

## Linear Corridor Development – New Pipeline Alignment and Stream Crossings Policy

**Policy No:** 19-01

**Policy Title:** Linear Corridor Development – New Pipeline Alignment and Stream Crossings

**Policy Statement:** Freshwater Conservation Canada wishes to ensure that New Pipeline Alignments and associated stream crossings minimize impacts on watershed connectivity and stream channel health through proper planning, design and monitoring.

### Principles Applied:

- Pipeline alignments should take into account and avoid exceptionally sensitive, natural features of the landscape or watershed to be traversed.
- Connectivity of the watershed and streams must be considered in order to ensure the un-impeded movement of water, nutrients, sediments and aquatic life.
- Alignment must use a well proven risk-assessment methodology and avoid critical aquatic habitats.
- Selection of any crossings must ensure the smallest footprint possible.
- Crossings must be designed to minimize impacts to flow, sediment and habitat using the best available techniques approved through the most current Pipeline Stream Crossing Guidelines.
- The pipe used must be designed to minimize risk of failure based on the product being moved and installed properly with appropriate oversight and long-term maintenance.
- Regulated monitoring programs are essential and must include an emergency plan developed based on risk assessment that includes sensitivity of the streams, material being moved and location of the crossings.

## Policy Rationale and Considerations:

Freshwater Conservation Canada recognizes that there are constraints driving selection of pipeline routing all of which must be balanced to achieve the best possible compromise between environmental and socio-economic realities, concerns of local communities and stakeholders and the Indigenous and Non-Indigenous peoples of Canada. Linear corridors, their establishment and maintenance can have a major impact on the movement of sediment, nutrients and contaminants and overall connectivity of watersheds and their rivers. Pipelines have been used for decades to move fluid and gaseous materials efficiently across great distances and have demonstrated to be the most secure way to do so. In the last 10 years, there has been higher scrutiny of pipelines, their alignments and safety. This has been in part driven by the concerns for some of the products being moved and some highly public spills that have occurred. Freshwater Conservation Canada believes that in most cases it is possible to select routes that represent such a balance. Freshwater Conservation Canada believes that new pipelines can be constructed and operated in a manner that will not result in adverse effects on fish, fish habitat, and the aquatic environment as long as the principles above are applied: this includes strong regulatory oversight and rigorous maintenance and monitoring.

## Objectives of Policy Statement:

Freshwater Conservation Canada wishes to ensure that where new pipelines are deemed to be important to the economic development of Canada that their alignment selection, materials used, installation, stream crossings, and their maintenance and monitoring ensures no or minimal impact on watersheds, their streams and aquatic life.

## Implications to Organization:

Freshwater Conservation Canada must ensure a rational and science-based review is conducted of any new pipeline development that may affect our rivers and streams. This will also mean that we must ensure that our members and chapters have sound information and understanding of the regulatory processes, which regulator is responsible for specific pipelines and who to contact so that they can be advocates for sound management of pipelines in order to protect our rivers and streams. All pipeline reviews should be coordinated by Freshwater Conservation Canada National office.

## Delivery:

Freshwater Conservation Canada needs to ensure that chapters work through National office for any review of new pipeline developments. Freshwater Conservation Canada staff need to review the status of and work with both Provincial and National energy regulators to ensure the best science and approaches are being applied to the alignment, maintenance and monitoring of new pipelines as it relates to aquatic ecological integrity.

**Effective Date:** May 1, 2019

**Last Board Approval Date:** May 1, 2019