

BC OGRIS Project Profile

Project Name:	Northeast Air Monitoring Program
Project Number:	HS-2013-01
Proponent:	BC Ministry of Environment
BC OGRIS Funding Envelope:	Health and Safety
Timeframe:	Phase 1 (Complete)—December 19, 2012 to March 31, 2014 Phase 2 (Complete)—July 7, 2014 to May 31, 2016 Phase 3—November 1, 2016 to October 31, 2017

Project objectives

The objectives of this project are to initiate an Air Quality Assessment Program in the Northeast with the goal of capturing air quality data to make informed decisions regarding public health.

Project description

The project will be a multi-year phased collaborative initiative between stakeholders, industry and government—aiming to provide long term air quality information to the public and decision makers. It also plans to engage local community members and stakeholders in the participation and development of the air monitoring network.

Project background

Historically, air monitoring in the Northeast has focused on major point sources (including some oil and gas facilities). Continuous particulate matter monitors have been maintained at Dawson Creek, Fort Nelson and Fort St John. Continuous ambient air monitors for Hydrogen Sulphide (H₂S) and Total Reduced Sulphur (TRS) are operational in Taylor but are not considered representative of the larger region.

Since 2009 the BC Ministry of Environment has worked with the BC Oil and Gas Commission to monitor and report on ambient air quality using the Ministry's Mobile Air Monitoring Lab (MAML) in communities adjacent to intense oil and gas development and in areas identified by the public. In 2010 and 2011, the MAML conducted air quality surveys, each of 3-4 weeks duration in several communities around the Dawson Creek area (Tomslake, Rolla, Groundbirch, Kelly Lake and Farmington).

Project approach

The project is scoped into 3 phases over an approximate timeline of 4-5 years.

Phase 1—COMPLETE:

- Established an Advisory Group to engage with the local community—provided advice and further context in site selection.
- Purchased and installed monitoring equipment at 3 new locations.
- Analyzed existing ambient air quality data.
- Completed the initial network design identifying priority monitoring sites and components to measure at each site.

Phase 2—COMPLETE:

- Continuing to engage the local community.
- Characterizing air quality in the Northeast BC.
- Developing governance options for the ongoing Northeast Air Quality Monitoring Network.
- Expanding the air quality monitoring network and reporting capabilities.

Phase 3—CURRENT:

- Continuing to maintain the air quality network and update the knowledge of air quality in northeast BC. Air monitoring stations will be rotated throughout northeast BC to expand the geographic coverage and understanding of air quality in those areas.

Project deliverables

The deliverables from this project include the following:

Phase 1--Complete

1. Final report from phase 1 describing accomplishments in phase 1 and plans for phase 2— including the following information:
 - Existing air quality data;
 - Initial network design;
 - Results of the installation of rural monitoring sites and preparation of the core air quality monitoring site; and
 - Scope for Phase 2 and 3.

Phase 2—Complete

1. Final report from phase 2 describing accomplishments in phase 2 and plans for phase 3— including the following information:
 - Activities involving the engagement of the local community;
 - Reporting on the characterization of air quality;
 - Options and recommendations for long-term funding and management of air quality in Northeast BC; and

- Revised network design.

Phase 3—Target: August-October, 2017

1. Final report from phase 3 describing accomplishments in phase 3 and an update on the air quality in northeast BC.