

Energy & Natural Resources Regulatory Bulletin February 2021



FEDERAL

Canada Launches New Program to Plant Two Billion Trees

On 19 February 2021, Natural Resources Canada announced the [Growing Canada's Forest \(GCF\) Program](#). As a part of Canada's goal of net-zero emissions by 2050, the GCF aims to plant a total of 2 billion trees over the next ten years. Natural Resources Canada is currently looking to engage organizations interested in becoming involved with this program. Interested new organizations can submit a Request for Information (RFI) for single or multiple-year tree planting projects, or an Expression of Interest (EOI) for experienced organizations for early start projects. [RFIs](#) and [EOIs](#) are due on 27 May 2021 and 25 March 2021, respectively.

Fisheries and Oceans Calling All Canadians to Contribute to Blue Economy Strategy

The federal government's Blue Economy Strategy aims to sustainably develop industries in the ocean sector while focusing on ocean health, equity, knowledge, and finance. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) plans to implement a strategy to manage 100% of waters under national jurisdiction by 2025. On 23 February 2021, the [DFO announced an online engagement portal](#), inviting all Canadians to contribute until 15 June 2021. Following this engagement session, the DFO plans to incorporate feedback directly into the development of the Blue Economy Strategy.

To participate in the Blue Economy Strategy engagement, Canadians are encouraged to visit the [website](#).

ALBERTA

New Edition of Directive 020: Well Abandonment

The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) has released the latest edition of [Directive 020: Well Abandonment](#). Section 5 of the updated Directive allows for select routine abandonment of commingled wells that involve qualified subsurface geological strata in corresponding geographic locations. Non-routine requests related to commingled abandonments have not been affected, and the AER continues to accept requests.

The AER has also released a summary of their responses to the stakeholder feedback window from 4 November 2020 to 4 December 2020. Stakeholder feedback response can be found as an attachment on the [Directive 020 webpage](#).

Update to Survey and Mapping Requirements

The AER has issued [Bulletin 2021-04](#), making changes to the *Pipeline Rules* and the *Oil and Gas Conservation Rules (OGCR)* affecting survey and mapping requirements.

The following change to the *Pipeline Rules* has been made:

- Section 4(1) was amended to remove the requirement to survey before the commencement of construction. Pipelines must still be surveyed within the timeframe given in the pipeline approval.

The following change to the *OGCR* has been made:

- Section 2.020(3)(c)(i) for licensing of wells has been repealed. Applicants are no longer required to submit the elevation of the corners of the well surface lease. Applicants are still required to provide elevation of significant water bodies, topographic and drainage patterns, and general spatial and topographic information.

As a result of the changes to the *OGCR*, a corresponding change has been made to [Directive 056: Energy Development Applications and Schedules](#) under Section 7 Requirements 16(g)(i).

Alberta's 1976 Coal Policy Reinstated

In June of 2020, the Alberta Government rescinded the 1976 Coal Policy, allowing development of the province's Rocky Mountains, Foothills, and Eastern Slopes regions. Following concerns raised by Albertans about surface mining in the Eastern Slopes, the Alberta Government has announced the reinstatement of the [1976 A Coal Development Policy for Alberta](#), effective 8 February 2021. Under this policy, land is placed into four Categories, dictating where and how leasing, exploration, and development of coal can occur. Further to the reinstatement, Alberta Energy released [Information Letter 2021-07](#), directing the AER to:

- Consider coal Categories and associated requirements as a part of its decision-making process in coal exploration and development.
- Enhance public engagement regarding coal exploration on Category 2 lands.
- Prohibit mountain top removal in Category 2 lands in addition to the restriction on surface mining.
- Cease issuing coal exploration approvals on Category 2 lands pending consultations for a new coal policy.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

Changes to the *Environmental Management Act* and Contaminated Sites Regulation

The Government of British Columbia released an [industry bulletin](#) regarding the approval of thirteen amendments to the [Environmental Management Act \(EMA\)](#) and [Contaminated Sites Regulation \(Order in Council 0368/2020\) \(CSR\)](#). Changes pertaining to the process for identifying contaminated sites are effective on 1 February 2021. The amendments include changes to submission timing, the Site Profile document, the Site Disclosure Statement, and the Certificate of Restoration (CoR) process.

A permit holder must provide a site disclosure statement to the Ministry of Environment registrar and a copy of the site disclosure statement to the BC Oil and Gas Commission (Commission) within six months after the owner or operator: 1) decommissions a site on the land, or 2) ceases operations on the land. A permit holder is no longer required to provide a site profile to the Commission at the time the permit holder applies for a CoR with respect to an oil and gas activity. Site profile forms already received by the Commission, with submitted CoR applications, will be forwarded to the Site Registrar.

Professional Governance Act Officially in Force

On 5 February 2021, the bulletin [Professional Governance Act Officially in Force](#) was released. The *College of Applied Biology Act* was repealed, and the *Professional Governance Act (PGA)* and corresponding Applied Biologist Regulation came into effect in British Columbia. The new PGA is intended to provide a consistent framework for five self-regulating professions under the PGA that incorporates best practices in governance. The College and the practicing registrants are regulated under the new legislation.

The [College's Professional Practice primer](#) and [Applied Biologists Regulation](#) conveys how activation of the PGA immediately affects your practice.

Did You Know?

Integrated Sustainability is pleased to welcome our new Regulatory Manager, Jamie Peters, of the Regulatory team. Jamie is a highly qualified Environmental and Regulatory Professional with extensive knowledge and involvement in the environment and regulatory private and public sectors. Through positive relationships with regulatory agencies and major projects experience, Jamie proactively identifies environmental and regulatory complications and presents solutions to mitigate effects, streamlining the overall project lifecycle and success.

Jamie is excited to bring her experience to the clients of Integrated Sustainability. For more information on our regulatory services, please contact Jamie Peters at jamie.peters@integratedsustainability.ca or (403) 200-7905.

Contact Us



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