

Weekly NEWS

esaa Environmental Services Association of Alberta

An Information Service for Alberta's Environment Industry

The Week Ending August 21st, 2020



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Comments & submissions are welcome!

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WAGE FUNDING FOR EMPLOYERS COMMITTED TO CULTIVATING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROFESSIONALS Fall 2020 Applications are now open!



Welcome to ECO Employment Programs! Working with the federal government as part of Canada's Work Integrated Learning Strategy, we work with employers and post-secondary partners to help students kick-start their career path in the environmental sector.

We will cover up to 50% of a student's wages to \$5,000 when employers hire the brightest minds in Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math (STEAM) and Business.

- Funding is for paid work terms. Work terms can be full time or part time from 6 – 16 weeks.
- Students gain valuable on-the-job experience
- Employers increase future talent pool and resource availability
- Students and Employers are required to find their own co-op placement
- Three sessions per year: Winter (January-April), Summer (May-August), Fall (September-December)
- Applications open 3 months prior to start of co-op session

Additional funding may be available for employers who hire student from one of the following groups:

- Women in STEM
- Indigenous People
- Persons with Disabilities
- First-year Students
- Recent Immigrants (Permanent resident or refugee status)

Host organizations may complete multiple applications for funding in the upcoming semester. Submit your application early to secure your funding. Once your funding is secured, you can begin your search for qualified, talented students to fill the position.

If you have not received contracts for your current approved placement please contact us at coop@eco.ca and we will complete the process.

TOWN AND FORMER EMPLOYEE PLEAD GUILTY TO CHARGES

The Town of Bow Island and a former employee have each pleaded guilty to one count under environmental legislation related to drinking water.

The Town of Bow Island pleaded guilty to failing to immediately report structural or equipment malfunctions in the waterworks system, an offence under the *Environmental*

Protection and Enhancement Act. The town was fined \$10,000 and was placed under a 2.5-year probation order that will closely monitor the town's compliance with legislated monitoring and reporting requirements.

The town's former employee, Ryan Jeffery Sanderson, pleaded guilty to one count of providing false or misleading information, which is also an offence under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*. Sanderson was sentenced to six months jail, to be served in the community under a conditional sentence order, followed by two years of probation.

LAND PETROLEUM AND INDIVIDUAL CHARGED FOR HINDERING AER INSPECTIONS

August 13, 2020... The Alberta Energy Regulator (AER) has laid charges against Land Petroleum International Inc. and its president, Bill Fung, for hindering AER inspections.

Eight charges have been jointly laid against Land Petroleum and Bill Fung. The charges, which fall under the [Oil and Gas Conservation Act \(OGCA\)](#), are related to facility inspections near Ponoka in August 2018.

Land Petroleum and Bill Fung are charged with hindering or failing to assist the regulator under section 96(1) of the OGCA. The charges also allege that they caused others to contravene provisions under section 108(1) of the OGCA.

The next court appearance for Land Petroleum and Bill Fung will be on September 4 in Ponoka.

To ensure the right to a fair prosecution, the AER cannot release any further details.

The AER ensures the safe, efficient, orderly, and environmentally responsible development of hydrocarbon resources over their entire life cycle. This includes allocating and conserving water resources, managing public lands, and protecting the environment while providing economic benefits for all Albertans.

QUEBEC MINING COMPANY FINED \$400,000 FOR VIOLATING THE CANADIAN ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT, 1999

Canadians value a safe and clean environment. Environment and Climate Change Canada's enforcement officers work hard every day to make sure individuals and companies are observing Canadian environmental laws.

On August 19, 2020, Seleine Mines, a division of K+S Windsor Salt Ltd., was fined a total of \$400,000 after pleading guilty to four counts of violating subsection 125(1) of the *Canadian Environmental Protection Act, 1999*. The fines will be directed to the Government of Canada's Environmental Damages Fund, where they will be used for environmental and conservation projects, often in the community where the offence occurred.

An investigation by Environment and Climate Change Canada enforcement officers revealed that the company had disposed of dredged material on four occasions between August 10 and 14, 2014, outside of the disposal area authorized by the disposal at sea permit issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

As a result of this conviction, the company's name will be added to the Environmental Offenders Registry.

SOLAR PROJECT SEEKS TO REPLACE ABANDONED OIL WELLS IN RURAL ALBERTA

(Source: Global News) After years of concerns over abandoned oil infrastructure in rural Alberta communities like Taber, there's a possible new solution on the horizon.

