



Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of British Columbia
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Secretary to the Joint Review Panel
Enbridge Northern Gateway Project
444 Seventh Avenue S.W.
Calgary, AB T2P 0X8

January 25, 2012

Re: Proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline, port facility near Kitimat and associated tanker traffic

Dear Panel Members,

We are writing to you to express our concern over Enbridge's proposed Northern Gateway pipeline, port facility near Kitimat and associated tanker traffic. Such an industrial use of a globally significant area is not consistent with the interests of our members, and risks the economic activity of thousands of jobs associated with a sustainable, nature-based adventure tourism industry.

The Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC (SKGABC) is a non-profit society and industry association which represents professional sea kayak guides and tour operators in BC. Through ongoing professional development, certification and advocacy, the Alliance strives to promote high standards of sea kayaking safety, conduct, and representation through an alliance of professionals. Established in 1994, the SKGABC is proud to have over 800 members, including over 75 company members, who live in all areas of the BC coast, across Canada and internationally. In 2005 (the most recent year for which statistics are available), the sea kayaking industry alone served 70 000 clients and brought in nearly \$15 million in direct revenue.

Our members provide guided adventure tourism services to clients from around the world, and among many other important areas, tours operate around northeastern Vancouver Island, Haida Gwaii, and the Great Bear Rainforest. Clients join tours for the access we provide to high-quality coastal scenery, wildlife viewing opportunities and world-class wilderness experiences that this area offers. From client feedback and our own surveys, it is clear that if there were diminished wildlife or scenic quality, this area would cease to be attractive as a destination and they would look elsewhere for adventure tourism experiences. Not only would our members be affected, but so would the dozens of accommodation, car rental, restaurant and other services that our clients make use of when visiting British Columbia.

We feel that large-scale movement of bitumen across such a large area and variety of vulnerable ecosystems poses a risk not justified by the eventual revenues. When these environments are put at risk, our members and their livelihoods are also put at risk. Specifically:

- Recent pipeline breaches, including those owned by Enbridge, have shown that pipeline technology is not infallible

- New technologies promised by the proponent are not a failsafe buffer against human errors that could cause a major accident like the sinking of the BC Ferry *Queen of the North* or the *Exxon Valdez* spill
- After more than 20 years, oil is still on the beaches of Alaska and wildlife populations (including large mammals such as killer whales that are the mainstay of ecotourism in many areas) have still not recovered following the grounding of the *Exxon Valdez*
- At this time the resources to contain or clean up a large spill don't exist in BC, which would leave oil to spread, possibly in severe weather conditions, over a vast distance causing irrevocable damage to the beaches, waterways and wildlife that our industry depends on
- Even without a spill, tourism revenues may be impacted as the perception of British Columbia as a pristine natural environment will diminish as pipeline construction and traffic will appear to further industrialize our coast

For these reasons, we ask you to recommend that the Northern Gateway pipeline, and all its associated tanker traffic not be approved. Pipelines are not perfect, and tankers cannot be guaranteed to stay clear of obstructions in the complex waters of the north and central coasts. All it would take is one error, and the livelihoods of our members, business partners and neighbours could be forever altered.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.



Rick Snowdon, President
On behalf of the Board of Directors
Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC