

# Bulletin 2020-05

March 12, 2020

## ***Oil Sands Environmental Monitoring Program Regulation and Regional Monitoring Approval Conditions***

We require oil sands operators to conduct and support regional monitoring activities and to participate in regional monitoring programs. When we issue approvals under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act (EPEA)* to oil sands operators, conditions are added that require them to participate in regional monitoring programs, such as those run by the Wood Buffalo Environmental Association.

The Oil Sands Monitoring (OSM) Program was established by the *Oil Sands Environmental Monitoring Program Regulation (2013)*. This joint provincial-federal program performs various types of environmental monitoring across the oil sands regions of northern Alberta. Oil sands operators holding AER-issued *EPEA* approvals are required to participate in this program and pay a yearly fee. Under section 6 of the regulation, if an approval condition requires regional monitoring that is being done by the OSM program, and the approval holder is meeting its obligations under the program, then the approval holder is deemed to be in compliance with that condition. We will check this “deemed compliance” annually.

Deemed compliance does not apply to certain conditions related to regional initiatives, such as participation in some environmental management frameworks under the *Alberta Land Stewardship Act*.

We will now issue letters annually to existing approval holders listing specific approval conditions that are considered satisfied under the regulation. All other conditions, including project area monitoring requirements, remain unchanged and are the responsibility of the approval holder.

For more information, please contact our Customer Contact Centre by phone at 403-297-8311 (1-855-297-8311 toll free) or by email at [inquiries@aer.ca](mailto:inquiries@ aer.ca).