



EPA Criticism of Dirty Fuels Pipeline Likely to Stall Controversial Project

Washington, DC (July 21, 2010) - In formal comments from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) just made public, the agency is highly critical of the State Department's Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for TransCanada's proposed Keystone XL Pipeline Project. With EPA's formal engagement, the pipeline permitting could be seriously stalled.

Jim Lyon, senior vice president for National Wildlife Federation applauded the action.

"EPA has raised a major red flag. It's done the right thing and acknowledged that the risks of dirty fuels have not been taken into account. Tar sands and the pipelines that carry them are the wrong energy choice for the U.S.," Lyon said.

The comments can be read at

[http://yosemite.epa.gov/oeca/webeis.nsf/%28PDFView%29/20100126/\\$file/20100126.PDF?OpenElement](http://yosemite.epa.gov/oeca/webeis.nsf/%28PDFView%29/20100126/$file/20100126.PDF?OpenElement)

According to EPA, the **Draft EIS failed to fully consider America's clean energy goals**, the impacts of consuming more high-carbon fuel on climate change, the impacts of refining tar sands oil on air quality, the risk of oil spills, the implications to environmental justice communities, and the impacts on wetlands and migratory birds. Additional information and analysis of these issues would be "necessary to fully inform decision makers and the public."

The Draft EIS is a step in a larger process the State Department is charged with for granting or denying a presidential permit for the Keystone XL Pipeline Project. After addressing the comments received on the Draft EIS from the public, members of Congress and other federal agencies, the State Department will issue a Final EIS. Then at some point, the State Department must also determine whether building the pipeline is in the national interest. **The State Department had been on a fast track toward this decision, but EPA's engagement is likely to slow the process**, perhaps considerably.

EPA's comments on the Draft EIS are part of a rising tide of concern over the safety of the pipeline and the implications of increasing America's consumption of dirty tar sands oil. On June 23rd, 50 members of the House of Representatives sent a letter to Secretary Clinton asking that the permitting process be completed with the full consideration of the Obama Administration's clean energy and climate change priorities. On July 2nd, Senator Ben Nelson issued a statement urging full consideration of the pipeline's environmental and economic impacts. On July 6th, Congressman Waxman, the Chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Committee, sent a letter to Secretary Clinton opposing the pipeline. Other members of Congress from the states the pipeline would pass through have also relayed the widespread concern of their constituents to the State Department.

This 2,000 mile pipeline would carry up to 900,000 barrels per day of tar sands oil—the world’s dirtiest kind of oil—from Alberta, Canada right through America’s heartland to refineries on the Gulf Coast.

National Wildlife Federation is America's conservation organization inspiring Americans to protect wildlife for our children's future.

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Contacts:

Tony Iallonardo, senior communications manager, 202-797-6612, iallonardot@nwf.org