

Energy summit takes aim at “dirty oil”

Dan Mesec/The Interior News

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(Photo: Gerald Amos speaks to a concerned crowd about Tar Sands at the All Nations Energy Summit, June 6.)

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In the wake of the Enbridge pipeline project proposal, Moricetown held an All Nations Energy Summit last weekend to discuss the risks and impacts the project would have on the environment if it is approved.

Representatives of First Nations bands from the Athabaskan all the way to Kitimat were in attendance to voice their opinion about the tar sands and the destruction of their traditional lands.

“We’re trying to bring together First Nations from along the pipeline and the tanker route, as well as non-first nations communities to help learn more about the project itself,” said Tara Marsden, co-organizer for the Moricetown All Nations Energy Summit.

There were a number of workshops and presentations during the summit including personal accounts from people directly affected by the development in the tar sands and the possible arrival of oil tankers on the B.C. coast.

“Informed decision making is a right for First Nations,” said Marsden. “We’re trying to inform and inspire people to have a say in developments like this.

“There have been coalbed methane rallies and meetings that were very similar to this but it was focused only on the Northwest, but this is huge, we’re really bringing a lot of people together.”

Keynote speaker, Merran Smith, of Forest Ethics based in Vancouver said that the time is right for change .

“There has been a couple hundred people who have come out to hear about not just the pipeline, but the whole story of the impacts, development and expansion of the tar sands, and all the risks involved with this pipeline,” said Smith.

“We’re at a crossroads, are we going to choose to continue our addiction to oil or are we going to choose to start developing new forms of energy — green energy?”