Working the Construction Segment of a Pipeline Right of Way Project

Take a look inside a right of way agent’s job as they work through a challenging project.

Teeing Up To Say Thanks

ORC hosts inaugural golf outing.

Open For Business

New office locations now open in 5 states.

On the Road with Bob: Little Rock

With museums, barbecue and even a park where you can mine your own diamonds, Little Rock offers a little bit of everything.
While many right of way assignments end with the successful acquisition of the necessary permanent and temporary rights of way; the pipeline right of way agent’s job often continues through construction, restoration and final in-service of the pipeline. This project demand broadens the scope of the agent’s role beyond acquisition and keeps the agent engaged with the landowners and construction contractors until the pipeline is brought on line and all the properties are restored to their pre-construction condition and ready to turn over to operations. The role increases accountability with the landowner from whom rights have been purchased and it places the agent alongside construction contractors working daily through the dangerous and fast paced construction cycle. The work schedule can include early mornings, long hours and extended work weeks as contractors race to meet project deadlines and overcome construction challenges. The right of way agent will be expected to be on-site anytime construction activities are underway and will remain the landowner’s primary point of contact as concerns arise.

Special Provisions for Construction
Agents acquiring pipeline rights of way are required to capture landowner special provisions for construction during the acquisition process. Not every tract will have a special provision but
ADAPTABILITY

noun
the quality of being able to adjust to new conditions.

In nature, it can save a life.
In business, it can save a project.

No two projects are the same, and each one requires a unique approach. Which is why we built ORC Parcel Suite® - a fully customizable web-based right-of-way database solution from O.R. Colan Associates, LLC. Our agents and project managers can add tabs on the fly, build reports quickly, and change fields to custom specs, from any standard web browser. The result? Improved efficiency and performance, and an increase in overall client satisfaction. ADAPT, STREAMLINE, AND IMPROVE, with ORC Parcel Suite®.
some may have several. These provisions are compiled into a tract by tract list (sometimes called a construction stipulations list) which will be referenced throughout the construction cycle from pre-bid to demobilization. They are not typically included in the language of the easement; however, they reflect promises made by the pipeline company as a component of the successful right of way negotiation and relate to items such as access during construction, construction limitations such as hours of operation and/or restoration requirements such as stipulating a specific seed mix be used during reseeding. Contractors bidding on the project will reference the provisions as they relate to restoration quantities such as fencing, culverts, etc., and to identify any items which may limit construction options or methodologies and ultimately affect pricing. For instance, restricting a private drive’s access to ½ ton vehicles or less may accommodate the landowner’s desire but it may also result in heavy equipment move-arounds resulting in substantial additional costs.

All special provisions are subject to the client’s approval but once agreed to, they become the standard for the parcel(s) affected and are a key component of the construction right of way agent’s responsibility. The agent will need to be well acquainted with each item and will work daily with the project’s chief inspector to ensure the construction team has advance notice of upcoming concerns. Daily kick-off meetings are used to share information about where work crews will be assigned and what activities are anticipated along the route. The agent will reference the special provisions list to bring attention to concerns associated with any parcel where activities are likely to occur. Just as knowledge of pricing items for bidding was important from a cost perspective, failure to adhere to special provisions is equally important. A work stoppage caused by the landowner can cost the pipeline company tens of thousands of dollars as large construction teams and their equipment sit dormant or have to be moved to another location as they await a resolution. The role of the right of way agent in keeping the contractor and the landowners informed and updated on anticipated concerns is critical to the project’s successful completion.

Knowledge of Construction Techniques
Knowledge and experience of pipeline construction techniques is essential to the construction right of way agent. Agents without construction experience should be briefed prior to being assigned to an active construction project to ensure they are well acquainted with pipeline construction methodologies and can communicate expected impacts effectively to the landowner. Pipeline companies often provide training material such as videos and typical drawings which illustrate the process and common equipment used. A well-informed agent can prepare landowners for upcoming activities and possibly avoid unnecessary concerns or stoppages.

Safety is Critical
Working in a pipeline construction environment, by necessity, places the agent in proximity to hazards. Pipeline companies work hard to ensure that the work environments are safe and they place the greatest value on the health and welfare of their employees and contractors. Safety is not optional - it is essential. Agents will be included in daily safety tailgate meetings and will be encouraged to be vigilant as they travel up and down the line in response to daily concerns. Most companies have a zero tolerance for unsafe activities and will often give anyone on the line (including the right of way agent) the ability to stop an unsafe act when witnessed. Personal protective equipment (PPE) is required to be worn by everyone regardless of your role. Hardhats, safety glasses, reflective vests, protective shoes and, in some cases, flame retardant clothing (FRC) are common requirements. Safety concerns include items...
such as open ditches, ditch collapse hazards, crush injury hazards (pipe can weigh hundreds of pounds per foot), heavy equipment operations, overhead electrical hazards, etc. A project safety manager will be assigned but safety is the responsibility of every person on the line.

