

April 30, 2012

### **Northern Gateway Project – Summary of reasons for opposition**

The New Democrat Official Opposition in British Columbia has made a formal submission to the National Energy Board outlining our opposition to the Enbridge Northern Gateway Project proposal. We believe that it poses significant risks to our environment and economy while offering relatively few benefits.

The principal concerns of the New Democrat Official Opposition are as follows:

#### **1. Lifting the current tanker moratorium will put B.C.'s coastline at serious risk of devastating environmental and economic damage from oil spills.**

- The north and central coasts of B.C. and Haida Gwaii contain wilderness ecosystems that have high ecological, cultural and economic value.
- Direct market use values related to fishing, seafood processing, aquaculture, tourism, marine transportation and other economic activities in the area total \$386.5 million annually.
- The topography, along with poor and unpredictable weather conditions, makes these waters a dangerous navigational route.
- When the Exxon Valdez, which ran aground in Prince William Sound, Alaska on March 24, 1989 the impacts were devastating and long-lasting:
  - More than 20 years later, the effects are still being felt. Vital shore habitats remain contaminated, the pacific herring fishery has been closed for 15 seasons since the spill, and the herring population is still not recovered.
  - Clean-up costs alone are estimated to have cost \$3.7 billion.
  - The economic costs for fishing, socio-cultural impacts, and wildlife and natural resource damages range from \$8.5 billion to as high as \$127 billion.
- According to U.S. statistics, there has been an average of one marine oil spill every two years shipping oil from Alaska.
- A legislated, permanent moratorium on oil tankers and drilling activity is needed to protect B.C.'s north coast.

#### **2. The pipeline will traverse remote, highly valued areas of B.C., crossing almost 800 streams, putting these valuable environments and species, such as salmon, at risk.**

- The NGP will travel almost 700 kilometres across remote parts of British Columbia, crossing approximately 800 rivers and streams, most of which are salmon bearing.
- One major leak or spill into the Fraser or Skeena river systems will have a catastrophic impact on our wild salmon and other fish species.
- Enbridge experienced a total of 419 spills between 2006 and 2010 in Canada and the U.S. – totalling 65,047 barrels of crude oil.

- In 2010, an Enbridge pipeline spilled approximately 20,000 barrels of diluted bitumen into the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. Clean up, originally expected to be completed in two months, took over a year to complete, and has cost over \$700 million to date, double the original Enbridge estimate. Almost two years later, sections of the Kalamazoo River remain closed to fishing and other recreational activities.

### **3. First Nation communities would be most severely affected by an oil leak or spill.**

- The impact of the pipeline, and even worse an oil leak or spill, will be most severely felt by First Nation communities who depend on the land and waters of their traditional territories for their economic, social and cultural well-being.
- The proposed pipeline traverses the traditional territory of a number of B.C. First Nations, directly affecting their aboriginal rights, which must be identified and addressed in accordance with the duty to consult set out in law.
- First Nations must be consulted effectively and be respected at a government-to-government level, in keeping with honour of the Crown and in the manner repeatedly affirmed by the Supreme Court of Canada.
- Aboriginal rights and title must be recognized through full and complete engagement in accordance with consultation requirements set out by the court.

### **4. Greenhouse gas emissions generated by NGP-related oil sands development will contribute to the costs of climate change.**

- Rapid development of the oil sands make it increasingly difficult for Canada to shape and implement greenhouse gas reduction plans that will be both effective for climate protection and equitable to all provinces and economic sectors.
- As increased emissions from massively expanded Alberta oil sands are 'locked in,' other sectors of the economy and other provinces lose options for effective and affordable emission reduction measures.

### **5. The NGP provides few long-term, sustainable economic benefits for B.C., and forgoes value-added economic activity involving upgrading and refining in Canada.**

- The pace of the oil sands development envisioned by the NGP represents a lost opportunity to ensure the development of crude oil resources in a way that captures real value-added benefits for Canadians.
- It has been estimated that a pipeline transporting 400,000 barrels of raw bitumen a day to the United States also transports approximately 18,000 refinery jobs out of Canada.
- The 'volume rather than value' represented by too rapid a pace of resource exploitation could lead to an artificially high dollar, reduced manufacturing, and a rise in inflation and interest rates.

### **6. Canadian consumers will see increased Canadian oil prices.**

- According to Enbridge's own analysis, the NGP will increase the price of domestic oil by \$2 to \$3 a barrel.