



Keystone XL Tar Sands Pipeline

A proposed 2,000 mile pipeline through America's heartland would inject America with 900,000 barrels per day of one of the dirtiest fuels on the planet, threatening our communities, our landscape, and our climate.

Tar Sands Oil

Big Oil has some big plans to put America's clean energy future in jeopardy by expanding the production of tar sands oil – one of the most destructive, dirty, and costly fossil fuels. The largest tar sands reserves in the world are located beneath the boreal forest in Alberta, Canada. This forest provides critical habitat for about 50 percent of North America's migratory birds and some of the largest populations of wolves, grizzly bears, lynx and moose in the world.

Oil companies are digging up this pristine forest to extract the tar sands, leaving behind huge toxic wastelands. To remove the thick black oil from the sand, they heat it using natural gas and wash it using enormous volumes of freshwater. In the process, they create toxic lakes that are so large they are visible from space. Just in 2008, 1,600 migrating ducks drowned after landing in the toxic sludge.

Producing one barrel of tar sands oil requires:

- Extracting at least four tons of earth, half of which is tar sands.
- Contaminating two to four barrels of freshwater to separate the oil from the sand.
- Releasing at least three times more global warming pollution than conventional oil.

Keystone XL

Once the thick black oil is removed from the tar sands and processed into a heavy crude oil, it's ready for delivery. And the primary target is U.S. refineries. The U.S. already imports 800,000 barrels per day (bpd) of tar sands oil and the stage is being set for a drastic increase. The tar sands industry is fast at work building an extensive pipeline network that would deliver this dirty fuel to every corner of our nation. Several pipelines already transport tar sands oil from Canada to the U.S. and two new ones have been built in the last few years. But the next one could be a game-changer.

TransCanada, a Canadian pipeline company, has proposed a pipeline called Keystone XL, which would carry up to 900,000 bpd of tar sands oil from operations in Alberta, Canada, more than 2,000 miles to refineries on the Gulf Coast. The pipeline would cut through six American heartland states, including Montana, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, and Texas.

Keystone XL would lock the U.S. into a dependence on this dirty fuel and drive a massive expansion of the tar sands operations in Alberta, Canada. Because Keystone XL would deliver tar sands oil to the Gulf Coast, America's largest oil refining and transport hub, it would effectively open the entire U.S. market and international markets to dirty fuel. The added capacity of Keystone XL and the other two pipelines that have been built recently could more than triple U.S. consumption of tar sands oil. If expansion of tar sands goes unchecked, it will be impossible to reach our goals to reduce global warming pollution.

Contacts:

Jenny Pelej

Regional Representative
406-529-6369 (p)
PelejJ@nwf.org

Ryan Salmon

Coordinator, Global Warming
Solutions Program
202-797-6606 (p)
SalmonR@nwf.org

Impacts of Keystone XL

Risks to people, wildlife and property along the pipeline route

Keystone XL will cross through America's agricultural heartland, the Missouri and Niobrara Rivers, the Ogallala aquifer, sage grouse habitat, walleye fisheries and more. TransCanada has applied for a permit from the Department of Transportation to use thinner steel in its pipes and waive safety regulations to save the company money and allow it to pump the dirty fuel at dangerously high pressures. Our public water supplies, crop lands, wildlife habitats and recreational opportunities will all be at risk of dangerous tar sands oil leaks.

More air pollution at refineries

Refining of tar sands oil emits higher levels of sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, lead, mercury, and other toxic pollutants than conventional oil. This increased pollution puts the communities located around the refineries, which already fail to meet basic clean air standards for soot and smog pollution, at further risk of respiratory disease.

Undermines America's clean energy future

If built, Keystone XL will lock us into a future where we are dependent on one of the dirtiest and costliest fuels in the world. It's time we invest in real solutions for our energy security. Cleaner fuels, like sustainable biofuels, more efficient vehicles, and new generation electric vehicles, are all viable and readily available alternatives to dirty tar sands oil. Making a transition to a clean energy future holds tremendous economic opportunity for all Americans rather than a continuation of the record profits for Big Oil by Big Oil.



Take action

Before TransCanada can begin construction of Keystone XL it needs a presidential permit from the U.S. Department of State for the pipeline's U.S.-Canada border crossing. Prior to issuing the permit, an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the pipeline and a formal determination of "national interest" must be made. You have the chance to stop this pipeline by making your voice heard in the permitting process.

Visit www.nwf.org/tarsands to submit your comments directly to the Department of State. Tell Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, to deny a permit to TransCanada, and stop the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline through our communities and lands.

We need to say **NO** to tar sands oil. Instead, we should say **YES** to made-in-America clean energy that will create jobs and reduce global warming pollution. American clean energy innovation will put Americans to work and make us more energy independent.