An Exciting Experience
While working construction right of way can mean long days, it can also be a rewarding experience. Seeing a pipeline go in the ground will make you approach your next acquisition assignment differently. It will boost your confidence in the facility and it will equip you to better communicate the process to future landowners as you continue your role as a right of way professional. ■

Did You Know?
The Rockies Express Pipeline - one of the largest natural gas pipelines ever built in North America - spans more than 1,679 miles, and crosses eight states! It has a capacity of .6 billion cubic feet per day.

Source: Tallgrass Energy
ORC Hosts 1st Annual “Client Appreciation” Golf Outing

By: Steve Toth, COO

On August 18th, ORC hosted more than 80 clients and employees at its inaugural Client Appreciation Golf outing. The event took place at the Safari Golf course located in Powell, Ohio adjacent to the Columbus Zoo. More than 20 teams participated in the event that included a shotgun start and a scramble format. After golf, a dinner reception was held at the club pavilion and awards and prizes were provided for lowest team score, closest to the pin, longest drive and longest putt.


Also, a big thank you to the many ORC employees that helped plan the event. All of your hard work made this outing a big success. We are looking forward to hosting our 2nd annual golf outing next summer! Stay tuned for further details!

ORC would like to thank all of the sponsors of this inaugural event. We hope to see you again next year!
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Recent Wins

ORC U&I – Ameren Gas – Illinois

In October 2017 ORC U&I was awarded two Illinois projects with Ameren Gas.

The first project, known as Troy to Highland, involves an existing 14.5-mile gas transmission line. The existing 10-inch diameter pipe is to be replaced with a 12-inch pipe. ORC’s role is to contract and coordinate with the approximate 100 property owners along the route, provide or update the project line list, review survey and title work, locate existing farm taps, handle damage claims, maintain the clients project system, update cost estimates, and overall real estate management. The project started in November 2017 and is expected to be complete in late 2019.

The second project, known as Glen Carbon to Rt. 157 & Rt. 162, involves an existing 4.25-mile gas transmission line. On this project, the current 12-inch diameter pipe is being replaced with another 12-inch pipe. This project is similar in scope and duration to the Troy to Highland project, except smaller.

These projects are two of more than a dozen projects ORC has been awarded by various Ameren departments within the last 12 months. To accommodate this workload, ORC has hired three new staff within the last six months and anticipates hiring another 2-4 employees within the next several months. ORC is currently searching for a new office in Illinois to support future work and additional clients in the region.

NCDOT Awards ORC Highway Project in Outer Banks

In September of this year, ORC’s NC team was awarded the R-5014 Dare County – Colington Road Project. The purpose of the project is to reduce roadway flooding and improve the operation and safety of Colington Road. The road is flooded by wind tides several times a year in various locations. The project will raise Colington Road in these areas to reduce the frequency of water overtopping the roadway. Colington road is also a favored cyclist route and, as such, the project will also include shoulder improvements along much of the project corridor to accommodate this use. The project involves 140 acquisitions and 1 relocation.

West Virginia Division of Highways Right of Way Manual

O. R. Colan Associates has been selected to revise and update the West Virginia Division of Highways Right of Way Manual. The staff of ORC Training, with extensive experience in technical writing for federal regulations, agency guidelines, and State DOT procedures, is reviewing the manual and making recommendations for revisions required by statutory or regulatory changes. Our team is also working closely with WVDOH right of way staff to identify areas for process improvements, as well as streamlined approaches for its right of way acquisition program based on best practices in other states. The revised manual, including QA/QC checklists and updated forms, is scheduled for completion by May 2018.

ORC has previously worked with the State DOTs in Virginia, Montana, Maine, Utah and New Jersey to produce comprehensive and professional right of way manuals. All State DOTs must prepare and submit for approval by FHWA an up-to-date ROW manual by no later than August 23, 2018. These updated manuals will reflect new provisions in the FHWA Final Rule for 23 CFR Parts 635, 710 and 810, Right of Way and Real Estate, effective September 22, 2016.
Introducing ORC Metrics Connector
A new and innovative way for you to track your projects. No more navigating complicated software. Simply log in to visualize project data on an easy-to-navigate, customized dashboard.

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✓ Simple access - see the status of all your projects in one location, with no learning curve

Pricing
Cost varies by project and number of users.

For more information, please contact Steve Toth at stoth@orcolan.com.
ORC Purchases New Office in Columbus, Ohio

ORC is excited to announce that the Ohio team has moved to a new office in Columbus, Ohio. The new regional office will support a variety of transportation and energy clients throughout the United States. The Columbus office is currently home to thirty ORC Associate and Utility employees. The ORC staff is responsible for supporting a variety of projects in several states throughout the country.

