

**VANCOUVER AUDUBON SOCIETY STATEMENT OF CONCERN**

October, 2013

**RE: TESORO-SAVAGE PROPOSED OIL TERMINAL AT THE PORT OF VANCOUVER**

The Vancouver Audubon Society Board of Directors have deep concerns about the proposed oil terminal at the Port of Vancouver. As the proposal advances to the state Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council for scoping the depth of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) we wish to list concerns for study.

**GLOBAL WARMING**

Our biggest concern is global warming. The recently released report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) shows that the situation is dire. We must kick our addiction to oil.

The difficulty we as a civilization face is: that which has enabled so many to prosper, oil and coal, is that which could well destroy civilization. The writer, Bill McKibben, in a well-researched article that appeared a year ago used the device of three numbers to illustrate our problem.

The first is 2 degrees Celsius. That is the temperature increase beyond which the world must not increase if we are to avoid the worst of worst catastrophes. The world has already increased the temperature .08 degrees. We are already seeing effects from an unstable climate. The second number is 565 gigatons. This is the number of gigatons of carbon the world can put into the atmosphere and still remain below 2 degrees Celsius. If we keep increasing carbon production at the rate we are doing, we will blow through that 565 gigatons in (McKibben said) 16 years (15 years now). The third number is 2,795 gigatons. That is the amount of carbon contained in the oil and coal reserves now carried on the books of the fossil fuel industry. That would include the carbon in the Bakken oil that is proposed to be shipped through the Port of Vancouver.

The Environmental Impact Statement for this proposal must include a discussion of its effects on climate change. Although the amount of carbon in the Bakken oil to be shipped through the Port of Vancouver by itself may not put the world over the tipping point, the EIS must still consider the cumulative effects of this oil on the total carbon load in the atmosphere. The amount of oil shipped can be estimated. It surely should not be impossible to find the carbon content of the Bakken oil. This must be in the EIS.

**DISASTER POTENTIAL**

The recent oil train disaster in Lac-Megantic, Quebec led to 47 deaths. That oil train came from the same Bakken oil fields as this proposed project. This month a derailment occurred in Edmonton and a pipeline burst in North Dakota. Considering all the safety hazards and the massive number of check points needed to operate safely, the obvious possibility of a crucial step being missed is not a question of "if" but "when". This is an explosive cargo. It would move along 200 miles of river shoreline. Ecosystems are at risk should an oil train derail or explode. Disaster could disrupt communities for days, weeks, months. Vancouver, just two years ago, witnessed the tragic oil spill from an abandoned cargo ship that took many months and millions of dollars of government funds to cleanup. The Columbia River was polluted with immeasurable damages.

**TESORO-SAVAGE SAFETY RECORD**

Tesoro ranks in the top 50 toxic-air polluters. They have been cited for over 4000 violations. They were fined \$1.1 million for violations at refineries in Washington and three other states; this is the largest fine

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of this type in the 40 year history of EPA clean fuels programs. A 2010 explosion at the Tesoro Anacortes refinery killed 7 and a \$2.39 million fine was levied by Washington State L & I. The blast was "entirely preventable" and reports showed 39 "willful" violations and 5 "serious" violations of workplace safety and health regulations. This is not a record that inspires public trust.

#### **LOSS OF HABITAT**

The proposed rail traffic would have impact on wildlife, fisheries, and bird populations. The route goes thru east-west bird migration corridors. While those populations currently cohabitate with rail traffic east of Vancouver thru and past Steigerwald, Franz Lake, and Pierce National Wildlife Refuges, the doubling or tripling of train traffic through that corridor could be disruptive to the waterfowl the refuge is designed to protect: especially geese and ducks. If wintering birds are disrupted too much from feeding and made to fly too many times, they use up energy needed for their migration.

#### **BAKKEN CRUDE**

Bakken Crude oil emerges from the earth by way of hydraulic fracturing or "fracking" a controversial process that destroys the habitat and water quality from the lands it comes from. The water spoils from this type of drilling are contaminated. The land is destabilized and loses some of its shock absorber ability. This leaves the earth more vulnerable to earth quakes. Bakken crude has high content of hydrogen sulfide whose vapors carry threat of explosion.

#### **RAIL VOLUME & CONGESTION:**

The proposal as presented includes as many as 12 oil tank car trains per day coming west and south from North Dakota, through Northern Idaho, Eastern Washington and along the Columbia River to Vancouver. This rail traffic presumably would add to the current load these rails must hold from traditional rail customers, including Agricultural products. Rail traffic already causes air pollution, obstructs communities and divides them, one side of the tracks from the other. The additional traffic will likely cause delays for all rail customers as competition for rail times and schedules gets more complicated. Should the proposal for shipping coal through the Columbia Gorge to Longview ever come to pass, the amount of rail traffic would double or triple the current load. The above named effects would rise accordingly. The Tesoro-Savage project projects 3426 train trips per year.

#### **SHIPPING TRAFFIC**

The proposal estimates 730 ship transits to/from the facility /year. Tesoro reports they will cause new source pollutants potential of 136,000 metric tons of greenhouse gases annually. The non-profit advocacy group, Columbia River Keeper, estimates the figure to be far more: 59.64 million metric tons of CO2 per year. This disparity in figures needs serious study and review.

Please take all the time you need to evaluate every aspect noted and if the results don't merit approval, reject this proposal.

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