The RenuWell project is preparing to turn inactive wells into solar energy projects it says will generate 2,900 MWh and over \$224,000 in electricity sales per year directly to the surrounding area.

"Effectively, we're just using the power connection that's in the prepared surface that the oilfield development has provided," originator of the RenuWell Project, Keith Hirsche, explained.

"We're also putting in native grasses and things like that for ground cover. So we'll be rebuilding the soil once the project is in place."

The project has support from multiple partners and stakeholders including Irrican and some of Canada's most established solar companies, which will be coordinating installs.

In most cases, Alberta Environment and Alberta Energy Regulator will require sites to pass off reclamation certificates prior to installation.

"There's a lot of sites out there that might cost \$2- to \$3 million to reclaim," Alberta Surface Rights Group Director Daryl Bennett said.

"Instead of spending that money to reclaim the land, why don't you spend it on the solar project and give yourself another 40 or 50 years to reclaim the soils?"

"There's roughly 3,000 abandoned oil sites that landowners are concerned about because oil companies walked away," M.D. of Taber Reeve Merrill Harris said. "The weeds are an issue, they're not getting paid their lease rentals."

The RenuWell project lists a number of economic outcomes, including:

1. New economic opportunities for landowners stranded with orphaned wells on their farms.
2. Energy cost savings for the farmers who can purchase the solar electricity to power their irrigation systems.
3. Conserved farmland by utilizing brownfield sites for solar energy projects.
4. Cost savings for consumers by repurposing existing infrastructure such as roads and power lines that were put in place for the original oil well production.
5. Reduced reclamation costs for oil and gas companies who don't have to remove the roads and power lines to the sites.
6. Generated revenue for Irrigation Districts to continue irrigation system maintenance and upgrades.
7. Ongoing property tax revenue for the Municipal District of Taber.

"I haven't seen anybody that understands the project that is opposed to the project," Bennet said.

"Even the oil companies are looking at possibly putting some of these solar projects on some of their remote sites where it's very costly to bring electricity in."

Shovels are expected to hit the ground as early as next spring.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT TO JOIN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF TECK COAL MINE EXPANSION IN B.C.

(Source: Financial Post) OTTAWA — The federal government will join an environmental assessment of a major expansion to a proposed southern British Columbia coal mine.

"The potential for adverse effects ... may not be mitigated through project design, the application of standard mitigation measures, or through existing legislative mechanisms," says an analysis from the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada.

Environment Minister Jonathan Wilkinson used the analysis to make his decision, released Wednesday, on the Teck Resources project.

He had already reversed an earlier ruling and announced that Ottawa would take part in a review of the proposed Vista coal project in Alberta. Several other companies have made known their plans to mine coal in that province.

Teck is planning an expansion to its network of coal mines in the Elk Valley area of southeastern B.C. The Castle project would increase the area being mined by about one-third and allow the company to maintain production of steel-making coal at 27,400 tonnes a day.

The review involves fisheries, First Nations and international relations — all areas of federal jurisdiction. The mine expansion would also produce significantly more coal than the threshold required for a federal review.

Teck spokesman Chad Pederson called Wednesday's announcement an "unfortunate decision."

“The Castle project has already been proceeding through a rigorous provincial environmental review process,” he said in a statement.

“We will work with the B.C. Environmental Assessment Office and the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada to ensure a co-ordinated review and seek to avoid duplication.”

Wilkinson was not available for an interview.

B.C. Environment Minister George Heyman said the province will co-ordinate federal involvement.

“I appreciate that they understand and have committed to working within provincial timelines while they review matters of federal jurisdiction, such as trans-border issues,” he said in an email.

Lars Sander-Green of Wildsight, one of the groups that asked for a federal assessment, thanked Wilkinson for the decision.

“If Teck can’t show how they can reduce selenium pollution downstream of their mines in the long term ... then no reasonable environmental assessment should approve this mine,” he wrote.

The decision also has implications for Alberta, where the government has said it hopes to increase the province’s production of steel-making coal.

Ian Urquhart, conservation director for the Alberta Wilderness Association, welcomed the Teck decision.

“The federal process is a more open, accessible process” — especially compared with Alberta’s, he said.

Urquhart said Ottawa had little choice but to step in.

Teck’s Pederson said the Castle project is “part of the existing Fording River operations and is necessary to maintain the associated jobs and economic activity.”

The company’s existing mines in the area are responsible for significant problems with selenium, an element toxic in large amounts. Reports on concentrations in area waterways show levels up to four times B.C.’s maximum for drinking water. Monitoring stations near the mines have reported levels 50 times what’s recommended for aquatic health.

Teck’s own research has reported the near-disappearance of rare cutthroat trout from a 60-kilometre stretch of the Fording River downstream from the company’s four mines.

That water flows into the cross-border Kooconusa Reservoir. The reservoir drains into the Kootenai River, which flows about 200 kilometres across Montana and Idaho.

That contamination was a main concern of eight interveners who asked Ottawa to assist British Columbia in reviewing the expansion.

Those interveners included five First Nations on both sides of the border, 34 environmental organizations and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

“Direct and cumulative impacts from coal mining in the Elk Valley have resulted documented impacts to Lake Kooconusa and the Kootenai River water quality, fish and fish habitat in the U.S,” says the protection agency’s submission.

Urquhart suggests Wilkinson’s Teck and Vista decisions are a warning to the Alberta government, which recently revoked a decades-old policy restricting coal development in the province’s foothills and mountains.

“The issue this creates for Alberta is just how difficult it is, even with changes to the coal policy, to have as much control over coal development as (cabinet ministers) would like the province to have.”

ARCTIC NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE: THE ANIMALS AT RISK FROM ALASKA OIL DRILLING

(Source: BBC News) The US government is pushing forward with controversial plans to allow drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, by laying out the terms of a leasing programme that would give oil companies access to the area.

The wildlife refuge in north-eastern Alaska sits above billions of barrels of oil. However, it is also home to many animals, including reindeer, polar bears and different species of bird.

The idea of drilling in the area did not originate with President Donald Trump and his administration. Rather, the leasing programme is just the latest step in a controversy that has been ongoing since the late 1970s.

One side argues that drilling for oil could bring in significant amounts of money, while providing jobs for people in Alaska.

Others, however, are fearful of the impact drilling would have on the many animals that live there – as well as the damage burning more fossil fuels would have on our rapidly warming planet.

This push from the Trump administration comes just two months after [the Arctic circle recorded its highest ever temperatures](#).

“This plan could devastate the amazing array of wildlife that call the refuge home through noise pollution, habitat destruction, oil spills, and more climate chaos,” Kristen Monsell, from the US-based Center for Biological Diversity, told the BBC.

“The coastal plain is the most important land-based denning habitat for polar bears and is the birthing grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd.

“Over 200 species of birds are found in the refuge along with Arctic foxes, black and brown bears, moose and many others.”

Any oil spills, for example, would not only harm nearby wildlife and their habitat, they could be fatal.

Polar bears, Ms Monsell adds, are “particularly vulnerable” to oil spills.

“Polar bears must maintain a pristine hair coat as insulation against the cold – but when a polar bear comes into contact with spilled oil, it can soak a polar bear’s fur and persist for several weeks. It will be groomed and ingested, irritate the skin, and destroy the insulating abilities of the fur,” she says.

“Studies show that fatalities can occur from effects on the lungs, kidneys, blood, gastrointestinal tract, and other organs and systems. An oil-coated bear that is not cleaned and rehabilitated will probably die.”

Oil industry bosses insist they have a well-established record of environmentally responsible development of Alaska’s energy resources. But environmentalists say the US government has not adequately considered the risks to wildlife and local communities.

Meanwhile, polar bears are far from the only animals who rely on this large stretch of wilderness.

The refuge is home to more than 200 types of bird. Prof Natalie Boelman, an environmental scientist from Columbia University, describes it as “a huge nursery for avian species”.

“If you go up there in the spring it’s crazy, every little puddle, even if it’s just half a metre by half a metre... you can barely see the water, it’s just covered in ducks and geese,” she tells the BBC.

She is particularly concerned about the impact sound levels from any drilling would have on animals in the refuge, as well as on the indigenous communities that live nearby.

“With industrial activity comes a great deal of sound, from aeroplane noise, helicopter noise, truck noises, seismic activity,” she says.

“There’s been very little scientific study into how this impacts the many different animals up there, but there’s a lot of anecdotal evidence that sounds that are associated with any anthropogenic activity really bother them.”

This anecdotal evidence, she adds, comes from the Native Alaskan communities that live near the refuge.

