



## The Round-Up: October 29th 2006

Posted by [Stoneleigh](#) on October 29, 2006 - 12:24pm in [The Oil Drum: Canada](#)

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### [Warming climate opens late-season Arctic routes](#)

Arctic straits that are typically choked solid with ice this time of year remain completely open to shipping traffic late in October, raising profound issues for Canada as it struggles to maintain its grasp on the Arctic.

For the past week, the Canadian Coast Guard scientific icebreaker Amundsen has sailed east from the Nunavut hamlet of Kugluktuk, encountering virtually no resistance through straits that have for centuries been nearly impossible to traverse, even in summer.

"We actually went through Bellot Strait and Fury and Hecla Strait, which nobody has ever done this time of year," said Fisheries and Oceans researcher Gary Stern, who is serving as chief scientist aboard the Amundsen. "There was absolutely no ice."

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## Natives file suit against pipeline

A legal storm rocked a \$4-billion plan to put oilsands production on global markets by building a pipeline from Edmonton across British Columbia to a new supertanker terminal at Kitimat.

Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, a Prince George coalition of eight B.C. First Nations along the proposed Gateway Pipeline route, launched a protest lawsuit today in the Federal Court of Canada.

The legal broadside alleges federal Environment Minister Rona Ambrose failed to consult aboriginal communities properly before setting up a "joint review panel" of the Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency and the National Energy Board to consider the project.

The lawsuit demands a halt to the regulatory process until Ambrose co-operates with the natives, saying her decision fails to comply with years of aboriginal rights rulings by the Supreme Court of Canada.

The B.C. natives want a decision-maker role as judges of the project comparable to aboriginal seats on an environmental joint review panel currently holding hearings on the \$7.5-billion Mackenzie Gas Project, Carrier Sekane Chief David Luggi said in an interview.

The Gateway proposal poses risks to natural resources such as water and salmon on territory claimed by the tribes in decades of B.C. negotiations still underway, Luggi said.

Discussions with Enbridge have fallen short of convincing the communities the project will do no harm, he said. The history of pipelines show they are always environmental risks and oil spills are inevitable, Luggi added.

"It's just a matter of time," the chief predicted.

More than four years of talks by Enbridge with about 40 aboriginal communities along the Gateway route will continue to identify their concerns and strive to find ways of responding, company spokesman Glenn Herchak said.

The project remains on schedule for completion in 2010 or 2011 at the latest and Enbridge does not interfere in aboriginal rights disputes between Ottawa and natives, Herchak said.

It is too soon even to speculate on effects of the court case, said Robert Deslauriers, environmental agency communications director Robert Deslauriers said.

Natural Resources Canada has been assigned responsibility for aboriginal rights issues associated with the Gateway project and is setting up a process to consult all the B.C. native communities affected, Deslaurieirs said.

Luggi said he accepted an invitation to meet Natural Resources Minister Gary Lunn in Ottawa Dec. 7. Ambrose should also attend, the B.C. native chief added.

#### [EU set to meet gas emission targets](#)

The European Union is on track to meet its collective target for cutting greenhouse gas emissions, Brussels said on Friday. However, the European Commission warned against complacency as it revealed that seven member states were running behind. "These projections show there is no room for complacency or error," environment commissioner Stavros Dimas said.

#### [BAPE rejects Skypower's Quebec wind farm plan](#)

The Quebec Environmental Public Hearing Board has rejected a \$350-million wind power proposal from a Toronto company that wanted to build an expansive farm in the province's northeastern region.

The board, known by its French acronym, BAPE, gave the thumbs down to Skypower's plans, which would include the construction of 114 windmills in four communities bordering the St Lawrence seaway, near Rivière-du-Loup.

#### [Clearing the air on Clean Air Act](#)

The introduction of the federal government's Clean Air Act last week, rather than clarifying public understanding about air pollutants and other emissions, seems to have exacerbated the confusion.

Principal in that confusion is a misunderstanding of the fact that all emissions are not the same.

Statistics pertaining to smog-forming gases have routinely been misapplied to carbon-dioxide output and vice versa, and the roles of both have been comprehensively confused. It is no wonder the subject seems unfathomable.

So let's clear the air.



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