

Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline and Tanker Proposal

BACKGROUNDER

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Sierra Club BC
Environmental Defence Canada
Equiterre

Introduction

The Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline and Tanker proposal would transport 890,000 barrels/day of tar sands bitumen to Canada's west coast for export in oil tankers.

The risks - social, economic, environmental - of this proposal far outweigh any supposed benefits to the Canadian public and the province of British Columbia. An approval of Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain pipeline and tanker proposal would not conform to government promises for climate action, First Nations reconciliation, or social license in B.C.

This pipeline and tanker proposal, if approved, would create an unacceptable risk of spills and lead to extinction of the southern resident orca population, harming the local tourism economy and putting the Government of Canada in contravention of the *Species At Risk Act*.

Summary of Risks

Diluted Bitumen Spills

- Kinder Morgan would increase tanker traffic nearly 700 per cent, from [60 to 400 tankers](#) a year in Vancouver's busy inner harbour, passing by Stanley Park and hundreds of kilometres of beaches, islands, and coastal wilderness.
- A spill is inevitable. The existing Trans Mountain pipeline has already spilled around 5.5 million litres (35,000 barrels) in [82](#) separate incidents. Even brand new pipelines are spill-prone ([Nexen](#)), and ships carrying fuels have recently spilled into B.C.'s coastal waters ([MV Marathassa](#), [Nathan E Stewart](#)), exposing deficient marine spill response.
- No technology currently exists that successfully cleans up heavy bitumen spills in oceanic environments, concluded the [National Academy of Science](#).
- Industry considers "success" in spill response to be recovery of [10 to 15 per cent](#) of conventional oil. Leaving 85 per cent of an oil spill in the marine environment is unacceptable to coastal communities. The amount recovered would be even smaller for diluted bitumen, which [sinks and cannot be contained by booms](#).
- A spill would put at risk [98,000 coast-dependent jobs](#), salmon rivers, wildlife, tourism opportunities, and the health of B.C. residents.
- Oil spills have a long legacy: 27 years after the Exxon Valdez tanker spill devastated large populations of whales, otters, fish, and seabirds in Alaska, oil still persists in the coastal ecosystem. Long-term genetic damage from exposure to the crude oil may mean that some species never fully recover.

Orcas

- Even without a spill, the project will very likely eliminate the [endangered southern resident orca whale](#) population from B.C. Mitigation is impossible: the increase in tanker traffic noise has been proven to interfere with their hunting. Approval would place the Government of Canada in contravention of the *Species At Risk Act*.

Climate

- Building this pipeline could release nearly [80 million tonnes](#) of greenhouse gas emissions per year into the atmosphere, and make it extremely difficult for Canada to meet domestic and international climate commitments.
- Environment and Climate Change Canada's greenhouse gas assessment did not consider the full lifecycle of emissions.

Human Health

- Doctors from across Canada warn of acute and long-term health effects from asthma to cancer as a result of a rupture or spill, and have called on the federal government to conduct a [Cumulative Health Impact Assessment](#) before making a decision on the project.
- A diluted bitumen spill would result in mass public exposure to dangerous levels of benzene gas and other toxins. These petrochemicals, used to move the viscous bitumen through the pipe, are cancer-causing and when they react with oxygen, [can inflict serious injury on](#) humans and other mammals.
- Six years ago a pipeline spilled between three and four million litres of diluted bitumen into the Kalamazoo River causing numerous negative health impacts on residents, including [headaches, coughing, nausea, dizziness, and fatigue](#), with elevated effects on first responders.
- The [Burnaby Fire Department](#) warns of significant risks to the student population at Simon Fraser University, who are located just east of the tank farm. In the event of a fire or [tank farm explosion](#), the disaster site would block the evacuation route for residents on Burnaby Mountain.

Economics

- The Kinder Morgan pipeline threatens [\\$9.7 billion in GDP](#) supported by the B.C. coastline.
- Benefits go to Texas-based Kinder Morgan: B.C. would see little financial gain from the project. Kinder Morgan and tar sands producers would collect most of the revenue while B.C. would receive less than [2 per cent](#).
- Kinder Morgan's insurance is capped at [\\$1.3 billion](#) for a spill at sea but the clean-up costs for a major spill could reach [\\$9.4 billion](#).
- Kinder Morgan's proposal creates only [50 permanent jobs](#), while putting at risk over 98,000 coast-dependent jobs.
- Redirecting fossil fuel subsidies to clean, renewable energy would create [6 to 8 times](#) more jobs.

First Nations Opposition

- 66 First Nations in B.C. are firmly opposed to the proposed project (B.C. First Nations signatories of the Treaty Alliance Against Tar Sands Expansion and/or Nations that have filed challenges to the NEB Kinder Morgan recommendation).
- [Seven judicial reviews](#) (including four from six different First Nations) have been filed against Kinder Morgan.
- The Tsleil-Waututh, Squamish, and Musqueam Nations, the First Nations whose traditional territory spans Metro Vancouver, are united in their strong and public opposition to the project
- Over 86 First Nations across Canada and the U.S. have signed the [Treaty Alliance Against Tar Sands Expansion](#), and over 130 Nations and their allies signed the [Save the Fraser Declaration](#).

Kinder Morgan's History of Spills

- Kinder Morgan's report on catastrophic oil spill costs was [thrown out](#) by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as faulty science.
- Kinder Morgan [told](#) the National Energy Board "Pipeline spills can have both positive and negative effects on local and regional economies, both in the short- and long-term."
- Since purchasing the Trans Mountain pipeline in 2005, Kinder Morgan has been responsible for [four major oil spills](#).
- Kinder Morgan is responsible for [1,848 oil and chemical spill violations](#) since its incorporation in 1997, with nearly 500 from pipelines. Kinder Morgan also has a lengthy record of workplace safety violations in the U.S., including the [death of five workers](#) in an incident in California. In 2014, the financial magazine *Barron's* analyzed Kinder Morgan's financial statements and found the company [might not be spending the resources necessary](#) to responsibly maintain its pipeline and storage assets.

