

Canada's TAR SANDS *Clean them up or shut them down*

Everything about the Athabasca tar sands happens on a massive scale. They are already the biggest energy project in the world, and the fastest-growing source of greenhouse gas pollution in Canada.

The tar sands threaten an area of boreal forest the size of Florida, and are causing acid rain affecting lakes and rivers in Saskatchewan. In Ontario, human and animal health are harmed due to the refining of dirty tar sands oil there.

The tar sands have negative impacts on the human health of surrounding communities, the wild species that call northern Alberta home, and the desires of Canadians everywhere to take real action to fight climate change.



Photos: Alberta's Boreal forest by Garth Lenz.

Unfortunately, political leadership on this issue has been lacking. The federal and Alberta governments are neglecting the health of tar sands workers, nearby communities, wildlife and forests of northern Alberta, and are ignoring the real need to tackle climate change.

Oil companies are able to bypass laws and regulations



meant to protect the people and environmental heritage of Canada. If our governments don't deal with the negative impacts of tar sands extraction on the ground

and in our atmosphere, the consequences for the planet will be severe.

Newly elected President Barack Obama has promised to curb the US addiction to dirty fuels. As Canadians concerned about climate change, we must encourage him in this goal. Ending the importation of dirty tar sands oil will allow both of our countries to deal with the reality of climate change.

Let President Obama and Prime Minister Harper know how you feel about the tar sands. **Let's take real action to fight pollution and the climate crisis.**

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wildernesscommittee.org



Photo: S. Jocz

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Pass a real cap on carbon emissions

Tar sands production is the fastest growing source of new greenhouse gas pollution in Canada, and left unchecked could more than triple by 2020. The desire of Canadians for real action on climate change is being undermined by our federal government's lack of action on the tar sands. Not wanting to disturb the powerful oil corporations, the federal government has failed to take any meaningful action to cap emissions anywhere in Canada. Worse, until they set limits on the tar sands, they can't or won't regulate the rest of Canada's emissions-heavy industries.

Hard caps need to be put on greenhouse gas emissions in Canada immediately, so that we can begin lowering our greenhouse gas emissions and addressing the climate crisis.

Wildlife at risk

The blackburnian warbler (above) is just one of the hundreds of bird species who depend on boreal forests for habitat. In areas heavily affected by tar sands development, the abundance of certain bird species has already declined by as much as 80%. Bird species that rely on older forests, such as the black-throated green warbler, are predicted to decline by 60% in the coming years if development continues to proceed at the current pace. References and more info: wildernesscommittee.org/tarsands



Photo: Robert McCaw.

Respect aboriginal title and rights

Aboriginal title exists in areas affected by the tar sands. These legal and moral obligations must be respected, and the communities and traditions of First Nations must be included within the decision making process of their traditional territories.

First Nations must be given meaningful control over tar sands operations from the disposition to the reclamation and monitoring phases.

Enforce air, water and forest protection regulations

Independent scientific studies have found that pollution in the tar sands area of northern Alberta rivals

the most polluted cities in China. Even the oil companies' own studies show they are exceeding provincial pollution guidelines. Enormous toxic tailings ponds are having a deadly impact on bird species. The nearby community of Fort Chipewyan has found dangerous and rising levels of mercury, arsenic and other dangerous toxins. One of the best tools to reduce carbon in our atmosphere, Canada's boreal forest, is being devastated by a network of pipelines, wells and roads.

For our health and the health of the planet, Canada needs peer-reviewed science-based limits to protect our air, water and forests. Monitoring to ensure compliance must be independent of industry, and enforcement measures must be stringent.



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227 Abbott Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 2K7
T: 604-683-8220 F: 604-683-8229
www.wildernesscommittee.org



Dear Prime Minister Harper,

I have sent a card to President Obama telling him how I feel about ending the use of Tar Sands oil in the United States.

The Athabasca Tar Sands are having a negative impact on the human health of surrounding communities, the wildlife of northern Alberta, and the ability of Canada to fight the dangers of climate change. Urgent action is needed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and respect aboriginal title and rights.

Shouldn't the tar sands meet basic environmental and social standards?

I support

I do not support

the Canadian government taking action to clean up or shut down the Athabasca Tar Sands.

Name (please print) _____ Signed _____

Address _____ Postal code _____

No postage required

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Hon. Stephen Harper
Prime Minister
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

Dear President Obama,

As a Canadian, I have been heartened to see your position on ending the use of dirty fossil fuels. As you know, the Athabasca Tar Sands, in northern Alberta, produce some of the world's dirtiest energy. Canadian governments has so far refused to take meaningful action to clean up or shut down the Tar Sands. I have sent a card to Prime Minister Harper telling him how I feel about taking action to clean up or shut down the Athabasca Tar Sands.

Our planet and its citizens need your help.

I support

I do not support

the US government taking action to end the importing of dirty oil from the Athabasca Tar Sands.

Name (please print) _____ Signed _____

Address _____ Postal code _____ Country _____

\$0.98 CDN postage

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President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500