



Blair Weston
Community and Indigenous
Relations Manager
FortisBC

FortisBC Inc.
908B Front Street
Nelson BC V1L 4C2
250-231-0176
blair.weston@fortisbc.com
www.fortisbc.com

March 24, 2021

RE: Reinstatement of the Service Agreement between BCHydro and FortisBC.

Thank you Mayor Hewat for the letter asking FortisBC to look into the service agreement between BCHydro and FortisBC and the ability to station a Power Line Technician (PLT) in the office in Kaslo. Over the last few years, FortisBC has looked into this possibility and there are a few factors working against this happening.

- 70-90% of the outage times in Kaslo are attributable to transmission line outages and the effect of restoration time for these outages if there was a crew stationed in Kaslo would be negligible.
- Large amounts of infrastructure upgrades have occurred in the area since we had a crew in Kaslo. Those upgrades mean distribution outages in Kaslo have been much less frequent since the last time a crew was there.
- One PLT in an office is not feasible due to limitations on the types of work one person can undertake safely. If FortisBC was to station a crew in Kaslo, we would want a 3 person crew as we do in our other smaller regional office in Grand Forks. To compare the customer counts the Grand Forks office services 5,014 customers while Kaslo and the BCH service area north of Kaslo is approximately 1806 customers
- We have not reached out to BCHydro this year but in 2019 when the Regional District of Central Kootenay asked BCHydro about renewing the service agreement with FortisBC the answer from BCH was

The Lardeau Valley is serviced by our crew from Nakusp. In the event of an unplanned outage, BC Hydro will bring in crews from other locations or contractor crews if they can respond faster than the crew from Nakusp.

For safety reasons, we need to have a full crew complement of three power line technicians to respond to trouble calls. There is not enough work in the Lardeau Valley to justify three full-time employees. However, we have recently added another power line technician to our crew in Nakusp. This will assist with a quicker response to trouble calls in the Lardeau Valley.

All these points mean at this time FBC does not think the workload in the area, and the limited potential benefits to restoration times can justify stationing a crew in Kaslo.

On a more positive note, FortisBC is beginning a project around right of way and vegetation management to try and decrease transmission line outages to Kaslo and the BCHydro customers served by these transmission lines. The project is starting in 2021 and will continue for two years.

As always, if you have any other questions please feel free to reach out again

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Blair Weston', with a stylized, cursive script.

Blair Weston
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