“Subsistence hunters who are really dependent on both caribou and waterfowl to sustain themselves and their families, they have a really hard time hunting when there’s air traffic going by,” Prof Boelman says.

“They report having to just give up hunting a specific animal as soon as a helicopter or aeroplane goes by, because it just wakes the animal up – and that’s a huge loss for them.

“So we know it has an impact on the behaviour of the animals, and also that this then has an effect on the subsistence of communities. But also, what does that noise do to animals’ stress levels? What does that do to their reproductive success?”

Conservationists also fear for the Porcupine caribou, a breed of North American reindeer which roams the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The coast – where proposed drilling would take place, should it go ahead – is particularly important to them.

Maggie Howell, executive director of the Wolf Conservation Center, tells the BBC: “That coastal plain is the calving route for caribou, and the caribou also has one of the most impressive migrations of any land mammal.

“The herd travels north to the coastal plain every year, about 400 miles (644km) each way, and that’s where they’re having their babies. Any drilling is going to impact their lives drastically, as well as all the other animals and people who depend on that caribou.”

One animal that predates on caribou, and would therefore also be at risk, is the Alaskan tundra wolf. Ms Howell says her team has “already seen” the damage done by drilling in other areas with caribou and wolf populations, such as Alberta in Canada.

“As a refuge, it’s there to be preserved,” Ms Howell says. “It’s not only a safe haven for the wildlife, but also a symbol of our country’s national heritage.

“And if these animals can’t be safe in a wildlife refuge, where can they be? Where can they be just left alone to live their lives and fulfil their own purpose?”

ESAA MEMBER NEWS

VERTEX IS EXPANDING – JOURNEY TO A NEW SHOP & OFFICE!

Vertex is growing and we’re excited about our recent move into a new shop and office!

After ten years at the same location, we were busting at the seams. Despite multiple expansions within our own industrial complex, our landlord finally had no more space to offer. For a year we looked and finally found the perfect place, we bought it in 2019 and just finished renovating it.

The Vertex team is so excited to move into our awesome new location! If you’re around, feel free to drop by. There is plenty of room to physically distance now!

New Location: [40 McBrine Dr Kitchener, ON](#)

Thank you for sharing this exciting time with us, and contributing to our growth and expansion!

Stay safe - Bruce and the Vertex Team

UPCOMING EVENTS



Virtual Regulatory Forum

9:00 am - 4:00 pm
September 16th, 2020

ESAA is pleased to announce that the draft agenda for the upcoming ESAA Regulatory Forum is now available. Full details can be found at: <https://www.esaa.org/events/#id=209&wid=401&cid=153>.

ESAA has intentionally kept the registration fees low and are asking everyone to register, spread the word about the event and presentation. Approximately 90% of ESAA's revenues come from events, and now more than ever your Association needs your support!

- 6 hours of potential professional development
- Can't make all of the presentations. Don't worry - you can come and go out of the presentations as needed.
- Missed a presentation. All of the presentations will be recorded and available to registered participants only.

Registration rates:

- **Member: \$49**
- **Non-Member: \$79**
- **Registration Link: [Click Here](#)**

This full day workshop features the following presentations:

Orphan Well Association (OWA) Update
Lars DePauw, Executive Director, OWA

Indian Resource Council (IRC) Introduction
Steve Saddleback, Director, National Energy Business Centre of Excellence, IRC

Contamination Management and Administration of the Remediation Regulation
Adrian Kerry, Senior Remediation & Contamination Specialist, Alberta Energy Regulator (AER)

Canadian Federal Contaminated Site Clean-up
Martine Lalonde, Environmental Specialist, Public Services and Procurement Canada

Incorporation of Atlantic RBCA in Nova Scotia's Contaminated Sites Regulations
Brent Cox, Contaminated Sites Specialist, Nova Scotia Environment

Impact Assessment Agency of Canada (Tentative)

Environmental Prosecutions – How Bad Can It Get? Is there a Defence?

John Georgakopoulos and Anand Srivastava, Willms & Shier Environmental Lawyers LLP

Clarifying or Muddying Environmental Insolvency? Post-Redwater Review and Implications

Jacquelyn Stevens, Willms & Shier Environmental Lawyers LLP

Show Me the Money: Site Rehabilitation Program (SRP) Update

Eric Appelt, Associate, McLennan Ross LLP



Virtual Emerging Contaminants Forum

8:30 am - 4:15 pm

September 23rd, 2020

ESAA is pleased to announce that the draft agenda for the upcoming ESAA Emerging Contaminant Forum is now available. Full details can be found at: <https://www.esaa.org/events/#id=210&cid=153&wid=401>

ESAA has intentionally kept the registration fees low and are asking everyone to register, spread the word about the event and presentation. Approximately 90% of ESAA's revenues come from events, and now more than ever your Association needs your support!

