

BALAGIAWA!

Unceded Coast Salish Territory

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PIPELINE SPECIAL

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On the march to the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain Pipeline Terminal in North Burnaby.

photo: Michael

Kinder Morgan Brings Tar Sands Oil to the Coast

By Michael

BURNABY- Late last month, a massive display of civil disobedience took place in Washington DC. More than 1,000 people were arrested attempting to pressure the US government to stop the proposed Keystone XL Pipeline, designed to carry tar sands oil from Northern Alberta to the Gulf Coast.

At the same time, in North Burnaby, social justice groups, environmental groups, and concerned residents gathered to protest the tar sand's pipeline that runs through their backyard. The line runs to Kinder Morgan's Trans Mountain Pipeline Terminal on the banks of beautiful Burrard Inlet.

Ben West reminded the attentive protestors that "Right now, two times a week, leaving from right from over there [Burrard inlet] there are two tankers carrying about three times as much oil as was spilled by the Exxon valdez putting our Vancouver harbour at risk."

West went on: "Kinder Morgan, the company that runs that terminal, has very quietly been trying to expand the amount of oil passing through there: in fact, they said they want to go up to 700,000 barrels a week through that pipeline. That would drastically increase not only the threat to our coastline, but also the amount we are contributing to climate change. In the fight against climate change in British Columbia, we are standing blocks away from ground zero."

"The governments and corporations aren't really listening. How many people here believe that Harper is going to do something credible about the tar sands? We can't rely on the government or these 'representatives' of ours to make change," said Harjap Grewal of the Council of Canadians.

Once the spirited march arrived at the Kinder Morgan site, passing by a police mass arrest vehicle, organizers linked up to Mike Mercredi from Fort

Chipewyan. Fort Chip is an isolated community downstream from the tar sands. Via phone to megaphone, Mercredi told demonstrators: "This generation is stepping up and making their voices heard and this is scaring them...we are ready to do what it takes. This is not going to end here. This is the start of the people's resistance."

That resistance was poignantly displayed by 10-year-old Ta 'Kaiya Blaney, who addressed the crowd, saying "All people think about is money. What about the future generations? What about my generation? What about the animals and ecosystems? What about the cultures of the world that depend on ecosystems?"

Blaney spoke about the proposed pipeline to bring oil from the Alberta tar sands to Kitimat: "Apparently they're planning to hang a pipeline off cliffs in the Rockies, anyone can see that's ridiculous." She went on to sing a song she wrote called shallow waters. The acapella performance was beautiful.

Another moving speaker was Rose from Fort Chip. In the mid-day sun, Rose courageously shared her story. She described battling for her life having been diagnosed with breast cancer in January; a diagnosis she said is not uncommon in Fort Chip – a community that has made international headlines for rare cancers and proximity to the tar sands. "I didn't think I was going to get it. I thought my body was strong enough... but no, I got it too now. I am fighting for my life. I wish there was something I could do to stop this...they have ignored us...I would like to see it stopped."

Like Rose, Mike Mercredi would like to see the tar sands stopped. He anticipates a storm. "Our voices are getting louder and we're starting to scare them because when people stand up, that's when things change; and that's the world we have today...we have to rise up like a storm."

THE BIG GREEN MACHINE

by VMC

Environmental NGOs (ENGOs) have their brands stamped all over today's ecological struggles. It's a top down gesture often built more around markets and media than around defending the land.

San Francisco-based Forest Ethics is promoting a campaign solely focused on the Enbridge Pipeline in Central BC; Victoria's Dogwood Initiative has split the BC coast in two and runs a "no tankers" campaign for the north coast without a word about the tankers coming in and out the Port of Vancouver; and climate giant 350.org encourages its supporters to allow the police to arrest them en-masse, without confrontation or resistance.

Forest Ethics is funded by the Pew Charitable Trusts, the Dogwood is funded by the Brainerd and Tides Foundations, and 350.org takes money from the Rockefeller Foundation. These foundations give huge resources to groups that ultimately aim to cooperate with industry, rather than actually address environmental issues on the basis of science, biodiversity or community health.

The role of large, foundation and corporate funded NGOs in the environmental movement has been called "the wrong kind of green," by UK journalist Johann Hari. They are called a mechanism for "offsetting resistance," by writers and activists Macdonald Stainsby and Dru Oja Jay. Jay and Stainsby argue that manufacturing a muted, pacified resistance to the Alberta tar sands – from where heavy crude is meant to flow through the proposed Enbridge pipeline through central BC and Wet'suwet'en lands – has become a new cash cow for a growing set of ENGOs.

According to their research, more than \$2 million a year from the Pew Charitable Trusts alone is distributed to various ENGOs across Canada.

The unaccountable behaviour of large, foundation-funded groups is exemplified by their willingness to sit at the table with industry and government and negotiate on behalf of Indigenous and environmental groups.

The 2001 Great Bear Rainforest agreement, which protected 28 per cent of the coastal rainforest Indigenous and environmental groups aimed to protect from logging, provides a fitting example for this kind of co-opted environmentalism.

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Grassroots Gathering to Resist Proposed Pipelines

Report Back from Unist'hot'en Gathering, Wet'suwet'en Territory

By Gord Hill

SMITHERS-- Members of the Unist'hot'en clan of the Wet'suwet'en nation hosted their second gathering this summer to oppose industrial threats in their traditional territory. Specifically, they are opposed to two major pipeline systems that will cut through their territory: the Pacific Trails Pipeline and Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway twin pipelines.

