

# Frequently Asked Questions



## Elk Creek Pipeline Project

### What is the Elk Creek Pipeline?

The Elk Creek Pipeline is being constructed to transport natural gas liquids (NGLs) from near ONEOK's existing Riverview Terminal in eastern Montana to Bushton, Kansas. The pipeline includes approximately 900 miles of new, 20-inch diameter pipe and will have the capacity to transport up to 240,000 barrels per day (bpd) of unfractionated NGLs.

### Why do you want to build the Elk Creek pipeline?

The existing Bakken NGL and Overland Pass pipelines are operating at full capacity. Additional NGL takeaway capacity is critical to meeting the needs of producers who are increasing production and are required to meet natural gas capture targets in the Williston Basin. The Elk Creek Pipeline will strengthen ONEOK's position in the high-production areas of the Bakken, Powder River and Denver-Julesburg regions and also provide additional reliability and redundancy on our NGL system.

### What experience does the company have with pipelines?

ONEOK is a leader in the gathering, processing, storage and transportation of natural gas and natural gas liquids in the United States. The company owns and operates the following NGL assets:

- 7,100 miles of NGL gathering pipelines
- 4,370 miles of NGL distribution pipelines
- 26 million barrels of NGL storage capacity
- 7 NGL fractionators
- 8 NGL product terminals
- 840,000 barrels per day of net NGL fractionation capacity

### What are NGLs?

NGLs primarily consist of ethane, ethane/propane mix, propane, iso-butane, butane and natural gasoline. NGLs are primarily used by agriculture, petrochemical and plastics industries, as well as for refining and home heating uses.

### How will you ensure that the Elk Creek Pipeline is safe?

The safety of the public and its employees is the highest priority for ONEOK. In general, pipelines remain one of the safest and most efficient methods of transporting energy. ONEOK operates extensive natural gas and natural gas liquids pipeline systems, compressor stations and a variety of other facilities.

The Elk Creek Pipeline is being designed and constructed to meet or exceed applicable government and industry standards. It will be monitored daily during construction, tested prior to being placed into service and inspected regularly for integrity.

Our trained technicians will monitor and control the pipeline around the clock using a combination of highly sophisticated sensors and communications technology and will perform periodic, on-the-ground inspections. We also will educate the public on how to live and work safely near the pipeline and inform local emergency responders of how to respond to any emergency situation.

### What would happen if the Elk Creek Pipeline were to rupture or leak?

ONEOK goes to great lengths in the design, construction, operation and maintenance of its pipeline systems to ensure safety and reliability; however, if a rupture is detected, the company automatically stops the flow of product and contacts local emergency responders.

Upon notification, ONEOK and local emergency responders work in tandem to enact pre-established response plans and notify affected landowners. In all cases, emergency responders are directed to protect people first, followed by the environment and property.

### What is an easement?

An easement, or right of way (ROW), is a limited right to use a portion of property for specific purposes. ONEOK will compensate the landowner for the right to construct, operate and maintain an underground pipeline, and in limited cases, aboveground equipment, such as valves and cathodic protection sites related to the pipeline.

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### **What can the public expect during construction?**

The first step of pipeline construction involves surveying and staking the pipeline ROW. Then, the route will be cleared and graded, if necessary, to create a suitable working surface for construction. Finally, a trench, the depth of which varies according to local conditions but must comply with regulatory standards, is dug.

The second step involves laying the pipe along the right of way, also known as “stringing.” When necessary, the pipe sections are bent to conform to the contour of the surrounding land. The pipe sections are welded together by qualified welders and are X-rayed to verify their integrity before being coated and inspected prior to being lowered into the trench.

The third step of construction involves backfilling the trench, and the final step is restoring the ROW to as near as practical to its original condition. Through a process called hydrostatic testing, the pipeline is then filled with water and safely pressure tested to validate its design and strength. As dictated by unique conditions, directional drilling (or tunneling) may be used to avoid potential impacts on the public.

### **Whose jurisdiction does the pipeline fall under?**

The Elk Creek Pipeline is an interstate natural gas liquids pipeline, subject to the jurisdiction of the U.S. Department of Transportation. There are a number of other federal, state and local agencies that will issue permits or approvals in connection with the construction of the pipeline.

### **How deep underground will you lay the pipeline?**

The depth of cover – or the amount of cover between the top of the pipeline and ground level – will be determined by environmental conditions. In normal soil conditions, depth of cover is 3 feet. In areas of rock, it is 2 feet.

These depths are in accordance with U.S. Department of Transportation pipeline safety regulations and will allow for consistent use of the land as specified in easement agreements. ONEOK employees will work with the necessary agencies and stakeholders to satisfy all regulations. Any additional concerns or issues from stakeholders on depth of cover will be considered.

### **What reviews take place before pipeline construction?**

ONEOK consults with all required local, state and federal agencies. In addition, environmental, constructability, civil and engineering surveys are completed.

### **Additional Information and Contacts:**

[www.oneok.com/elkcreeppipeline](http://www.oneok.com/elkcreeppipeline)

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