

Canadian activists insist 'This Pipeline Will Not Be Built!'

Indigenous and Climate Leaders Tell Trudeau After Canada Approves Trans Mountain Expansion

Tuesday 25 June 2019, by [CORBETT Jessica](#) (Date first published: 19 June 2019).

The federal government's decision on the dirty energy project came just a day after the House of Commons voted to declare a climate emergency

"Canada deserves a [Green New Deal](#), not more fossil fuel projects."

That's how many climate campaigners—including Clayton Thomas-Muller of 350.org—[responded](#) after Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on Tuesday announced his federal government approved an expansion of the Trans Mountain tar sands pipeline, just a day after the country's House of Commons [voted](#) to declare a climate emergency. Ahead of the anticipated move, critics [charged](#) that green-lighting the project would make an "absolute mockery" of the emergency declaration.

Greta Thunberg, the Swedish teen whose [solo strike](#) outside her country's parliament last year ignited a [global youth climate movement](#), called the decision "shameful."

One second they declare a [#ClimateEmergency](#) and the next second they say yes to expand a pipeline.

This is shameful.

But of course this is not only in Canada, we can unfortunately see the same pattern everywhere...<https://t.co/zVbWXnLBSQ>

— Greta Thunberg (@GretaThunberg) [June 19, 2019](#)

Tzeporah Berman, international program director at Stand.earth, said the approval was "inconsistent" with the House of Commons declaration. As Berman put it, "If we are going to fight climate change in Canada, we need to face the fact that we can no longer expand fossil fuel production and infrastructure."

The Canadian government [purchased](#) the "climate-killing" pipeline from energy giant Kinder Morgan last year, after the company faced construction delays due to widespread opposition from environmental and Indigenous groups. The expansion project [involves](#) building a new pipeline roughly parallel to an existing one that runs from Alberta's oil sands to a coastal terminal in Burnaby, British Columbia.

Trudeau's government claimed in a [statement](#) Tuesday that "every dollar the federal government earns from this project will be invested in Canada's clean energy transition." The statement said that

while approval for the project was based on the confidence that “strong environmental protections have been and continue to be put in place” and “consultations with Indigenous peoples involved meaningful, two-way dialogue” that fulfilled its legal obligations, the government plans to “launch the next phase of engagement with Indigenous groups on ways they could share in the benefits of the expansion, including through equity ownership or revenue sharing.”

Several Indigenous leaders and groups such as Protect The Inlet, meanwhile, [maintain](#) that the expansion project “lacks consent from many Indigenous peoples and Nations along the route and tanker radius,” and remain staunchly opposed to it.

“No matter who approves it, this pipeline will not be built,” [declared](#) Will George, a leader of Protect The Inlet and member of the Tsleil-Waututh Nation, whose territory encompasses the tanker terminal. “People in British Columbia are the ones risking disaster from spills and we’re prepared to do whatever it takes to stop this pipeline.”

Vancouver is holding an emergency march to send a clear message to [@JustinTrudeau](#) that the [#TMX](#) pipeline has no consent and will not be built. Details below <https://t.co/kAL1jh4bE6>

— 350 Canada (@350Canada) [June 18, 2019](#)

The Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs [said](#) Tuesday that the government’s announcement “demonstrates a lackadaisical and irresponsible approach to combating climate change and recognizing the human rights of Indigenous peoples.”

“Our lands are burning and flooding. Our fish are dying and our people are suffering. Now is not the time to recklessly pursue environmentally devastating projects while our territories suffer,” said Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, president of the Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs.

“We will actively and continuously resist the pursuit of short-term gains, in order to ensure the quality of life and the well-being of our children and our children’s children,” Phillip vowed. “We do not accept Canada’s pre-meditated decision, and we are prepared to continue to oppose this project through any means possible.”

"The federal government is in a conflict of interest as an owner, regulator and enforcer, as well as a fiduciary for First Nations... & all you taxpayers" said [@TsleilWaututh](#) Chief Leah George Wilson. "We will be appealing this decision to the Fed Court of Appeal." [#TransMountain](#)

— Dogwood (@dogwoodbc) [June 18, 2019](#)

Climate activists and Indigenous groups [held](#) an emergency rally in downtown Vancouver Tuesday night in response to the government’s announcement and are planning a march in solidarity with the Tiny House Warriors—who, for years, have [challenged](#) Kinder Morgan and now the Canadian government by constructing small structures in the pipeline’s proposed path—for Saturday.

On Saturday we march! After that we keep resisting. [@JustinTrudeau](#) [@Bill_Morneau](#) are talking about "de-risking" [#TMX](#), but we will make sure building infrastructure to

destroy our future stays a huge risk. [@CHEK_News](#) [@cfax1070](#) [@CTVNews](#)
[@CBContheisland](#) [@timescolonist](#) [#TMX](#) [#StopTMX](#) [pic.twitter.com/JTtI7Kts2V](#)

— Emily Thiessen 🇺🇸 (@emilymingsan) [June 18, 2019](#)

“It is our basic responsibility as settlers to support Indigenous struggles. Indigenous people worldwide are on the frontline against resource developments that are pushing our biosphere to the brink of climate and ecological collapse,” said march organizer Bobby Arbess. “We must help stop the massive expansion of tar sands driving the Trans Mountain project. It represents a lethal tipping point that is not morally acceptable in a climate emergency.”

Jessica Corbett

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P.S.

Common Dreams

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2019/06/19/pipeline-will-not-be-built-indigenous-and-climate-leaders-tell-trudeau-after-canada>