Petroleum 1
Today

- Mainly the Tarsands
- Alberta prefers to call them the “Oil Sands”
  - Sounds much cleaner
Tarsands

• Conventional petroleum output is probably at or close to its global peak
  – Supplemented by fracking
• Petroleum only gets more expensive from now on
• But the Athabaska tar sands hold the largest petroleum reserves outside the Middle East
Tarsands

• Exploitation of tarsands involves major environmental challenges
  – Local impacts, oil spills
  – Local energy and water demand
• Does and will affect human health, First Nations, local environments
• But most of these impacts can/could/should be managed
Tarsands

• Gillanders et al 2008
• Looked at 1984-2005 Landsat imagery
  – Densest, most mature woodland destroyed faster than scrub
  – Extractive area boosted from 2,500 HA 1984 to 33,000 HA in 2005
• Environmental impact easily registers in Landsat’s crude imagery.
Where the future meets the past.

The Wood Bison Viewpoint  50km ahead

Syncrude
Securing Canada's Energy Future
Tarsands

• But using petroleum involves release of CO2, a crucial greenhouse gas
• This will be the most difficult issue to manage
  – Tarsands a crucial global reserve
  – Pipelines to the coast make it easier to exploit the tarsands
  – Harper government keen to promote these
Tarsands

- Two major technologies for mining:
  - Open-pit surface excavation
    - Scars the landscape
  - Horizontal drilling and steam extraction
    - Less surface impact but generates contaminated water, requires energy
Tarsands

• The heavy bitumenous crude needs to be processed before it can be refined
  – Changed into a synthetic crude in an oil upgrader
Tarsands

- Tarsands boom fuels population growth which outstrips social investment
  - Fort McMurray short of housing, deficient in social infrastructure
FORT MCMURRAY, ALBERTA
WELCOME TO
FORT McMURRAY
WE HAVE THE ENERGY
NOW HIRING
(FULL & PART TIME STAFF)
"WE OFFER"
* ABOVE MINIMUM WAGE
* FLEXIBLE SCHEDULES
* MEAL DISCOUNTS
* TRANSPORTATION HOME FOR STAFF WORKING LATE
APPLY WITHIN
Tarsands

• Altering Canada
• Ottawa, Edmonton allow private sector to play a key role
  – Increasingly hands the resource to outsiders
• Already vital to the USA
  – Canada its largest foreign oil supplier
  – China, India keen to get a share of the action
Petroleum

- Petroleum industry has become very powerful in the west, especially in Alberta
  - Tends to dominate Alberta’s politics
  - Alberta’s elites rich with oil money
  - Makes petroleum industry difficult to regulate
  - Petroleum industry essentially controls environmental monitoring in and around the Tarsands
Pipelines

• To make it easier to exploit the tarsands pipelines are needed to reach export markets
  – To be filled with tarsands crude diluted with chemicals (dilbit)
Pipeline to the US Gulf Coast

• TransCanada’s Keystone XL
• An thorny political issue for years in ther US
  – Republicans pro, Democrats anti
  – Obama turns it down
  – Trump would approve it
Pipelines

- With Keystone XL frustrated the industry backed by the Harper Government pushed for two other schemes:
  - Northern Gateway to Kitimat BC, via tankers to Asia
  - Furious opposition from First Nations, BC
Pipelines

• And another scheme to reverse Enbridge line 9 from Sarnia to Montreal
  – To carry Tarsands dilbit
  – Through Toronto and many other parts of southern Ontario and Quebec
  – Just south of Campus
Enbridge’s Tar Sands Pipeline Plan: All Pain & No Gain for Ontario & Quebec
THE TARSANDS COME TO ONTARIO

#NOLINE9

Resistance, Education and Alternatives
Sat., NOV. 17
10 am - 5 pm
@ Sydney Smith
100 St. George St, U of T

Special guests: Maude Barlow (Council of Canadians), Art Sterritt (BC Coastal First Nations), Wes Elliot (Haudenosaunee land defender) and Vanessa Gray (Aamjiwnaang First Nation) as well as experts on labour, environmental justice and Indigenous Rights.

More info: boliviacaclimatejustice@gmail.com | t.grupoapoyo.org | Facebook
Part of the OPIRG Rebuilding Bridges conference: rebuildingbridges.wordpress.com
• Enbridge’s line 6B ruptured in 2010 and spilled 1M Gallons + of dilbit into the Kalamazoo River
• Exposed where it crosses the Rouge River in Toronto
Pipelines

• *If maintained properly* are fairly safe ways to move oil about
• The real issue is that they make it easier to exploit the Tarsands/Oilsands
• And most of the oil refining/petrochemicals jobs will shift to the end of the pipeline