

**Title:** Lessons Learned from the Express Pipeline Project: The Perspective from the National Energy Board of Canada

**Format:** Presentation

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**Abstract:**

The Express Pipeline is a crude oil transmission system owned and operated by Terasen Pipelines Inc. (the Project). The Canadian portion of the Express Pipeline, from Hardisty to Wild Horse, Alberta (approximately 435 km), is regulated by the National Energy Board (the Board; the NEB), the Canadian federal agency that regulates the construction and operation of interprovincial and international pipelines according to several pieces of legislation, including the *National Energy Board Act* (the NEB Act) and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act* (the CEA Act).

A Joint NEB/CEA Agency Panel convened a public hearing to review all aspects of the proposed Project, including environmental effects, economic feasibility, engineering issues, and tolls, among others. In June 1996, the Board approved the Project. Construction of the Project was carried out between August and November 1996, and environmental monitoring and follow-up activities commenced in 1997, ending in 2001.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the practical implementation of the conditions pertaining to environmental issues and predicted environmental effects, particularly those relating to monitoring and follow-up. The following questions were considered:

- How effective were the proposed mitigation, monitoring, and follow-up measures?
- How did the performance of these measures in the field compare to the predictions made in the original environmental assessment?
- How can the Board apply these lessons on subsequent projects in the context of improving environmental assessment predictions, improving the selection of mitigation measures, and advancing the design of follow-up and monitoring programs?

**Key words:** environmental assessment, environmental follow-up, environmental monitoring, pipeline

**Conference topic:** (1) Environmental Follow-up; (2) Environmental Assessment of Infrastructure Projects

**Additional information:** Another paper, titled “Environmental Follow-up and Monitoring at Canada’s National Energy Board”, was submitted for the same conference session as this paper. The author’s of both papers have discussed potential overlap between the two papers and have determined that this paper will present a case study of monitoring/follow-up practice, while the other paper will present a theoretical/framework approach.