Like most of BC, Wet'suwet'en traditional lands remain unceded Indigenous territory, over which BC and the federal government lack jurisdiction. Having failed to legally extinguish Aboriginal title, BC today constitutes an illegal state entity occupying sovereign Indigenous territories, in violation of Canadian and international law. As is the case historically, however, the real imposition of colonial control is achieved through force, and for nearly 150 years state-sanctioned resource exploitation and settlement has occurred on Native land.

As early as the 1880s, Natives in BC began protesting this blatant theft of land. By 1927, the Indian Act was amended to outlaw land claims organizing. During the 1960s and 1970s, Indigenous peoples throughout North America began to mobilize to defend their lands.

Along with direct actions carried out by grassroots radicals, band councils began litigation in the courts to change laws and policies (i.e., the Nisga'a land claim).

In 1987, the Gitksan and Wet'suwet'en launched their joint land title court case known as Delgamuukw (a hereditary title). The case was accompanied by rallies and civil disobedience-style blockades, most often carried out by the band councils (the Office of the Wet'suwet'en was formed during this court case, essentially a tribal council).

After appealing to the Supreme Court of Canada, the Delgamuukw case was concluded in December 1997. The court recognized the prior existence of Aboriginal title but that it must now be accommodated with the assertion of British sovereignty. Negotiations were encouraged to resolve this difference.

Nearly 15 years after the Delgamuukw decision, however, there has been a rapid expansion into the most remote Indigenous territories by corporations in search of new resources to extract.

Along with mining, the oil and gas industry has seen record-breaking growth. In 2008-09, the industry contributed some \$2.3 billion to the provincial revenue. In 2010, there were some 20,400 oil wells in the province. This growth has been stimulated by increased demand from US and Asian markets.

In 2011, PetroChina invested \$5.4 billion in Encana to secure supplies of natural gas. In order to transport all this oil and gas from northeastern BC and northern Alberta, several major pipelines are now planned, many of which cross through Wet'suwet'en and other Indigenous territories.



photo: Dawn Paley

A PIPELINE PRIMER – FACTS AND FIGURES

The Pacific Trails Pipeline is officially the Kitimat- Summit Lake Natural Gas Pipeline Looping (KSL) project. It will move natural gas from Summit Lake (near Pr George) to Kitimat using an underground 36" pipeline with an 18-metre right of way on each side. The plan is to carry up to 1,000 Mmcf/d (million cubic feet per day).

A Liquid Natural Gas processing facility will be built nearby (at Bish Cove, on a Haisla reserve, 650 km north of Vancouver). The facility would initially handle five million metric tonnes per year. From Kitimat it would be shipped by tanker to Asia. Estimated cost of the pipeline: \$1 billion, project completion date: 2015.

Going with the Flow

According to the Wet'suwet'en and others, the proposed Pacific Trails Pipeline has a similar right-of-way to Enbridge's pipeline. Originally permitted to take natural gas into the tar sands, the proposed flow has since been reversed to transport natural gas from shale deposits fracked in north east BC. Because it is liquid natural gas, it has faced less regulatory hurdles and slid through with barely any opposition. A very real danger is that the Pacific Trails Pipeline will serve as a trail blazer for Enbridge; after all, why oppose a pipeline if there is one already built?

During a May 2011 interview, Enbridge CEO Pat Daniel discussed Enbridge's move into natural gas and the possibility of joining with Enbridge's Gateway and the Pacific Trail Pipeline. "We would hope to be able to see some synergies with the right-of-way that we're working on with our Gateway pipeline out to the West Coast."

Band Councils Cash In

While many NGOs and band councils have opposed the proposed Enbridge pipeline, the Pacific Trails Pipeline is actually supported by 15 band councils along the planned route. An agreement signed in 2009 gives these bands a combined 30 percent stake in the pipeline. Some of the supporting bands include Burns Lake, Stallat'en, Carrier-Sekani, and Wet'suwet'en.

According to Chief David Luggi of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, the 15 bands "could realize cash flows of up to \$570 million over the life of the 25 year deal". The bands will also receive \$18 million each over the next two years from Human Resources Development Canada to train 600 Aboriginal people to work on the construction of the pipeline.

Know Your Enemy: Pacific Trails Pipeline

The three major stockholders of the Pacific Trails Pipeline are Apache Canada Ltd. (40%), Encana (30%) and EOG Canada (30%). The Kitimat plant will be owned by Apache and EOG.

Apache Canada Ltd. is a subsidiary of the Apache Corp of Houston, Texas, with operations in the US, Canada, Argentina, Australia, Egypt, and the UK North Sea. In 2010, its market capitalization was approximately \$30 billion.

EOG Resources Canada Inc. is a subsidiary of EOG Resources, Inc. based in the US with operations in Canada, the UK, China, and Trinidad.

Calgary-based Encana was created by CP Rail and merged with the Alberta Energy Corp in 2002. Its operations have been opposed in Alberta and northern BC, where its pipelines have been subjected to explosive attacks by persons unknown near Dawson's Creek. Encana's US subsidiary has been criticized for fracking practises (which it also uses in northeastern BC).