

CHOOSE CLIMATE
POWER PAST PIPELINES

NOT ONE MORE TAXPAYER DOLLAR FOR TAR SANDS EXPANSION



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As Canada heads into the 2020s, it's hard not to feel a sense of calamity in the headlines. It seems the winter blasts as Arctic air spills southwards fold right into severe flooding in the spring and onto catastrophic wildfires and deadly summer heat waves.

People are rising up. An army of protesters and students are regularly walking out from classes and workplaces across the country.

What's our federal government doing in these dire times? It's building the brand new Trans Mountain pipeline expansion to allow tar sands companies to produce even more of the dirty oil fuelling these disasters. And they're doing it with your hard earned money.

Canada's the fourth largest oil producer in the world.¹ Oil and gas is the country's single most polluting sector, worse even than transportation and responsible for more than a quarter of our carbon emissions.

In order to hold global warming to safe levels, the world's best scientists tell us we need to reduce carbon pollution by 7.6 per cent every year for the next decade starting yesterday.² That's going to be extremely challenging even without tar sands expansion working against our efforts.

For the last decade, a broad Indigenous-led movement across North America has fought pipeline projects to protect local waters and stand in the way of the production of planet-warming fossil fuels. In Canada, that means stopping the expansion of the Alberta tar sands.

Many of us are trying to reduce emissions — taking transit in urban centres, using cleaner power, insulating buildings more efficiently and living in denser communities. Meanwhile, the nation's most polluting companies are refusing to do their share and instead want to double production of fossil fuels, starting with the Trans Mountain pipeline.³

That's why the project has become what should be a "last showdown" in Canada's fight for a safe climate and against fossil fuel power. Like the French emperor Napoleon Bonaparte's final defeat — it's time for Big Oil to meet its Waterloo.

That doesn't mean workers have to suffer. Quite the opposite and despite what Alberta's corrupt establishment believes, many residents are ready to get off the boom-and-bust rollercoaster of fossil fuels. Instead, provincial and federal governments are using tens of billions of public dollars in a desperate attempt to prop up the failing industry.

Polls show 74 per cent of Canadians — including half of Albertans — support or can accept a phase out of the extraction and export of fossil fuels over the next 20 to 30 years.⁴ Research found people are even more supportive of that transition if it comes with a "good jobs guarantee" for anyone currently employed in fossil fuels.

Canada is full of talented, driven people who just need to know they have a place in the post-carbon economy. Rather than cut a blank cheque for the Trans Mountain pipeline and prop up the nation's most polluting sector for a few more years, let's invest the money in a future that will actually last.

"... it's time for Big Oil to meet its Waterloo."



Photo top: proposed Teck Frontier mine site near Lake Claire, north of Fort Mackay, A.B. and Suncor Millennium mining operation, A.B. oil sands (Garth Lenz).
Photo bottom: Syncrude upgrader and trucks, Highway 63, A.B. (Garth Lenz).

NO PIPELINES IN A CLIMATE EMERGENCY

On Sept. 27, 2019 one million young people across Canada walked out of classes to join the Global Climate Strike. They questioned why they should study for a future their government is actively undermining with its refusal to take serious action to limit global warming to safe levels.

Less than a year beforehand, the world’s top scientists presented the stunning Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report on what it would take to achieve that goal and the dire consequences of failing. Global carbon emissions need to be cut in half and then some by 2030 to keep us on track and pollution from the burning of fossil fuels needs to be eliminated by 2050.⁵

Earth has already warmed about 1.1°C since the Industrial Revolution. **If humanity can limit temperature rise to 1.5°C instead of 2°C, the planet will lose half as many ecosystems, experience half as much drought and hundreds of millions of people will be spared from climate disasters and poverty.**⁶ We could even save a few coral reefs and keep some



Photos: grizzly bear near Blue River, B.C. (John E. Marriott).

ice in the Arctic.

