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“Kinder Morgan Expansion Plans: A RISK TOO GREAT TO ACCEPT”

Tsleil-Waututh Nation to Oppose Kinder Morgan Pipeline Expansion to Pacific

North Vancouver, BC – October 31, 2011

Chief Justin George announced today that the Tsleil-Waututh Nation will oppose the expansion of the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline. “The pipeline ends at the Westridge terminal located along the Burrard Inlet in the heart of the Tsleil-Waututh traditional territory. “The risks associated with the Kinder Morgan project are too great to accept” said Chief George.

“The Tsleil-Waututh are the ‘People of the Inlet’. We have exercised stewardship responsibility for the lands and waters of our territory since time out of mind. As a result of industrial expansion over the last century, my Nation has seen the quality of its resources decline to a point where our elders can no longer teach their grandchildren how to harvest traditional marine foods, such as clams, that have sustained our people for thousands of years.”

Kinder Morgan is proposing a three phased expansion to twin the existing Trans Mountain pipeline to facilitate the transportation of oil from Alberta to its Westridge terminal located on the south shore of the Burrard Inlet. The first stage of the expansion project was completed in 2008, shortly after the 2007 oil spill. If fully expanded, the pipeline capacity would increase the transportation of oil from 300,000 to 700,000 barrels per day and usher in an era of intensified oil tanker traffic in Burrard Inlet.

“Since Kinder Morgan took over operation of the Trans Mountain pipeline, our community has noticed an increase in tanker traffic in Burrard Inlet. Vancouver is one of the most beautiful and livable cities in the world. The community, the people, the environment; there is just too much at stake to allow such a project to proceed.”

“Tsleil-Waututh is supportive of economic development initiatives that find a balance between the environment and the economy” said Chief George. “Tsleil-Waututh has embraced sustainable development on our reserve land and in our traditional territory. We are property developers and business owners in renewable energy technology. We have an array of government and industry partnerships that we rely upon to foster the economy that helps to sustain our community.”

Tsleil-Waututh directly experienced the impacts of the 2007 Kinder Morgan oil spill which discharged approximately 1500 barrels of oil into Burrard Inlet and adjacent areas. “The Nation has a history of leadership in advancing the protection and restoration of the lands and waters of our territory through policy and cooperative planning processes” said Chief George. “Our community was deeply affected by the 2007 oil spill. Our Inlet has been scarred by the impacts of oil spills and we have seen firsthand the inadequacies of emergency response and clean up efforts. Given this experience, it is just too big of a risk to allow more oil to be transported through Burrard Inlet for export.

Chief George continues, “this is not just a Tsleil-Waututh issue or an aboriginal rights issue; this is an issue that could impact everyone’s quality of life. Residents of the Lower Mainland, local and regional governments, the environmental community and all First Nations rely on the health of marine ecosystems to sustain their culture and wellbeing.”

Tsleil-Waututh Chief and Council plan to discuss this matter further with their community and to engage other jurisdictions and stakeholders.

MEDIA CONTACT

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BACKGROUND

Tsleil-Waututh Nation is a progressive and vibrant Coast Salish community of approximately 500 members located along the shores of Burrard Inlet in North Vancouver, B.C., Canada. For more information please visit the Nation’s Website at www.twnation.ca.