

EXTRA!! EXTRA!! Northern mayors back pipelines

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Three British Columbia mayors have today expressed their support for a number of pipeline and port expansion projects that would provide significant economic benefits for communities across northern British Columbia.

“These projects represent new opportunities for not only northern BC but the entire province,” stated mayor Colin Kinsley, City of Prince George. “We think it’s important that northern community voices be heard in this debate. There are a number of pipeline and tanker projects that are being threatened by politics and the pressure of Vancouver and Victoria based environmental groups. This is unacceptable.”

Currently there are tens of billions of dollars in projects that have been proposed by a number of pipeline companies. Some political parties and environmental groups are calling for a ban on tankers on the central coast of British Columbia which would effectively kill these investments.

In 2007, 269 tankers called on the Port of Vancouver shipping gasoline, oil, kerosene, jet fuel and crude oil under the Lions Gate Bridge past Stanley Park.

“Last year the Port of Vancouver shipped over 6 million tonnes of petroleum on large tankers through Burrard Inlet,” said Kitimat mayor, Rick Wozney. “It was done in a clean, safe and secure way. If this can be done in the Port of Vancouver, then it can be done in the Douglas Channel to Kitimat provided that all environmental and safety measures are in place.”

The mayors re-iterated that all these projects must undergo lengthy environmental and public reviews before approvals are granted and construction begins.

“We support the projects while recognizing that the companies need to demonstrate environmental and community safeguards,” remarked Prince Rupert mayor, Herb Pond. “My community is benefiting greatly from our increased container traffic and it’s time other communities in northern BC benefit from new projects as well.”

Project proposals have been made by Kitimat LNG (LNG terminal), Pacific Trails Pipelines (pipeline), Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipelines (marine terminal and pipeline), and Kinder Morgan (Trans-Mountain Expansion—marine terminal and pipeline). Since 2006, EnCana has been importing condensate (a by-product of natural gas) into Kitimat on ocean-going tankers.

“These projects represent new investment, jobs and opportunities for all residents of Northwest BC who look forward to the benefits these projects may provide after many years of low or no growth,” said Mayor Wozney.

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