Unfortunately, we’re not even on track for 2°C of warming. Even if all nations achieve their goals to cut emissions — which few major polluters appear ready to do — we would still be headed for a world 3.2°C warmer by the end of the century.⁷ If we continue on this course, countries near the equator could be uninhabitable within the lifetimes of children alive today.

Meanwhile, in the next ten years the world’s fossil fuel companies plan to produce more than double the coal, oil and gas the Earth’s climate can safely handle.⁸ In Canada, they

want to increase oil production by 30 per cent. And they need the Trans Mountain pipeline to do that.

Coal mines and oil fields already in operation contain enough carbon to push us over

the safe limit and will have to be shut down before the end of their usable life.⁹ With that in mind, there’s simply no room left on this planet for new fossil fuel infrastructure.



YOUR PIPELINE MAKES NO SENSE

Often it’s said tar sands oil will just move by rail if the Trans Mountain pipeline isn’t built. While oil-by-rail exports have expanded, they represent a tiny fraction of what’s moving by pipeline, mostly because it costs more.¹⁴ Rail simply cannot move anywhere near the same amount of oil.

Nobody is building new tar sands projects like the Teck Frontier Mine, the largest proposal yet, with a plan to ship its oil by rail. The mine would produce six megatonnes (MT) of carbon pollution annually — more than all vehicles in the City of Toronto.¹⁵¹⁶ And it can’t move forward without the Trans Mountain pipeline expansion.

Others argue the pipeline is all about access to “tidewater” — what normal people call the ocean — to reach Asian markets. But Trans Mountain’s existing pipeline has provided a path for exports to Asia for years and only a few tankers have travelled across the Pacific, mostly when oil prices were low. Experts doubt Asia even has or will have enough refineries able to refine the low-quality bitumen Alberta offers.¹⁷

So what’s really behind the Trans Mountain pipeline? It’s worth more to the oil patch on paper than in practice. Lack of pipelines have contributed to a squeeze on tar sands investment in

recent years but there’s no evidence completing the project will change the outlook. Not only would new projects like the Teck Frontier Mine be a climate nightmare, low oil prices make it a lousy investment too.¹⁸

All building the Trans Mountain pipeline does is delay an inevitable reckoning for a few more years. Cancelling the project, on the other hand, would send a clear message that the party is over and could send the share prices of the big five oil majors into a tailspin. **That’s because Trans Mountain is not about the returns, it’s simply about a sales pitch for the investors. This is a project for Bay Street bankers, not Fort McMurray workers.**

QUICK FACT: What makes Canadian oil so polluting?

Unlike other oil producers, most of Canada’s crude is made from bitumen. It’s the peanut butter-like substance found in Alberta’s tar sands. Many countries simply stick a pipe in the ground, but our companies boil or steam the bitumen out of the earth using fracked gas. That means Canadian oil creates much more carbon pollution than other major producers.

TRUDEAU NEEDS A LESSON IN CONSENT

Indigenous communities, like the rest of Canada, are divided over the Trans Mountain pipeline. But while Canada is one nation, there are 117 First Nations and Métis groups who could be impacted by an oil spill from the project.¹⁰ Each has their own interests and their own rights. And according to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, they have the right to make their own decisions in their own lands according to their own political and legal traditions.

One nation cannot consent for another’s territory in the same way you can’t decide to build a patio on your neighbour’s backyard. It takes getting everyone onside.

More than half of these communities have not signed benefits agreements with Trans Mountain, despite the offer of a substantial amount of money. Even some who’ve signed say they don’t support the pipeline.¹¹¹² That means the federal government doesn’t have consent to put this project through.

That Trans Mountain is now being built by a Crown corporation is not lost on the land

defenders who are mobilizing to fight the pipeline all along the route. When the RCMP, who were created for the express purpose of displacing Indigenous people from their territories, are arresting young Indigenous activists to clear the path for a pipeline owned by the government of Canada, it’s hard for the prime minister to preach reconciliation.

Until Canada stops trying to ram these projects through without consent, they will continue to meet a barrage of court challenges and blockades that ultimately spell their demise. Trans Mountain has already had numerous legal troubles and those cases are likely to continue to the Supreme Court in the years to come.¹³



Photos: Tiny House Warriors near Blue River, B.C. (Peter McCartney).

