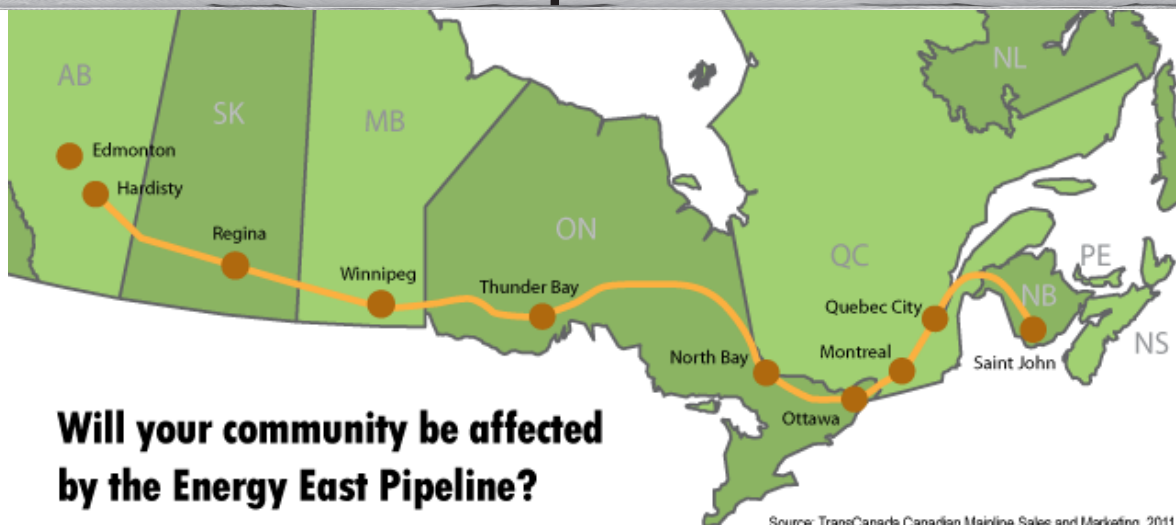


TransCanada Energy East: Another Broken Pipeline Plan



Will your community be affected by the Energy East Pipeline?

TransCanada Corp. wants to convert its natural gas pipeline, currently operating at half capacity, into an oil pipeline that would carry 1.1 million barrels per day. The pipeline, which has been dubbed “Energy East,” presently ends in Quebec. But the company, with the support of some politicians, wants to extend it all the way to the Irving refinery in Saint John, New Brunswick.

Seventy per cent of the Energy East pipeline (between Saskatchewan and Quebec) already exists. Under the proposal, the pipeline would need to be extended on both sides – in the west to connect the pipe to Empress, Alberta, and in the east through Quebec to Saint John. Marine tanker facilities will be added in Quebec City and Saint John, transforming the Gulf of St. Lawrence and Bay of Fundy into an oil tanker superhighway, exporting to international markets.

Old pipeline, new risks

Earlier this year, the Exxon Pegasus pipeline spilled an estimated 1 million litres of diluted bitumen (dilbit) from the tar sands in Mayflower, Arkansas.

“The Pegasus pipeline that ruptured and spilled thousands of gallons of tar sands crude in Mayflower was 65 years old, and was initially built to carry thinner oil at lower pressure in the opposite direction than today.”

-InsideClimate News

Similar to the Pegasus pipeline, the existing TransCanada pipeline was built in the 1970s and would also carry a substance (oil) thicker than the material for which it was originally built (gas). The National Petroleum Council for the U.S. Department

of Energy stated that “pipelines operating outside of their design parameters, such as those carrying commodities for which they were not initially designed, or high flow pipelines, are at the greatest risk of integrity issues in the future due to the nature of their operation.”

Converting an existing gas pipeline to an oil pipeline may mean less effort put into construction and materials, but it also means more risk for the many rivers and lakes along its route. When tar sands pipelines spill, they cause extensive environmental damage that is difficult to clean up. Tar sands crude, known as bitumen, is heavy and requires toxic chemicals to dilute it. In 2010, a tar sands pipeline ruptured, flooding the Kalamazoo River in Michigan with 3.8 million litres of diluted bitumen that sank to the bottom of the river. Conventional clean-up methods have not worked and, despite costing almost \$1 billion, the river is still polluted.

Profit before energy security

Some politicians and industry are saying they want to get tar sands crude to eastern Canadians, that this is a “nation-building” project. However, there is reason to believe that this pipeline is really meant to get the crude to Atlantic ports so that it can be easily exported. While TransCanada has confirmed Eastern Canadian refinery interest in crude, there is currently little capacity to refine bitumen in Quebec and Saint John, meaning diluted bitumen will be exported for processing.

There is no guarantee that the crude refined in Eastern Canada will be used to meet local needs. According to a press release from Irving Oil (Saint John refinery) earlier this year, “the refinery

exports over 80 per cent of its production to the U.S.” as refined products such as gasoline. Federal Natural Resources Minister Joe Oliver has also said that the Energy East pipeline could deliver Canadian oil to large energy consumers and new markets. We can expect that the crude will go to the highest bidders, and industry is looking towards Europe, India, and China as well as the U.S. East and Gulf Coasts.

There is also growing opposition to the pipeline from gas companies in Ontario and Quebec. This could mean higher prices and greater reliance on fracked gas imported from the U.S. The Council of Canadians is one of many voices calling for a ban on controversial fracking in order to protect water, the environment and public health.

Creating jobs

The allure of jobs may prove to be too good to be true. In the U.S. TransCanada’s Keystone XL job promises have been shown to be grossly overestimated by reputable sources such as the Cornell Global Labor Institute. Since the majority of the Energy East pipeline is already built, construction jobs will be limited. Many of the jobs would likely be temporary jobs to construct new pumping stations and infrastructure. To put this into context, the city of Burnaby, B.C. – the final destination of the Kinder Morgan pipeline – estimates that the Kinder Morgan pipeline expansion would only create 12 new jobs. We can and must create good, green jobs by ending our dependency on fossil fuels.

Communities have the right to say “no”

Communities along the routes of the Pacific-bound export pipelines including the Enbridge Northern Gateway project and the Kinder Morgan expansion are saying “no” to pipelines through their communities. People point out that a pipeline spill could threaten their drinking water, food sources, and the health of their communities. Bitumen and oil contamination has been connected with high rates of cancer, cardiovascular diseases, and respiratory problems. We also know that when it comes to pipelines, it is not a question of if there will be a spill, but when and where there will be a spill.

First Nations have demanded that these pipelines be stopped at their source: the tar sands. Under the United Nations Decla-

ration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, Indigenous peoples have the right to “free, prior, and informed consent.” This is being violated by ongoing, unfettered expansion in the tar sands. There are a number of legal cases underway, such as the Beaver Lake Cree Nation treaty claim against the Albertan and Canadian governments that tar sands development violates constitutionally-protected treaty rights. Ultimately, all of us have the right to care about our communities and the right to say “no” to this project.

Climate crimes

This pipeline is part of a larger agenda of extracting and exporting natural resources for corporate profit regardless of the impacts on people and the environment. It will jeopardize freshwater supplies and enable tar sands expansion, increasing climate pollution. Canada, a highly industrialized country, has a responsibility to cut its emissions to stop runaway climate change and the social and environmental impacts that result such as droughts, floods, loss of agricultural land, and forced displacement.



Take action!

For more information and resources about our Energy East campaign, visit www.canadians.org/energyeast.

Use our petition to contact your local, provincial and federal representatives, and tell them to say “no” to the TransCanada Energy East pipeline.

