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Event Galvanizes Opposition to Enbridge Tar Sands Pipeline

(Moricetown, BC) – Community opposition to the proposed Enbridge pipeline is growing. Over 200 people from communities along the pipeline route gathered Saturday in Moricetown, BC to discuss the impacts of the proposed mega-project.

The 1170-kilometre Enbridge pipeline would carry oil from the Alberta tar sands to a tanker port at Kitimat.

“This Energy Summit was a reminder that the tar sands affects us all – from Fort Chipewan to Haida Gwaii and beyond. We can only protect our lands and waters if we stand together,” said Wet’suwet’en hereditary chief Alphonse Gagnon.

Nations present included Mikisew Cree (AB), Kelly Lake Cree (BC), West Moberly (BC), Nadleh Whut'en (BC), Wet’suwet’en (BC), Kitkatla (BC), Gitga’at (BC), Haida (BC), Nisga’a (BC), Lake Babine (BC), Alexander (AB) and others. A letter of support from the Gitksan was read at the event.

George Poitras traveled to the event from Fort Chipewan, an Alberta community downstream from the tar sands, to share the devastating impacts the development has had on his community. These include a high incidence of rare cancers.

“The situation downstream from the tar sands is so toxic that one of our elders told his son not to have children because everything is so polluted and our people can no longer drink the water or eat the fish,” said Poitras.

Representatives of coastal First Nations reiterated their strong opposition to oil tanker traffic in coastal waters. “The tycoons expect to further spread the tar sands poison, putting their lavish desires before our lifestyles and our culture,” said Guujaaw, President of the Council of the Haida Nation. “We depend on these lands and waters and we will not put the safety and well being of our territories in their hands.”

MLAs Doug Donaldson (Stikine), Gary Coons (North Coast) and Robin Austin (Skeena) also attended the event. Member of Parliament Nathan Cullen (Skeena-Bulkley Valley) noted the event in the House of Commons on Friday.

Over 500 residents have endorsed a resolution calling for a moratorium on the transport of tar sands oil and a full public inquiry into the proposed pipeline. “We stand together in supporting a moratorium on the transport of tar sands oil through our territories and communities,” reads the resolution.

For more information, contact:

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