Project Overview

To transport the growing supply of natural gas liquids (NGLs) in the U.S., ONEOK is proposing to build the Elk Creek Pipeline. The project is an approximately 900-mile, 20-inch diameter pipeline that will have the capacity to transport up to 240,000 barrels per day (bpd) of unfractionated NGLs from eastern Montana to Bushton, Kansas. The project is expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

Elk Creek will originate in Richland County, Montana, traversing eastern Montana, Wyoming and northeast Colorado before ending in Rice County, Kansas. The preliminary route parallels ONEOK’s existing Bakken NGL Pipeline and the majority of the Overland Pass Pipeline, of which ONEOK owns 50 percent.

Working with Landowners

Listening to stakeholders and obtaining input on the route is an important part of the project’s development. ONEOK is committed to proactive and meaningful dialogue with landowners, community leaders and other stakeholders in order to provide accurate and timely responses to their questions or concerns. Right-of-way teams will work diligently with landowners to establish easement agreements, which grant permission for the pipeline to be constructed, operated and maintained on their property.

ONEOK is committed to selecting a route that will minimize impact to communities and the environment, while also allowing for safe construction and operation once the project is complete.

Project Timeline

BEGINNING OF 2018
- Right-of-way acquisition
- Civil, environmental and engineering surveys
- Permit preparation

SPRING/SUMMER 2018
- Community outreach
- Construction begins in some areas
- Permit submission activities begin

END OF 2019
- Pipeline in service
Safety is a Priority

Pipelines are among the safest and most efficient methods of transporting energy resources. ONEOK safely operates an extensive network of natural gas liquids infrastructure from the Canadian border to the Texas Gulf Coast.

Fostering a zero-incident culture is part of ONEOK’s safety commitment. This focus will apply to the design, construction and operation of the project. The Elk Creek Pipeline will meet or exceed government and industry standards, be monitored daily during construction and tested prior to being placed in service. Once operational, the project will be monitored around the clock using sensors and communications technology. The pipeline will undergo regular inspections to check for operational integrity.

Supporting Communities

ONEOK is committed to investing in the communities where it operates and where its employees live and work. Currently, ONEOK employs more than 2,400 people companywide and nearly 500 in the region of the project. Since 2012, the company has invested nearly $1.3 million from corporate and foundation contributions in Montana, Wyoming, Colorado and Kansas, where the existing Bakken NGL and Overland Pass pipelines operate.

ONEOK expects the Elk Creek Pipeline will generate thousands of jobs throughout the execution of the project. Once the project is completed, communities along the proposed route will benefit from tax revenues supporting public services and schools, for example.

Environmental Protection and Regulatory Oversight

Before construction begins, the preliminary route will undergo an extensive environmental review and permitting process. ONEOK will survey portions of the route to identify potential impacts to environmental and cultural resources. Surveys also involve conducting studies of local wildlife, water and soil conditions.

ONEOK will obtain and comply with all applicable federal, state and local permits authorizing the construction of the project.

Construction Overview

The 20-inch diameter pipeline will be made of high-strength steel and a protective layer of coating to prevent corrosion. The pipe will be buried approximately 3 feet below the ground surface, as required by the U.S. Department of Transportation pipeline safety regulations.

Inspectors will be assigned to construction areas to monitor compliance with all federal, state and local rules and regulations while also monitoring restoration to ensure it is progressing accordingly.

Contact Us

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Crews begin by staking the pipeline route prior to clearing and grading the right of way to create a working surface suitable for construction equipment and workers.

Next, sections of the pipe are laid along the right of way, also known as “stringing.” Joints of pipe will be bent and ultimately welded together to form one long, continuous segment that conforms to the contours of the land.

The pipe sections will be welded together by qualified pipeline welders and will be X-rayed to verify integrity. Coating will be applied over the welds to protect against corrosion. Equipment will then dig the trench so that specialty equipment can lower the welded pipe into the ditch and backfill the subsoil over the pipe.

Finally, after the pipeline is buried, it is filled with water and pressure-tested to validate its strength, per federal regulation.