#### **CANADA ENERGY REGULATOR**

**IN THE MATTER OF** the *Canadian Energy Regulator Act*, S.C. 2019, c. 28, s.10, (Act) and the Regulations made thereunder; and

**IN THE MATTER OF** an application by Westcoast Energy Inc. pursuant to section 241 of the Act for leave to abandon the Pointed Mountain Pipeline.

## **WESTCOAST ENERGY INC.**

#### POINTED MOUNTAIN PIPELINE ABANDONMENT PROJECT

February 2, 2022

To: The Secretary
Canada Energy Regulator
Suite 210, 517 Tenth Avenue SW
Calgary, Alberta
T2R 0A8



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#### **APPLICATION**

Westcoast Energy Inc. (Westcoast) hereby applies to the Canada Energy Regulator (CER or Commission) pursuant to section 241 of the *Canadian Energy Regulator Act* (Act) for leave to abandon the Pointed Mountain Pipeline (Project).

## 1.0 Background

- 1. Westcoast, a wholly owned subsidiary of Enbridge Inc. (Enbridge), is a "company" within the meaning of the Act.
- 2. Until the end of 2019, Westcoast owned and operated a natural gas pipeline system that extended from points in the Yukon Territory (Yukon), the Northwest Territories (NWT), Alberta and British Columbia (BC) through BC to a point on the international boundary between Canada and the United States near Huntingdon, BC.
- 3. Westcoast provided shippers on this pipeline system with raw gas transmission, treatment, and sales gas transmission services in respect of natural gas produced in the Fort Nelson, Fort St. John, and Grizzly Valley areas of BC.
- 4. The Fort Nelson gathering system included the Pointed Mountain Pipeline, which extends from southwest NWT, through southeast Yukon to northeast BC (Pipeline).
- 5. In separate transactions completed in 2018 and 2019, Westcoast sold most of its raw gas transmission and treatment facilities to Sukunka Natural Resources Inc. and NorthRiver Midstream Operations LP (NorthRiver Midstream), respectively. Westcoast now provides only sales gas transmission service through its system which extends from points in northeast BC and northwest Alberta to the Huntingdon, BC delivery area.
- 6. The transaction involving NorthRiver Midstream included the Fort Nelson gathering system assets connecting to the Pipeline. The Pipeline, which has been deactivated for many years, was not included in the sale transaction.
- 7. The approximately 56 kilometre Nominal Pipe Size (NPS) 20 Pipeline was constructed in 1972 pursuant to National Energy Board (NEB) Certificate GC-46 and deactivated pursuant to NEB Order MO-11-2008 (for mile posts 0 to 21.7¹) and NEB Order MO-003-2016 (for mile posts 21.7 to 34.6²). A 1,200 metre segment of the Pipeline crossing the Kotaneelee River was decommissioned (removed) pursuant to NEB Order MO-071-2015. As part of the deactivation process, the Pipeline was purged, cleaned of residual product, internally coated with corrosion inhibitor, filled with nitrogen gas to a minimum pressure of 70 kilopascals, and physically isolated from sources of upstream pressure.
- 8. Westcoast has determined that there is no prospective future use for the Pipeline, which is no longer connected to its pipeline system. Accordingly, Westcoast is seeking to permanently remove the Pipeline from service.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Kilometer posts (KP) 0 to 34.9.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> KP 34.9 to 55.6.



- 9. Subsection 241(1) of the Act provides that a company must not abandon a pipeline unless the Commission has, by order, granted it leave to do so. By this Application, Westcoast seeks approval from the Commission to abandon the Pipeline.
- 10. Subject to receipt of regulatory approval, Westcoast plans to carry out the abandonment work during the 2022/2023 winter season and 2023 summer season.

## 2.0 Project Description

## 2.1 Location and Description of the Pointed Mountain Pipeline

- 11. The Pipeline is located in a remote area of southeast Yukon, southwest NWT, and northeast BC. It commences at kilometre post (KP) 0.0 located approximately 25 km northwest of Fort Liard, NWT, within 95C1NE (NTS Grid 20k) (in the NWT) and angles southwest to approximately KP 55.6 located within 94N16NE (BC PNG Grid quarters) (in BC). Refer to Attachment 1 (Figure 1, Overview Map).
- 12. For further details on the Pipeline, including its start and end points, length, technical specifications, and regulatory approvals, please refer to Table 1 below.