TAR SANDS HAVE AN EXPIRATION DATE

Everyone can see the writing on the wall for Canada’s worst polluters, even if Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and oil executives are afraid to say it out loud. There’s no place for the high-cost, high-carbon tar sands in a world rapidly moving off fossil fuels.

That world is coming faster than many people think. **Global risk management analysts predict global oil demand will peak by 2022 — maybe even before the Trans Mountain pipeline’s earliest possible completion date.**¹⁹

While the world will continue to use oil for a few decades to come, it will soon begin to use less and less every year.

Electric vehicles are due to displace 13.7 million barrels per day of oil by 2040.²⁰ Even existing production will struggle to find a market, let alone costly new tar sands exports.

Kinder Morgan first proposed expanding Trans Mountain in 2012 and global oil markets have changed dramatically since then. Despite the excess supply that sent oil prices crashing in recent years,

the government is still relying on a hopelessly outdated business case for the project.

An updated economic look at the project in 2019 using the government’s own cost-benefit guidelines found Trans Mountain will end up ultimately costing Canadians between \$8.2 and



Photos: Suncor Millennium mining operation, A.B. oil sands (Garth Lenz).

\$18.7 billion, even after any potential revenue. It saw no likely scenario in which it creates a net benefit for the public.²¹

Adding new export capacity just as oil demand starts to fall risks the pipeline becoming a worthless white elephant. Just how much are Canadians willing to spend on a project now driven more by politics than economics?

THE MOTHER OF ALL FOSSIL FUEL SUBSIDIES

When the Trans Mountain expansion was first proposed, construction was projected to cost **\$5.4 billion** and be finished by 2017. In 2016, the project had just received its first approval and those costs rose to **\$7.4 billion**. Before the federal government bought the pipeline last year, the price tag grew to **\$9.3 billion**. Now that the Canadian public owns the project, nobody can tell us how much it would cost to build it.²²

Either the federal government is hiding the ballooning costs of Trans Mountain or worse yet, they don't even know. That any government would start a project without giving the public a credible cost estimate is a bad sign. The Parliamentary Budget Office, on the other hand, has given us some insight into the debacle. It says Canada already overpaid by up to a billion dollars, before counting the numerous delays continuing to decrease the value of the project. It also says a year of delay will lower its worth by \$693 million and every additional 10 per cent increase in construction costs puts it a further \$453 million in the red.²³



Photos: Trans Mountain pipeline yard, B.C. (Peter McCartney).

Trudeau is effectively cutting a blank cheque to the oil and gas sector for the project. He's doing so knowing full well permitting, legal errors and protests will slow construction and drive up costs even as his government promises to phase out fossil fuel subsidies. Unlimited funding to prop up the oil and gas industry only adds to the tens of billions of dollars in subsidies Canada already forks out for the sector every year.²⁴

Canadians are already coping with the massive costs of climate disasters, topping \$1.9 billion in 2018 alone, and facing an annual \$5.3 billion price tag to shield our communities from those impacts.²⁵²⁶ Rather than spending further on the endless Trans Mountain quagmire to make the problem worse, Canada should invest in meaningful climate action and jobs that will last instead.

ALBERTA'S PETRO-PENSION PLAN

As investors abandon the tar sands, Alberta Premier Jason Kenney has a bone-chilling plan to finance their continued expansion when no one else will. He wants to raid people's retirement savings.

