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VECO Canada Ltd.

## Autodesk Buzzsaw Improves Project Management on Remote Natural Gas Pipeline Development

VECO Canada Ltd., a petroleum and gas exploration, engineering, and construction firm based in Calgary, Alberta, faced some dramatic challenges when working on Central Alberta Midstream's West Wapiti Gathering Pipeline project. Adding to the actual physical and regulatory difficulties was the issue of communication among the various organizations and teams. VECO chose Autodesk® Buzzsaw™ to help them stay organized and to maintain easy, ongoing communication among all the stakeholders. As a result VECO saved time and money and made visible organizational improvements in just a short time.



*Once people get used to using Autodesk Buzzsaw, there's going to be money saved on travel expenses and file distribution, even things such as personnel and facilities administration.*

Steve Gundry  
Project Manager  
VECO Canada Ltd.

### The Situation

In the spring of 2000, VECO was selected to handle project management and design work for Central Alberta Midstream's West Wapiti Gathering Pipeline. This natural gas pipeline will stretch 108 miles across the eastern slope of the Rocky Mountains from northeast British Columbia to Grand Prairie in north-central Alberta.

### The Challenge

The logistics of building a natural gas pipeline can be daunting, with hundreds of kilometers of pipe to lay through a wide range of geological conditions. "We're dealing with remote, rugged terrain," says Steve Gundry, VECO's project manager on the pipeline project. "The Wapiti West Pipeline is going to require surveying, ditching, and drilling through, under, or around foothills, a series of large valleys, and several big rivers."

The physical challenges facing the pipeline project may sound intimidating, but just as difficult are the regulatory hurdles. Because the pipeline will cross a provincial border, all

plans and designs must be approved by Canada's National Energy Board. The project will be scrutinized for environmental impact by a team of fisheries and wildlife biologists, and VECO and Central Alberta Midstream must also address any First Nations' Aboriginal concerns.

Facing this array of organizational and geographical issues, Gundry and his team decided to use Autodesk Buzzsaw to help them stay organized and improve communication between all the stakeholders.

### The Solution

"We discussed the extranet option at our project kickoff meeting and agreed that it would really help in moving materials, keeping people informed, and staying focused," says Gundry. "We're on an extremely tight timeline, so it's essential that everyone has access to the most recent plans."

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“Autodesk Buzzsaw is cost-effective, easy-to-use, and functional,” says Geoff Holmes, VECO’s web administrator. “It provides a great solution to the problems that arise with projects like the West Wapiti Pipeline.”

Steve Gundry and his team have realized considerable time and cost savings from managing their project with Autodesk Buzzsaw. In particular, Gundry has been able to get documents to team members and regulators quickly and efficiently. Gundry says, “75 percent of the upfront work on the project has been environmental... All the documents together will take up several volumes. Autodesk Buzzsaw provides a central workspace where everyone can simply log on and get what they need right away.”

VECO’s engineering team in Calgary has also used Autodesk Buzzsaw to expedite workflow. “There is a whole range of factors to consider in designing a project of this scale,” explains Gundry. “Our engineers must select a route that will have the least impact on the environment. The gas coming out of the ground in northeast British Columbia is sour—meaning that it contains hydrogen sulfide. That will impact the type of facilities we’ll need

to build along the pipeline. Also, we need to keep in mind that once the pipeline system is in place, gas exploration can expand. So accessibility is a big concern. When everybody can get the documents they need in the same place, and we’re all working from the same version, the work gets done faster and more cost effectively.”

Although Gundry and Holmes have been using Autodesk Buzzsaw for only a few months, they have already seen improvements in organization. And they expect to see even greater efficiencies as team members and clients become accustomed to working on an extranet. “Once people get used to using Autodesk Buzzsaw, there’s going to be money saved on travel expenses and file distribution, even things such as personnel and facilities administration,” concludes Gundry.

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**Autodesk, Inc.**  
The Landmark @ One Market  
Suite 500  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
USA

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