**Table 1 - Pointed Mountain Pipeline Details** 

NEB Approval	GC-46
Year Constructed	1972
Product Carried <sup>3</sup>	None
Maximum Operating Pressure	9,308 kPa
Length	55.6 km
Start Coordinates	Latitude: 60° 23.810'N
	Longitude: 123° 49.580'W
End Coordinates	Latitude: 59° 57.981'N
	Longitude: 124° 13.262'W
Material	Carbon Steel
Diameter	NPS 20 (508 mm)
Wall Thickness	9.3 mm
Grade	API 5L X52
Coating Type	Extruded Polyethylene
Class Location	1
Current Status	Deactivated/Decommissioned
Deactivation and	MO-003-2016
Decommissioning Orders	MO-071-2015
	MO-11-2008

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> When in service, the Pipeline carried sour natural gas. It is currently deactivated and filled with nitrogen gas, with the exception of the 1,200 metre segment crossing the Kotaneelee River, which has been removed.



# 2.2 Rationale for Abandoning the Pipeline

13. The Pipeline is currently deactivated, is not connected to the rest of the Westcoast pipeline system and has no prospective future use. The Project will have no impacts on existing customers or service on the Westcoast pipeline system.

# 2.3 Abandonment Approach

- 14. Westcoast determined the appropriate method of abandonment following a comprehensive site-specific assessment. Westcoast's abandonment approach was informed by applicable legislation and regulations, relevant industry standards, available literature on pipeline abandonment methods, professional judgment, guidance from the NEB as part of Stream 3 of the Land Matters Consultation Initiative (LMCI), and Westcoast's own experience operating and decommissioning pipelines in Alberta, BC, Yukon and the NWT over the past 60 years.
- 15. Having regard for safety considerations, potential environmental impacts, and current and prospective future land use, Westcoast has determined that above-ground infrastructure associated with the Pipeline will be physically removed to pipeline depth and that buried piping, including watercourse and road crossings, will be abandoned in place. Abandoned pipeline warning signs will be installed at the end points of all pipeline segments along the right-of-way, on each side of watercourse crossings, and on each side of road crossings.
- Abandonment-in-place is considered the most appropriate method of abandonment in the case of the buried pipelines. This is primarily because the environmental disturbance that would be caused by excavation and disposal of the pipeline would be far greater and unwarranted in the case of this remote, predominantly forested, and uninhabited Crown and private land owned by a single industrial landowner. The physical removal of the pipeline would require disturbance of the vegetation and the brush that has re-grown on the pipeline right-of-way, thus potentially impacting caribou, and other wildlife habitat. Westcoast further notes that this approach is consistent with the LMCI base case assumption for small-diameter pipe in undeveloped land use areas.
- 17. Westcoast confirms that the abandonment activities will follow the requirements of Clause 10.16.2 of Canadian Standards Association Standard Z662-19: Oil and Gas Pipeline Systems (CSA Z662-19). Clause 10.16.2 of CSA Z662-19 provides that buried pipelines abandoned in place must be: (i) emptied of service fluids, (ii) purged or cleaned in a manner that leaves no mobile materials remaining, (iii) physically separated from any in-service piping, (iv) capped, plugged, or otherwise effectively sealed, (v) cut off at pipeline depth, and (vi) left unpressurized. Some of these steps have already been taken as part of the deactivation and decommissioning of the Pipeline. Currently, the Pipeline is deactivated and has been purged, cleaned, physically isolated from any sources of upstream pressure, and is filled with nitrogen gas<sup>4</sup>.
- 18. Cathodic protection will no longer be maintained on the abandoned pipeline. As a result, accessible test lead posts and anode wiring will be removed to pipeline depth. Any anode beds will be abandoned in place to continue corroding naturally. This prevents unnecessary environmental disturbances required to remove anode beds. Thirteen test lead posts are inaccessible and would require vegetation clearing including of forested

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> With the exception of the 1,200 metre segment crossing the Kotaneelee River, which has been removed.



lands and construction of temporary access roads for removal. To avoid significant clearing, access road construction and related environmental disturbance, Westcoast hereby requests an exemption from paragraph 4(1)(d) of the *Canadian Energy Regulator Onshore Pipeline Regulations* in respect of compliance with clause 10.16.3 of CSA Z662-19, which requires removal of related surface equipment to pipeline depth.

19. The corrosion process for piping that has been abandoned in place is expected to be localized and can take hundreds to thousands of years to occur. For small diameter piping, ground subsidence is unlikely even in the event of a full pipeline collapse.<sup>5</sup> For this reason, Westcoast has determined that it is not necessary to provide any special treatment for road crossings. There are no railway crossings affected by the Project. Westcoast does not anticipate any impacts to engineered structures (including roads and utilities,) as a result of the Project. Additionally, segmenting the Pipeline to prevent the undesired transportation of groundwater from one watershed to another was assessed. The Pipeline does not cross any watershed boundaries, so additional segmentation of the Pipeline was deemed unnecessary.

## 2.4 Scope and Timing of Abandonment Activities

- 20. The key Project activity sites are shown in Attachment 1 (Figure 2, Key Project Activity Sites). Westcoast expects that all physical abandonment activities (e.g., cutting, capping) will be confined to the existing right-of-way and previously disturbed areas where aboveground infrastructure is located.
- 21. New permanent access roads are not expected to be required for the Project. Access for physical abandonment activities should be limited to existing roads and right-of-way. Vegetation brushing will be required on the existing pipeline right-of-way to facilitate an approximately 10-metre-wide access route for a length of 19 kilometres along the Pipeline.
- 22. Table 2 below provides an overview of the physical abandonment activities. Please refer to Attachment 2 (Abandonment Activities) for further details regarding the planned abandonment activities. The Project will be carried out in accordance with CSA Z662-19 and the *Canadian Energy Regulator Onshore Pipeline Regulations*, with the exception, as noted above in paragraph 18, of the work in relation to the inaccessible test lead posts.

Table 2 – Abandonment Scope of Work

Worksite	Scope of Work		
PM-1	<ul> <li>Remove pig launcher and associated kicker line, flare, aboveground flare piping aboveground producer connection piping, structural steel, and risers</li> </ul>		
	Remove diesel and propane tanks		
	Conduct remediation if required		
PM-2	Remove producer tap		
	Conduct remediation if required		

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Det Norske Veritas. 2015. Understanding the Mechanisms of Corrosion and their Effects on Abandoned Pipelines. Prepared for the Petroleum Technology Alliance of Canada, Calgary, Alberta, Report No. TAOUS813COSC (PP07967, Rev1)



# Westcoast Energy Inc. Pointed Mountain Pipeline Abandonment Project

PM-3	Remove nitrogen vent and valves			
	Conduct remediation if required			
PM-4	Remove nitrogen vent and valves			
	Conduct remediation if required			
PM-6	Remove producer taps, risers, aboveground piping, and valves			
	Conduct remediation if required			
PM-7	Remove pig launcher and associated kicker line, flare, aboveground flare piping, aboveground producer connection piping, structural steel, and risers			
	Remove diesel and propane tanks			
	Conduct remediation if required			
PM-8	Remove pipe riser and support			
	Conduct remediation if required			
PM-9	Remove pipe riser and concrete pipe supports			
	Conduct remediation if required			
PM-10	Remove pig receiver and associated bypass line, kicker line, structural steel, valves, and riser			
	Conduct remediation if required			
Right-of-way	Remove test lead posts at accessible sites.			

23. Subject to the receipt of regulatory approval, the abandonment work is planned to be completed under frozen ground conditions during the 2022/2023 winter construction season and during the 2023 summer construction season. Remediation and reclamation activities are anticipated to take place in 2023 and extend into summer, 2024 if required.

