

## Oil Sands Monitoring (OSM)

### 2016-2017 PROJECT PLAN SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>B1-2-3 Monitoring Fish Health and Community</b>
<b>Type of Project:</b>	Long Term Monitoring
<b>Delivery Agent:</b>	ECCC/AEP
<b>Project Contact:</b>	Mark McMaster (ECCC) - mark.mcmaster@canada.ca
<b>Budget:</b>	\$ 1,350,000

#### Project Description:

This project will evaluate fish in the Alberta Oil Sands region as part of the Joint Oil Sands Monitoring Program. Specifically, this project is evaluating fish health, fish communities and habitat, fish assemblage (fish inventory), relative abundance and structure (i.e. age-class distribution), and contaminants in fish. Fish monitoring addresses key questions related to the potential effects of oil sands development on the environmental integrity of the Athabasca main stem, small streams and rivers. This work also contributes to the establishment of baseline conditions for future monitoring efforts.

#### Project Objectives:

- Develop a science-based framework for the monitoring and assessment of the environmental health of the Alberta Oil Sands Region through the use of fish health assessments, fish assemblage monitoring, water quality and contaminants levels;
- Collect baseline information on fish populations/communities required for establishing predictive relationships for assessing potential cumulative effects.
- Establish linkages between fish health and benthic invertebrates within the oil sands development region and downstream receiving environments, to examine, assess status and trends, and to inform other initiatives (e.g. the Lower Athabasca Water Management Framework).

#### Key Outcomes:

Improved understanding of the status and health of fish in the lower Athabasca Region.

#### Geographic Scope:

Geographically, sampling sites are located in the Lower Athabasca River from the Town of Athabasca to downstream of the Firebag River; Athabasca River tributaries (Steepbank, ELLs, McKay, Dover, Muskeg, Firebag, High Hills, Horse, Dunkirk, and Alice rivers); the Peace River watershed; and in the southern operators area of the Cold Lake oil sands deposit.

#### Associated Data and Reports:

Data from this project will be uploaded to the Oil Sands Portal. Reports include:

- Report on results from Peace Area fish monitoring
- Presentation of liver tumor assessment as part of PADEMP meetings in 2017.