

## Tar Sands Oil Well Blowout: "Nobody really understands how to stop it."

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WASHINGTON (July 25, 2013) - A tar sands oil well blowout enters its 10th week out of control in Canada's Boreal forest, as an in-depth study finds the industry has had more than 9,000 environmental mishaps in 16 years and Alberta's oversight is lax and failing.

**Danielle Droitsch, director of the Canada project at the Natural Resources Defense Council, made the following statement:**

"As this tar sands oil well blowout spreads unabated, we see once again that environmental damage from this industry is appallingly widespread, breathtakingly common, poorly overseen and largely kept from the public. This type of drilling for tar sands is what the industry has planned for much of the future expansion. Not only does it release even more climate pollution than tar sands strip-mining, but it clearly is a threat to the surrounding landscape that industry doesn't know how to handle. The tar sands oil well blowout makes it clear that projects such as the proposed Keystone XL pipeline that would drive expansion of this type of tar sands extraction should be rejected."

More than 190,000 gallons of tar sands crude has already gushed from a multiple blowout at Canadian Natural Resources Ltd.'s Primrose in situ drill site. The blowout is reported to have begun May 21 and continues unabated, contaminating native forest and bog lands, and killing beavers, loons and other wildlife.

"Nobody really understands how to stop it from leaking," a scientist who has been on the site for the Canadian government told the Toronto Star newspaper, anonymously.

The blowout coincides with the release of an exhaustive (676-page) report on Alberta's oversight of environmental incidents resulting from tar sands production. The report - by Global Forest Watch Canada and Treeline Ecological Research - cites "a minimum of 9,262 environmental incidents" between 1996 and 2012, including 1,179 pipeline releases.

Link to the report: <https://sites.google.com/site/bitumenenvironmentalincidents/file-cabinet>

Link to Danielle Droitsch's blog:

[http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/ddroitsch/tar\\_sands\\_well\\_blowout\\_raises.html](http://switchboard.nrdc.org/blogs/ddroitsch/tar_sands_well_blowout_raises.html)

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