

# Huge Oil-by-Rail Project Threatens Public Safety, Climate

***Attend Important Public Hearing Oct. 29***

Washington and Oregon are ground zero for dirty energy export projects. On October 29<sup>th</sup>, Governor Inslee's advisors—the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council—will hold a critical public hearing about the proposed Tesoro Savage oil-by-rail terminal in Vancouver, WA. Join Columbia Riverkeeper and our partners across the Northwest to send a strong message: dirty oil is not welcome in our communities.

**WHAT: Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council Public Hearing on Scope of Environmental Review for Tesoro Savage.**

**WHEN: October 29<sup>th</sup>, 6:00PM**

**WHERE: Clark College, Gaiser Student Center, 1933 Fort Vancouver Way, Vancouver, WA**

**RSVP: Email [Dan@Columbiariverkeeper.org](mailto:Dan@Columbiariverkeeper.org).**



*Oil unit train pulling into Anacortes, WA, refinery.  
Photo by Paul K. Anderson*

## Pipeline on Wheels

Tesoro Savage proposes shipping a **staggering 360,000 barrels of crude oil each day by rail along the Columbia River**. That's more oil than Canada's TransMountain Pipeline—the pipeline that carries crude to West Coast refineries—transports in a day. The proposed oil terminal would require **at least four unit trains per day**, with each train extending for **approximately 1.5 miles**. By a long shot, this is the largest oil-by-rail proposal in the Pacific Northwest. If granted, Tesoro Savage's proposal would represent a massive commitment by Governor Inslee and Washington State to dirty fossil fuels.

## Why Crude Oil is a Bad Deal for Columbia River Communities and Beyond

- **Public Safety at Risk.** Oil-by-rail catastrophes are not theoretical. In summer 2013, over 50 people lost their lives when a crude oil train derailed in Lac Megantic, Quebec. The Tesoro Savage project would also exacerbate train-related traffic delays in Spokane, Washougal, Camas, and Vancouver.

- **Oil Spill Risk Skyrockets.** The terminal would increase rail traffic and oil spill risks through the Washington State, including the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area, Spokane and Vancouver. Oil spills have the potential to cause dramatic harm to fish habitat and nearby neighborhoods and businesses along the proposed rail route.



*Photo courtesy of Transportation Safety Board of Canada*

- **Heavy Toll of Rail Traffic.** The terminal would require at least four full unit trains and four empty unit trains of oil each day to ship 360,000 barrels of oil on a daily basis. According to Tesoro Savage, each train includes 120 cars or more and extends *almost a mile and a half long*. These long, heavy trains would exacerbate traffic delays in communities along the rail lines in Washington, such as Washougal, Spokane, and Vancouver. The eight oil unit trains could come in addition to proposed coal unit trains – over a dozen of them – destined for Longview and Bellingham.
- **Toxic Diesel Pollution from Crude Oil Trains Threaten Public Health.** More rail traffic at the Port of Vancouver equals dirtier air for people to breathe in surrounding neighborhoods. The health dangers of diesel particulate emissions from rail yards are well-known. Increased incidence of cancer, asthma, and respiratory and cardiac conditions are attributed to inhaling diesel particulate matter.
- **Impacts Near & Far.** The proposed oil terminal is initially intended to ship shale oil from the Bakken formation in North Dakota and Montana to West Coast refineries. Oil companies extract Bakken oil through the process of hydraulic fracturing (“fracking”), a notoriously dirty method of producing fossil fuels that has polluted aquifers and damaged agricultural lands. In 2011 the oil and gas industry reported over 1,000 spills of wastewater, drilling fluids, or other materials in North Dakota, alone.<sup>i</sup>
- **Paving the Way for Tar Sands Export.** In the future, the proposed oil terminal could be used to ship Canadian tar sands oil to overseas markets, much like the controversial Keystone XL pipeline. Tar sands oil is one of the dirtiest fossil fuels on the planet.
- **Dirty Energy or Clean Energy Future?** The proposed oil terminal will increase access to and consumption of dirty oil. At 360,000 barrels of oil per day, the terminal will ship over 131

million barrels of crude oil per year. The combustion of this oil, alone (not counting the energy cost of producing the oil) will release over 56 million metric tons of carbon dioxide each year, *as much as almost 12 million cars worth of greenhouse gas pollution.*<sup>ii</sup> The community of Vancouver—and Washington State— can do better than becoming a trafficker of dirty fossil fuels.

- **Compromising the City of Vancouver’s Investment in Waterfront Businesses.** As reported in The Columbian, a real estate developer charged with remaking Vancouver’s waterfront warned the Port of Vancouver that safety concerns surrounding the Tesoro Savage terminal and rail traffic might make it tougher for him to pull off the showcase project. The \$1.3 billion redevelopment project of a former industrial site includes high-rises, offices, parks, and shops. To date, the project has attracted millions of dollars in public investment.
- **Too Many Unanswered Questions.** How will Washington State evaluate the safety and potential spill risks involved with oil trains and the massive oil terminal? How will the Tesoro Savage project impact traffic delays along the rail line? Do communities along the rail line have adequate first responder capacity to handle and emergency?

### ***Submit Comments by November 18***

Governor Inslee and his advisors—the Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council—must evaluate the steep costs of oil-by-rail in an Environmental Impact Statement. From public safety to traffic congestion to the risk of a catastrophic spill, Tesoro Savage’s project does not add up.

**Email:** [efsec@utc.wa.gov](mailto:efsec@utc.wa.gov)

**Mail:** Stephen Posner  
Interim EFSEC Manager  
Energy Facility Site Evaluation Council  
PO Box 43172  
1300 S Evergreen Park Dr. SW  
Olympia, WA 98504-3172



***Get Involved. Contact Dan Serres, Conservation Director, Columbia Riverkeeper, at [Dan@Columbiariverkeeper.org](mailto:Dan@Columbiariverkeeper.org) or (503) 890-2441.***

<sup>i</sup> <http://www.propublica.org/article/the-other-fracking-north-dakotas-oil-boom-brings-damage-along-with-prosperity>

<sup>ii</sup> 360,000/day x 365 days = 131,400,000 barrels/year. 131,400,000 barrels per year x 0.43 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>/barrel = 56,502,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year 56,502,000 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year x 1 car/4.8 metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year = 11,771,250 cars per year. Conversions from U.S. EPA website, <http://www.epa.gov/greenpower/pubs/calcmeth.htm#vehicles>