#### 3.0 Environmental and Socio-Economic Assessment

- 24. The Project is not a designated project under the *Impact Assessment Act*, 2019.
- 25. The Project environmental and socio-economic assessment (ESA) was conducted by Jacobs Consultancy Canada Inc. in accordance with the requirements of the CER Filing Manual. The ESA report is provided in Attachment 3. Please refer to Table 1.3-1 of the ESA report for the checklist providing concordance against Guide A A.2 and Guide B B.2 of the CER Filing Manual.
- 26. The ESA considered the factors listed in Guides A and B of the CER Filing Manual and issues and concerns identified through Westcoast's engagement program. The potential environmental and socio-economic effects of the Project were identified through Project-specific desktop studies and field surveys, applicable regulatory requirements and industry guidance, engagement with stakeholders and Indigenous communities, and professional experience of the assessment team. The ESA concludes that the physical abandonment activities and abandonment in place will not result in significant environmental or socio-economic effects.
- 27. The environmental and socio-economic issues identified in the ESA are consistent with expected and known potential effects arising from the Project and can be effectively



mitigated by standard environmental protection and monitoring measures. Environmental protection measures are provided in the Project-specific Environmental Protection Plan that is appended to the ESA report.

- 28. Following the completion of physical abandonment activities, reclamation and monitoring will occur along the disturbed portions of the Pipeline, as more specifically described below in section 4.0.
- 29. The ESA report is divided into the following key sections:
  - 1. Introduction
  - 2. Project Description
  - 3. Consultation and Engagement
  - 4. Assessment Methods
  - Assessment of Effects on the Physical Environment and Soil Productivity
  - 6. Assessment of Effects on Vegetation
  - 7. Assessment of Effects on Aquatic Resources
  - 8. Assessment of Effects on Wetlands
  - 9. Assessment of Effects on Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat
  - Assessment of Effects on Air Emissions and Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Climate Change
  - 11. Assessment of Effects on Acoustic Environment
  - 12. Assessment of Effects on Heritage Resources
  - 13. Assessment of Effects on Traditional Land and Resource Use
  - 14. Assessment of Effects on Socio-Economic Elements
  - 15. Rights of Indigenous People
  - 16. Assessment of Effects from Accidents and Malfunctions
  - 17. Assessment of the Effects of the Environment on the Project
  - 18. Environmental Compliance Strategy
  - 19. Follow-up and Monitoring
  - 20. Conclusion
  - 21. References
- 30. Westcoast has reviewed the ESA report and commits to the recommendations and mitigation measures identified therein.

## 4.0 Post-Abandonment Monitoring and Remediation

- 31. Following the completion of physical abandonment activities, Westcoast will reclaim the disturbed sites and conduct post-construction environmental monitoring (PCEM) for a period of five years to ensure that vegetation regrowth is on a trajectory to successfully meet equivalent land capability. The purpose of the reclamation monitoring phase of the Project is to:
  - assess the effectiveness of environmental protection measures implemented during physical abandonment activities;
  - review the success of re-establishing equivalent land capability at areas disturbed during physical abandonment activities; and
  - document any corrective actions or opportunities for improvement on future projects.



- 32. Land reclamation success will be measured against adjacent site conditions. Following the first, third and fifth full growing seasons after final clean-up, monitoring will include:
  - inspecting areas disturbed using ground reconnaissance to capture previously unidentified environmental issues;
  - evaluating the natural recovery of lands disturbed during physical abandonment activities:
  - assessing the effectiveness of mitigation practices used during physical abandonment activities;
  - evaluating the recovery of ecological function of wetlands disturbed during physical abandonment activities; and
  - recommending further remedial measures, if warranted, to be implemented to address outstanding environmental issues.
- 33. An environmental issues list will be used to track environmental issues and their remediation status during the field inspection and monitoring program. The reclamation assessment will include a visual evaluation of the physical landscape, vegetation, soils, watercourses, wetlands, wildlife, and heritage resources.
- 34. Westcoast does not expect that any remediation will be necessary following completion of the PCEM program. The Pipeline will have been cleaned, the soils will have been remediated if required, any exposure issues will have been addressed during the physical abandonment activities, and vegetation regrowth will be on a trajectory to successfully meet equivalent land capability. Also, the corrosion process for small diameter abandoned piping is expected to take hundreds if not thousands of years with virtually imperceptible ground subsidence impacts. To account for the remote possibility of issues arising following the completion of the PCEM program, however, Westcoast plans to undertake long-term monitoring of the pipeline right-of-way by aerial flyovers.
- 35. Westcoast will also retain its pipeline markers and signage along the right-of-way for as long as it maintains the land rights associated with the pipeline right-of-way. Signage will include contact information and an indication that the pipelines are abandoned.