Yes, it's true. And all Canadians should be worried because we'll be called on to help when this all goes belly-up. **Already, his government has forced Alberta teachers to hand over their \$18 billion pension fund to the Alberta Investment Management Corporation (AIMCo), a move union leaders called "tantamount to theft."**²⁷

It would give the province's minister of finance and its Treasury Board the power to direct investment dollars, and create a huge slush fund to finance risky petro-projects "which most people would not feel comfortable using their life savings to support."²⁸

That's just the beginning. AIMCo has also commandeered \$12 billion worth of workers' compensation



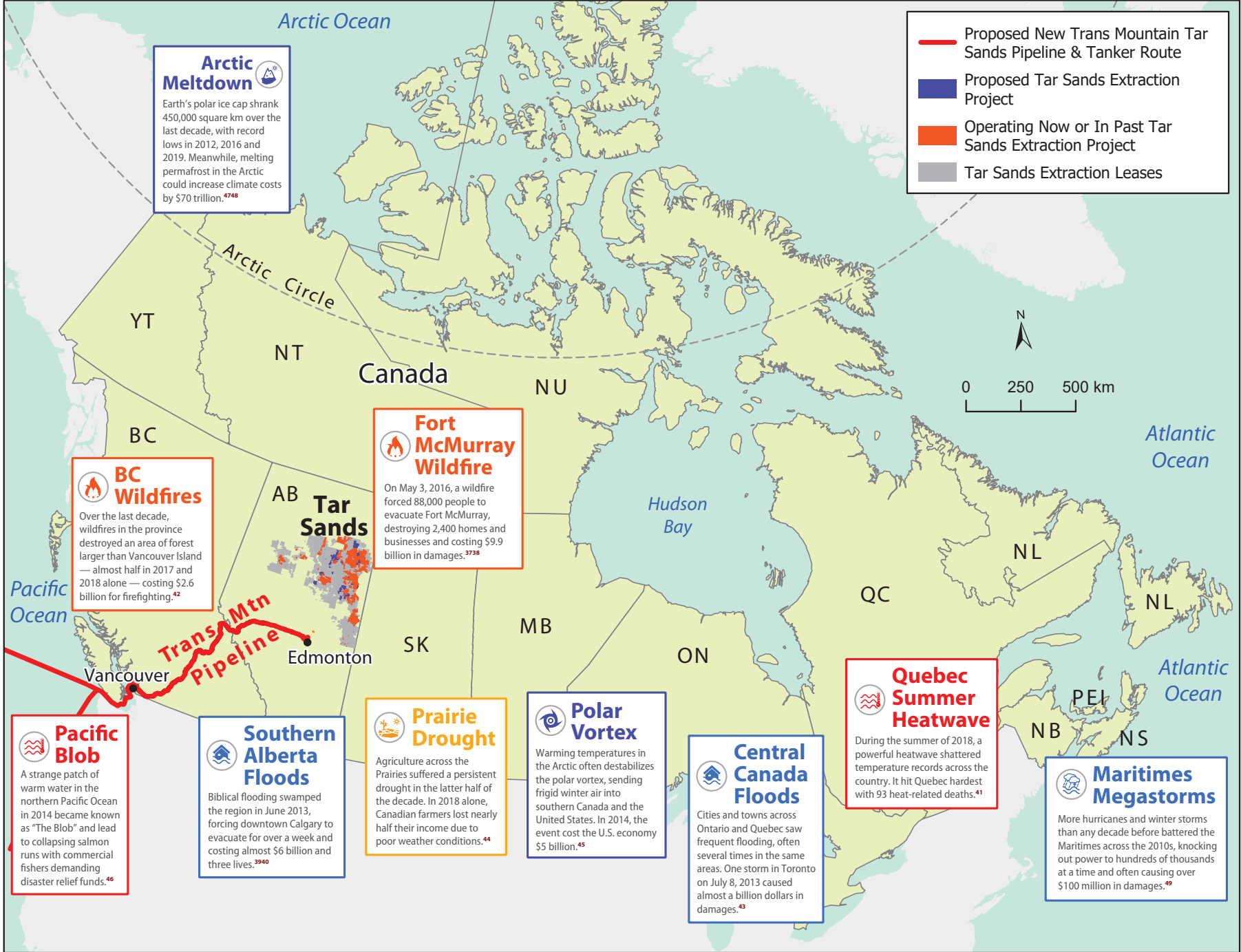
Photo: oil tankers in Burrard Inlet, B.C. (Joe Foy).

funds and healthcare funds. Provincial officials are looking at seizing control of the pension funds of over 350,000 government and municipal employees including nurses, firefighters and police officers.²⁹

But worst of all, Kenney is openly talking about pulling Alberta out of the Canada Pension Plan, giving AIMCo another \$40 billion worth of its residents' retirement savings to play with.³⁰ That would only cement Albertan workers and seniors to the fossil fuel industry's fortunes at the exact moment most credible experts are predicting oil companies will go underwater.