The new office address is 255 Taylor Station Road, Suite 100, Columbus, Ohio.

In addition to the new Columbus office, we have also recently opened new offices in Frederick, MD; Gafney, SC; Albermarle, NC and Muncie, IN.

ORC Matches Employee Donations for Victims of Natural Disasters

ORC matched employee donations, up to $500 per employee, to the American Red Cross for the storm victims of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma, Maria, the earthquake in Mexico and the wildfires in California. As of September 30, 2017 donations totaled $5,232.00.

Hurricane Harvey, as seen from space. Image courtesy of NASA/NOAA
DESTINATION: Little Rock, AR

Little Rock is the capital of the State of Arkansas, the Natural State. It is located along the banks of the Arkansas River. The name Little Rock is a bit unusual for a city. So where did it come from? It turns out that the City of Little Rock is named for a small rock formation along the Arkansas River that was used as a landmark by early river travelers. It could be easily spotted as a boat traveled the river. Eventually, the rock outcrop became the identifier for the city that developed near it. Hence, Little Rock.

ORC has been involved in right of way production and oversight work for many years in Arkansas. Initially, we were assisting the Little Rock Airport (now called the Bill and Hillary Clinton National Airport) with its land acquisition program. Later we acquired the site location for the new Northwest Arkansas Airport in Bentonville. Northwest Arkansas had outgrown the old airport in Fayetteville given the industrialization of the area.

Most recently, ORC has assisted the Arkansas State Highways and Transportation Department with its Connecting Arkansas Program (CAP). CAP is a massive upgrade of the roadway system in Arkansas, financed with a $1.8 billion multi-year bond issue. ORC provides oversight and some production work for the effort. We have also worked on several smaller projects for local governments.

The State’s favorite son, former president Bill Clinton, remains an important personality in the state and city. The Clinton Library, known as the William J. Clinton Presidential Library and Museum, sits adjacent to the Arkansas River on a parcel of land leased from the City of Little Rock. The library is surrounded by a city park.

The interior of the building is nicely laid out. You progress through a series of exhibits that begin when the president was a boy in Hope, Arkansas; through his years as governor; and finally president. As has become the custom in presidential libraries, the building contains a full-scale replica of the White House Oval Office and Cabinet Room. The Museum reportedly also contains an apartment for the former president when he visits Little Rock. An unusual aspect of the library building is that a portion of the structure is cantilevered over the river, making for great views from the terrace.

A particularly interesting aspect of the library development involved the acquisition of the site.

Continued on page 12
The foundation that planned and financed the library did not have eminent domain authority. When landowners rejected their offers to buy the needed property, the foundation turned to the City of Little Rock to acquire the site. However, the city could only condemn property for public use based on Arkansas law and court precedent. The city plan was to acquire the site as a park, and then lease some of that park to the foundation for the library. The city argued that approach was a permissible public use. The argument eventually worked its way to the Arkansas Supreme Court that agreed the land could be condemned as a park site. Hence, the site is officially known as the William J. Clinton Presidential Center and Park.

With all of this right way work going on, there is hardly time to enjoy the good food available in Little Rock. However, one must eat.

In Little Rock, there is a “no frills” restaurant called Doe’s Eat Place that advertises itself as world class. The restaurant serves huge steaks and lots of other great food. The steaks are popular because they are large enough to share. It was a favorite of the Clintons in their years in Little Rock. I have been there a couple times over the past years. Recently, I checked with Donna Roche, who manages the ORC operation in Arkansas, and she reports that the food is still excellent and the prices are still moderate.

Being a southern State, it would be a mistake not to mention that Little Rock has many good BBQ joints. Like Texas, BBQ in Arkansas can mean either pork or beef. I can vouch that Three Sam’s (on a temporary break due to a fire) and Whole Hog rival all the good Texas spots for great food at reasonable prices. BBQ is tasty in Arkansas.

One last thing: where else but Arkansas can you “mine” for your very own diamond? Imagine finding a 17-carat white diamond. You can do that at the Crater of Diamonds State Park, located about two hours southwest of Little Rock. And if you find one, you get to keep it! The park has some great displays that explain the formation of diamonds and why they are present at the site. So, even if you do not find a diamond, you will enjoy the hunt and gain some valuable information.
Located two hours southwest of Little Rock is Craters of Diamonds State Park. Here visitors can hunt for diamonds, and keep any that they find. In 1924 Wesley Oley Basham found a 40.23 carat diamond at the now state park mine site. Nicknamed Uncle Sam, it remains the largest diamond ever to be discovered in the U.S. (Image courtesy Craters of Diamonds State Park)

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