## 5.0 Safety Hazard Assessment and Mitigation

36. Typical safety hazards for the abandonment activities are expected to be mitigated through standard measures including but not limited to the Enbridge Safety Manual and Field Level Hazard Assessment. A project-specific safety plan will be developed in alignment with the requirements stipulated in the Safety Manual.

#### 6.0 Land Matters

37. No additional permanent land is required for the Project as the physical abandonment activities will take place entirely within existing right-of-way boundaries and temporary workspace. Please refer to section 2.4 of Attachment 3 for the approximate location and dimensions of anticipated temporary workspace requirements. These requirements are subject to change during the planning and construction phases and Westcoast will obtain any required landowner and/or occupant approvals for any such changes.



- 38. The start and end points of the Pipeline are provided in Table 1 above. The Pipeline is situated on remote provincial/territorial Crown land and private land within an 18 metre to 20 metre wide right-of-way. Approximately 99% of the Pipeline is located on provincial/territorial Crown land, with the remaining 1% located on private land held by NorthRiver Midstream. Two associated flare sites to be abandoned are located within surface leases. All of the land associated with the Pipeline falls within the 'Non-Agricultural, no future development anticipated' land use category.
- 39. The land rights for the Pipeline are held pursuant to right-of-way or lease agreements administered by the BC Oil and Gas Commission, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board (NWT), and Yukon Oil and Gas Resources. The proposed abandonment approach is consistent with these agreements.
- 40. At this time, Westcoast plans to retain its land rights for the Pipeline following the abandonment work. Should Westcoast decide to surrender its land rights in the future, it will take the appropriate steps with the BC Oil and Gas Commission, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, and Yukon Oil and Gas Resources, as well as the land registry systems, to terminate those rights in accordance with the applicable land agreements.
- 41. Following abandonment, the Pipeline right-of-way and leases will be subject to monitoring as described above. Westcoast will address any land issues that may arise during the monitoring period through internally generated funds or funds set aside for post-abandonment activities.

## 7.0 Stakeholder and Indigenous Engagement

- 42. Westcoast has carried out a stakeholder and Indigenous engagement program guided by its corporate values and in accordance with Enbridge's Indigenous Peoples' Policy. Please refer to Attachment 4 (Engagement Program Summary) for further detail regarding this program.
- 43. The parties included in Westcoast's Indigenous and stakeholder program included Indigenous groups, registered trapline holders, trapper/guide outfitter associations, government authorities at both the provincial/territorial and regional levels, Members of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Assembly, and industry parties.
- 44. Westcoast's engagement activities for this Project commenced in mid-2020 including with early and continuing focus on Indigenous outreach and discussion. While the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has created challenges, Westcoast has been able to effectively engage with parties by telephone and virtual meetings.
- 45. Between August 25, 2021 and November 5, 2021, Westcoast sent project information packages to all relevant stakeholders and Indigenous groups. Westcoast invited parties to contact the company if they wished to discuss the Project or request further information.
- 46. As shown in Table 1 of Attachment 4, constructive discussions have occurred with Indigenous groups. Attachment 4 provides a summary of engagement activities and issues and concerns raised by Indigenous groups. While communication channels will remain open, none of the other rights holders or stakeholders have reached out for further information or expressed any concerns with the Project.