- 7 hours of potential professional development
- Can't make all of the presentations. Don't worry - you can come and go out of the presentations as needed.
- Missed a presentation. All of the presentations will be recorded and available to registered participants only.

Registration rates:

- **Member: \$49**
- **Non-Member: \$79**
- **Registration Link: [Click Here](#)**

This full day workshop features the following presentations:

PFAS in Canada – A Federal Perspective

Rita Mroz,

Environmental Scientist – Contaminated Sites, Environment and Climate Change Canada

We (Almost) have a Guideline for PFOS –What’s Next?

Lindsay Paterson, Soil Scientist, SLR Consulting

1,4-Dioxane: A “Re-emerging” Emerging Contaminant

Terry Obal, Chief Science Advisor
Bureau Veritas Laboratories

Testing for SARS-CoV-2 in Wastewater

Bryan Shaw, Senior Technical Support Scientist, CARO Analytical Services

Sulphur – The Old New Contaminant

Simone Levy, Research Scientist, InnoTech Alberta

Remediation Considerations for Sites Impacted by Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances

Matthew Coady, Project Environmental Scientist, SLR Consulting

Emerging Contaminants - US Perspective

TBA

New Options for Treatment of PFAS in Soil and Water

David Fleming, Founder & Director of PFAS Program, TRS Group

Sulfolane interaction with Co-contaminants: Impacts to analytical detection and conceptual site models

Deanna Cottrel, Regional Specialist – Soil, Groundwater and Water, Shell Canada

Case Study Presentation

TBA

Contaminated Site and Landfill Origins of Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and Determination of Leaching Characteristics

Egemen Aydin, Senior Chemist, AGAT Laboratories

Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substance Dark Matter: Role of Total Organofluorine Analysis

Heather Lord, Manager, Environmental Research and Development, Bureau Veritas Laboratories

PFAS in Canada from a Legal Perspective: Laws, Guidelines, and Practical Considerations

Matthew Gardner and Jacquelyn Stevens, Willms
& Shier Environmental Lawyers LLP

REMTECH 2020 IS GOING VIRTUAL!

Due to the on-going COVID situation, ESAA has decided to take *RemTech 2020* online. The virtual version of *RemTech* will take place on October 14th and 15th and will feature a couple of keynotes, group sessions and breakouts, and a few other surprises. Check out the [draft agenda](#).

ESAA has intentionally kept the registration fees low and are asking everyone to register, and to spread the word about the event and presentations. Approximately 90% of ESAA’s revenues come from events, and now more than ever your Association needs your support!

Important Information for Sponsors and Exhibitors

- Sponsors: If you are a current sponsor of *RemTech*, watch your email for additional information and next steps.
- Exhibitors: If you are a current exhibitor of *RemTech*, watch your email for additional information and next steps.

Did You Previously Register for RemTech?

If you are already registered for *RemTech 2020*, you will need to register to attend the virtual version using the link below. ESAA will transfer your existing registration and payment to *RemTech 2021*. If you require a refund, please contact Joe Chowaniec at the ESAA Office.



Virtual RemTech Registration Fees

	<i>Early Bird Rate (until August 28th)</i>	<i>Regular Rate (after August 28th)</i>	
Member	\$69 + GST	\$99 + GST	Register Now
Non-Member	\$89 + GST	\$119 + GST	Register Now
Presenter	n/a	\$39 + GST	

Industry Positions Openings



As a benefit of ESAA Membership, ESAA Members can now post position openings on our website at no charge. Position opening ads also will appear in the newsletter at no charge. For full details visit: <https://www.esaa.org/news/job-board/>

Note: You must still complete the advertising form. After completing the order form, you will receive an email with a link to post your position.

Non-Members are welcome to advertise as well for a nominal charge. Visit [advertising form](#) to place your order.

Job Title	Organization	Application Deadline	Term	Details
Environmental Enforcement Officer	Environment and Climate Change Canada	2021-01-30	Full-Time	more
Intermediate Environmental Consultant	Ridgeline Canada Inc.	2020-08-31	Full-Time	more

join esaa now!

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