	Summary presentations	\$ 2,850.00
	Edits	\$ 1,520.00
	Data analysis	\$ 950.00
Draft Report Total		\$ 9,120.00
Final Report	Reporting – formatting	\$ 760.00
	Finalize	\$ 760.00
Final Report Total		\$ 1,520.00
GRAND TOTAL		\$ 19,996.50