- 47. The single private landowner is NorthRiver Midstream, who has been consulted since the beginning of the Project. It has no outstanding concerns with any Project activities or the planned monitoring and reclamation activities.
- 48. Westcoast will continue to update stakeholders and Indigenous groups as the Project progresses through the regulatory process and abandonment activities, addressing any concerns that may be raised throughout the process.

#### 8.0 Economics and Finance

49. The estimated cost of the Project is approximately \$18.5 million in 2021 dollars (including a net present value projection for long-term post-abandonment activities). A breakdown of these costs by abandonment activity category is provided in Table 3 below and includes costs related to engineering and project management, abandonment preparation, physical abandonment-in-place, post-abandonment activities, pipeline and above-ground facility removal and a contingency.

Table 3 - Project Cost Estimate

	Category	Cost (2021 dollars)
1.	Engineering & Project Management	\$3,730,686
2.	Abandonment Preparation	\$1,021,275
3a.	Basic Pipeline Abandonment-in-Place	\$
3b.	Provision for Post-Abandonment Activities	\$150,000
4.	Special Treatment	-
5.	Pipeline Removal	\$2,015,717
6.	Above-Ground Facilities	\$8,509,710
7.	Contingency	\$3,145,697
Total Cost Estimate		\$18,573,085

Note: Totals may not add due to rounding.

- 50. Westcoast intends to file a separate application with the Commission for approval to withdraw funds from its Gathering and Processing Abandonment Trust for the Project. This request will be made on a cost-reimbursable basis once the Project has been executed and the actual costs are known. At the outset, the Project will be internally funded by Westcoast. Westcoast confirms that funding is available to complete the proposed abandonment work.
- 51. While Westcoast does not expect environmental issues to arise post-abandonment, to the extent any future remediation or repair is required, it will be funded either internally or through the above-referenced trust or other mechanism approved by the Commission.
- 52. The original book cost of the facilities is approximately \$22.7 million, and the Pipeline currently has a nil net book value as the entire remaining rate base for Westcoast's Field



Services division was written down following completion of the sale to NorthRiver Midstream at the end of 2019.

53. The Pipeline formed part of Zone 1 of the Westcoast pipeline system for toll-making purposes. Zone 1 (and Zone 2) of the system no longer exist(s) and Westcoast will be accountable for the costs of the Project. Accordingly, there will be no impact on rate base or tolls for Westcoast's remaining customers in Zones 3 and 4.

#### 9.0 Service of Notice

- 54. Subsection 241(2) of the Act requires service of a notice on all owners of lands through which the Pipeline passes as well as the publication of a notice in at least one issue of a publication (if any) in general circulation within the area in which the lands are situated.
- 55. As noted above, 99% of the Pipeline is located within provincial/territorial Crown land with the remaining 1% located on private land belonging to a single industrial private landowner. Accordingly, Westcoast will serve the prescribed notice upon the private landowner and BC Oil and Gas Commission, the Mackenzie Valley Land and Water Board, and Yukon Oil and Gas Resources in their roles as Crown land managers and owners for the oil and gas industry in those respective territories/provinces.
- 56. Westcoast also commits to serve notice within 72 hours of filing the application on the relevant Indigenous communities and other stakeholders that have been identified in Attachment 4.
- 57. In satisfaction of the publication requirement, Westcoast has arranged to publish notices in the *Fort Nelson News*, the *Yukon News*, and the *NWT News/North*, which serve the areas in proximity to the Project. Notices will be published in the next available issue of each of the publications following filing of the application.

#### 10.0 Relief Requested

- 58. A copy of the Guide B Filing Manual Checklist has been included as Attachment 5.
- 59. Westcoast hereby requests from the Commission:
  - an order pursuant to subsection 241(1) of the Act granting Westcoast leave to abandon the Pipeline as proposed in this application;
  - an order pursuant to section 97 of the Act exempting Westcoast from the provisions of paragraph 4(1)(d) of the Canadian Energy Regulator Onshore Pipeline Regulations in relation to abandoning in place certain cathodic protection test lead posts; and
  - such further and other relief as Westcoast may request or the Commission may consider appropriate.



Communications with respect to this Application should be directed to:

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