British Columbia

Home to what’s known as the world’s largest frack, British Columbia has shale gas reserves in the Horn River, Montney, Liard and Cordova basins, which are all located in the northeast corner of the province. Media reports state that: “In B.C. alone, 7,300 wells have been fractured since 2005, and between 500 and a 1,000 new ones are being permitted each year.” The frequency of fracking in the province is unparalleled. Over the course of 111 days in 2010, the world’s largest frack took place at Two Island Lake in the Horn River Basin. According to Ben Parfitt’s report *Fractured Lines*, there were 274 consecutive “stimulations” or fracks, with an average of 17 fracks per well using 5.6 million barrels of water, 111 million pounds of sand and unknown quantities of toxic chemicals.

The Canadian Society for Unconventional Resources estimates that B.C.’s three largest shale basins hold up to 1,000 trillion cubic feet of natural gas.4

According to Eoin Madden of B.C.’s Wilderness Committee, “There are currently permits in B.C. gifting the gas industry 60 million gallons of our freshwater – from 540 of our precious creeks, rivers and lakes – every single day. To put this amount into perspective, that's twice the amount the city of Victoria uses on a daily basis.”

Even though the Horn River and Montney regions experienced terrible droughts in recent years, industry is ramping up to expand fracking in the province. There are currently 10 proposals for Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plants in the Kitimat-Prince Rupert region. These terminals would condense gas, turning it into liquid form so that it can be put on tankers and exported. This means there must also be pipelines built to get the gas to these LNG plants, one of them being the Pacific Trail Pipeline (PTP) which runs from Summit Lake to Kitimat on almost the same route as the Northern Gateway Pipeline.

The PTP is a fracking pipeline that would transport fracked gas from northeastern B.C. to LNG plants on the Pacific coast. The provincially-approved fracking pipeline could blaze a trail for further pipeline development by clear-cutting forest and creating infrastructure for other proposals such as Kinder Morgan’s alternative northern route for their Trans Mountain pipeline, Spectra Energy, and others.

Allowing fracking and LNG industries to expand will have unprecedented impacts on water sources and on the province’s greenhouse gas emissions. Studies already show that fracked natural gas can produce as much greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions as coal. Madden warns that at least eight times as much energy would be required by the energy industry than is currently provided by BC Hydro should these LNG plants go ahead, and the increase in GHGs from burning gas to run the facilities will “destroy B.C.’s position as a climate leader.”

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4 www.bcbusiness.ca/natural-resources/a-guide-to-bcs-shale-gas-boom
While these projects may appear isolated and separate, they are actually connected and make up what *Fractured Land* filmmakers call “Canada’s carbon corridor.” The proposed Site C dam – a dam that would flood prime farmland in the Peace River region – would fuel fracking in northeastern B.C. Fracking in northeastern B.C. and existing and proposed pipelines would be used to fuel the Alberta tar sands.

The B.C. government is considering 20 water licence applications in the Fort Nelson area. Neither the B.C. nor the federal government will conduct environmental assessments on these applications.

The Harper government’s 2012 omnibudget bills gutted the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, resulting in the cancellation of 3,000 project reviews across the country. One cancelled review was for an application from energy company Encana that requested permission to withdraw 10 million litres of water per day – roughly the same amount of water used by 30,000 people – from Fort Nelson River for its fracking project. The project will seriously impact the river, which is the

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**GROUPS WORKING ON FRACKING**

- **Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives**
  www.policyalternatives.ca/multimedia/fracking-bc

- **The Council of Canadians B.C.-Yukon Regional Office**
  www.canadians.org/fracking

- **Don’t Frack BC campaign**
  www.facebook.com/DontFrackBc
  @DontFrackBC

- **Sierra Club B.C.**
  www.sierraclub.bc.ca

- **Wet’suwet’en mobilizing Unist’ot’en Action Camp**
  unistotenencamp.wordpress.com

- **Wilderness Committee**
  www.wildernesscommittee.org/fracking
Fort Nelson First Nation’s (FNFN) lifeline. The community has fervently opposed the project. In 2012, both the B.C. Assembly of First Nations and the Union of British Columbian Indian Chiefs passed resolutions supporting FNFN’s call for a moratorium on all water licences for fracking in FNFN’s traditional territories until full regional baseline studies are completed, culturally significant land and water resources are protected, and other requirements are met.

In November 2013, Sierra Club B.C. and the Wilderness Committee, represented by Ecojustice, launched a lawsuit against the B.C. Oil and Gas Commission and Encana. They are arguing that the commission’s repeated short-term water approvals violate the province’s Water Act.

RESOURCES AND REGULATIONS

B.C. Oil and Gas Commission – Issues permits for water takings for fracking
www.bcogc.ca

B.C. Assembly of First Nations resolution
www.bcafn.ca/files/documents/06k-2012BCAFNresolutionshalegaswater.pdf

The Carbon Corridor and fracking in B.C.
www.commonsensecanadian.ca/category/energy-2/fracking-2

FracFocus: Fracking Chemical Registry
www.fracfocus.ca

Oil and gas laws
www.bcogc.ca/legislation

Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs resolution
www.ubcic.bc.ca/files/PDF/2012November_ChefsCouncil_Resolutions.pdf