

January 31, 2020

Dear Prime Minister Trudeau,

The National Council of Women of Canada (NCWC), representing thousands of Canadians from coast to coast, has, for many years, studied the destructive impacts of resource exploration, development, and use on Canada's environmentally sensitive ecosystems. Therefore, we have often urged the Government to act in a "precautionary" manner to protect these treasured natural areas.

As early as 2009, the NCWC urged the government of Canada to "*cease supporting the irresponsible production of oil from tar sands in Canada*". Today, we are speaking of the proposed Teck Resources Limited Frontier Oil Sands Mine project near Wood Buffalo National Park in northern Alberta. However carefully executed it might be, this mammoth project is bound to have an extremely damaging impact on thousands of hectares of old growth forest and wetlands, which are both important carbon sinks. It will also threaten wildlife including bison, lynx, and caribou, infringe on Treaty rights, and environmentally and economically impact nearby Indigenous communities for generations to come.

The NCWC recognizes that in giving the go-ahead, there have been conditions proposed by the Federally appointed review panel, and that some Indigenous people support the promised jobs and other benefits the mine may bring. However, others note these conditions do not address community concerns that were raised at public hearings into the project and do not effectively mitigate the known adverse environmental impacts of the mine.

The NCWC also supports the views of scientific experts and many Canadians that this 292 square kilometre open-pit bitumen mine will release millions of tons of greenhouse gases per year for over at least 40 years. This is totally unacceptable. Its approval will make it even more difficult to meet Canada's greenhouse gas reduction targets. We must remain vigilant to ensure Canada continues to provide leadership and meaningful assistance in the crucial fight against the disastrous impacts of global warming.

To conclude, the NCWC strongly urges the Government of Canada to reject the application for the Teck Resources Limited Frontier mega oil sands mine project. Doing so will demonstrate your commitment to ensuring the long-term protection of this fragile environment along with the health of its Indigenous population, their territorial lands, and their traditional ways of life. The rejection of the project will also positively impact Canada's climate change goals.

Sincerely,
Patricia Leson, President
Gracia Janes, 1st Vice President, Environment
National Council of Women of Canada

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Environment and Climate Change

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The Honourable Marc Miller, Minister of Indigenous Services

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The Honourable Dan Vandal, Minister of Northern Affairs
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Background:

**The National Council of Women of Canada Policy 2009 03 EI:
Cessation of Irresponsible Production of Oil from the Tar Sands in Canada**

Whereas 1: producing a barrel of oil from the tar sands leads to at least three times the greenhouse gas emissions as producing a barrel of conventional oil, and

Whereas 2: the tar sands oil production is the fastest growing source of greenhouse gas pollution in Canada, and

Whereas 3: the tar sands oil production causes widespread landscape destruction, and

Whereas 4: the tar sands oil production leads to massive toxic tailing lakes which leak and are likely to contaminate ground water, and

Whereas 5: since each barrel of tar sands oil produced by mining requires an average of three barrels of wastewater, great stress is being placed on aquatic resources and water resources in the Athabasca Valley and posing risks to the McKenzie River basin, and

Whereas 6: aboriginal communities in the tar sands region are experiencing the destruction of traditional hunting and fishing areas, therefore, be it

Resolved 1: The National Council of Women of Canada adopt as policy the cessation of irresponsible production of oil from the tar sands in Canada, and be it further

Resolved 2: The National Council of Women of Canada urge the Government of Canada to cease supporting the irresponsible production of oil from tar sands in Canada by

- a) placing a moratorium on new tar sands projects until environmental concerns are resolved
- b) stopping federal incentives to develop the tar sands