AIMCo has made some questionable investments in the oilpatch in recent years, bank rolling oil and gas companies only to see their share prices drop 70 to 95 per cent.³¹ This recent pension grab bought a shared 65 per cent stake in the controversial \$6.6 billion Coastal GasLink pipeline. AIMCo's CEO even has eyes on backing the Trans Mountain pipeline if it ever moves forward.³² With reckoning on the way as the world transitions from fossil fuels, the last thing the Alberta government should be doing is reaching into our pockets with oil-drenched hands to stake our retirement savings on an industry with no future.

CANADA'S TOP 10 CLIMATE DISASTERS IN THE LAST DECADE



MOVING CANADA FORWARD WITH A GREEN NEW DEAL

It's clear Canada cannot turn the corner in the fight against climate change while it's beholden to the interests of the fossil fuel industry. Trans Mountain is the most glaring expression of that conflict.

We can chase oil and gas down the economic drain and waste tens of billions of public dollars in the process, or we can invest in a transition that leaves nobody behind.

There's plenty of work to be done to build the green infrastructure we need to tackle climate change and clean up the mess failing oil companies are leaving behind.

This transition would mean historic investments in renewable energy, public transit, building renovations, agriculture and conservation. Research shows \$81 billion of funding over five years could create a million jobs across Canada — including over 140,000 in Alberta — while reducing

carbon pollution up to 36 per cent.³³ A Just Transition Act for unemployed workers from the fossil fuel sector could provide retraining and guarantee them new jobs building the clean economy.

The Green New Deal began as proposed U.S. legislation to address climate change and economic inequality.

In Canada, a growing movement of workers, scientists, faith leaders, Indigenous peoples, youth, artists and more than 60 organizations have joined the Pact For a Green New Deal. They are calling for a bold plan to fight climate change, address inequality and respect Indigenous rights.³⁴ Eight members of parliament were elected in 2019 on a promise to champion this transformative policy and a movement of young people across Canada, Our Time, is mobilizing to see it through.

This transition could also include holding fossil fuel companies and the banks who finance them accountable for the damage they've done. One internal memo from the Alberta



Photo: Lubicon Lake Cree Nation's Pitapan Solar Project, A.B. (Kate Hildebrand, Uvic).

Energy Regulator estimates cleanup costs for the province's oil and gas sites will reach \$260 billion, and bankruptcies are already leading to thousands of orphaned wells.³⁵

Cleaning them up represents a huge opportunity to create countless reclamation jobs across Alberta, often with the same skills required to extract oil and gas. However, taxpayers should not be expected to pick up the tab, as the province and industry propose.³⁶ Alberta has the power to go after the executives and shareholders of insolvent companies who abandon wells and the still-operating corporations who sold them in the first place.³⁷ It can and should require tar sands companies to use their enormous profits to begin cleaning up the enormous mess they've made.



Photos: abandoned gas well site owned by Shanghai Energy Corp. (Garth Lenz).

TAKE ACTION

Write the prime minister and urge him to:

- Stop spending public dollars to build the Trans Mountain pipeline.
- Reject the Teck Frontier Mine.
- Enact a Just Transition Act that guarantees retraining and good jobs to all unemployed oil and gas workers.
- Enact Green New Deal legislation that includes a detailed plan to eliminate carbon pollution by 2050.
- Require oil and gas companies to clean up the mess they leave behind.

Sign up for regular progress reports on the campaign here: WildernessCommittee.org/noTMX

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Photo: rally against Trans Mountain pipeline, B.C. (WC image).

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