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Environmental Assessment Certificate

Oil sands developments are large and often in the public spotlight; as a result they require an environmental impact assessment. In Alberta, the [Environmental Impact Assessment](#) can greatly influence the approval process of a project.

The EIA is essentially a summary of project activities, their anticipated local and regional effects, and requirements for mitigation or monitoring and investigation. If the environmental assessment is complete and representative of the conditions on site before development, and if it adequately describes both predicted project impacts, and methods to mitigate or compensate for these impacts, then an environmental assessment certificate is issued.

In legal terms from the [Canadian Environmental Assessment Act](#) (1992):

A certificate that states that an environmental assessment of a project has been completed, and that is signed by a responsible authority that exercises a power or performs a duty or function referred to in paragraph 5(1)(c) in relation to the project, is, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, proof of the matter stated (Department of Justice, 2008).

Once a project has the Environmental Impact Assessment certificate the project can then be considered for operational approval.

In the RAMP area being a member of the [Cumulative Effects Management Association](#) (CEMA) is often a condition for operational approval. Being a member of RAMP is sometimes a condition of operational approval.



Indian Pipe
Source: Jane Elser
(click to enlarge)

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