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WILDFIRE LOSS TO OILSANDS AT LEAST 30 MILLION BARRELS WORTH \$1.4 BILLION

Damage to oilsands projects minimal but analysts say restarting operations is taking longer than expected. Analysts say lost oilsands production from the Fort McMurray wildfires could top 30 million barrels and cost the industry upwards of \$1.4 billion.

Some of the largest oilsands producers in the province were forced to shut down or curtail operations last month as 80,000 residents of Fort McMurray evacuated the city to escape the fierce blaze, which has yet to be extinguished. Damage to oilsands projects was minimal but Calgary-based analysts say restarting operations is taking longer than expected. Analyst Martin King of FirstEnergy Capital estimates the industry's production loss at \$1.4 billion, while Nick Lupick, an analyst for AltaCorp Capital, puts the value of the losses so far at almost \$1.6 billion. Both said Wednesday that they expect their numbers to grow. "It sounds like there have been some pipeline clogging issues on some of these projects," said King. "I guess when the bitumen cooled it hardened

and so they're having trouble getting stuff down these pipes right now." King said his wildfire cost estimate is based on a production loss of about 37 million barrels, about half in the form of raw bitumen, which must be mixed with light oil to facilitate flow in a pipeline. The other half is much more valuable synthetic crude. Lupick said he based his calculation on lost production of about 28 million barrels but with a higher proportion in the form of synthetic crude, which commands prices similar to West Texas Intermediate oil, thus delivering the higher dollar figure. "Based on an outage of three weeks during the fires on average for all of the affected projects, the total lost revenue works out to be roughly \$1.6 billion," he said. "Made up of roughly \$1.05 billion of SCO and \$550 million of bitumen revenue." He said he expects the final production loss to grow beyond 30 million barrels because of delays in restarting projects and the fact that Syncrude Canada must complete a maintenance turnaround at its upgrader before returning to normal operations.

Lupick estimated Suncor Energy has lost about 21 million barrels of output from its own oilsands

operations as well as from Syncrude, in which it has a majority stake.

Those barrels would have been worth about \$700 million, he said, adding an outage at Suncor's Edmonton refinery that caused gasoline shortages in Western Canada would take the loss to about \$800 million. Lupick said other costs of restarting production could easily inflate Suncor's total losses to nearly \$1 billion. In a recent report to investors, analyst Paul Cheng of Barclays said about half of the one million barrels per day of production interrupted by the fire has been restored. "By the end of June, we estimate the majority of production would be back online, with about 300,000 bpd still ramping up or undergoing planned turnarounds, and operations basically back to normal by mid to end of July, assuming no new shut-ins from ongoing fires," he wrote.

SHELL CANADA APPROVED TO RESUME DRILLING OFF NOVA SCOTIA

Drilling ceased in March after a piece of equipment fell to the ocean floor Nova Scotia's offshore regulator

has given Shell Canada permission to resume drilling the first of two exploratory wells, following an incident earlier this year which saw a two-kilometre-long pipe to fall to the ocean floor. The Canada-Nova Scotia Offshore Petroleum Board (CNSOPB) said drilling can resume Wednesday, but Shell Canada faces new restrictions that will remain in place until the regulator completes further reviews.

Shell Canada's contracted drill ship, the Stena IceMAX, will now have to disconnect from the sub-sea well head once waves reach five metres in height. Previously, the limit was eight metres. The company faced a "rigorous and exhaustive review of the incident," said Stuart Pinks, the regulator's CEO. The regulator "sought and received assurance on a number of matters" including Shell Canada's equipment, procedures, training and risk management. No one was injured and no well fluids or oil-based drilling fluids were spilled, the regulator said. The CNSOPB is continuing to review the incident. It says no decisions have yet been made about the recovery of the riser that fell to the ocean floor.

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VANCOUVER ASKS COURT TO HALT TRANS MOUNTAIN PIPELINE EXPANSION

New legal action is one of several hurdles the pipeline project is now facing in B.C.

The City of Vancouver has joined the growing list of groups asking the courts to halt the Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion project. In the legal application that was filed in Vancouver on Friday the city is asking the Federal Court of Appeal to stop the National Energy Board from taking any action that would allow the project to move forward.

The city argues the National Energy Board failed to properly assess "whether the project is required by public convenience and necessity,"

when with a number of conditions.

It also argues the NEB failed to conduct a proper environmental assessment of the project, including the full scope of associated greenhouse gas emissions. The legal action is just one of many challenges the controversial pipeline project is facing. Over the weekend lawyers for the Living Oceans Society and the Raincoast Conservation Foundation said they have filed a judicial review, arguing the NEB did not take into account the impact the project would have on the endangered southern resident killer whales. And earlier this month the Squamish Nation launched its own judicial review of the board's recommendation, arguing the NEB did not fulfill its obligation to consult with the First Nation about the

project. Kinder Morgan wants to triple the capacity of its existing pipeline from the oilsands near Edmonton to Burnaby, B.C., thereby increasing the number of tanker ships in the area seven-fold. Following a second federal review, the federal Liberal government has said it expects to make a final decision on the \$6.8-billion project in December.

ALBERTA ENERGY REGULATOR TRIES TO STEM TIDE OF ORPHAN WELLS

It just got harder to buy oil and gas assets in Alberta. With little fanfare, the Alberta Energy Regulator has tightened up the rules for buying oil and gas assets. From now on, a company looking to buy oil and gas wells in Alberta will need a liability management ratio (LMR) of 2.0 or higher. That means the value of a company's producing wells must be twice that of the cost of abandoning and reclaiming the wells at the end of their life. It is a double of the existing ratio of 1:1 and means that more than 70 per cent of the companies licensed in Alberta can no longer buy oil and gas wells without paying a deposit to the regulator. This is a direct reaction to the Redwater Energy court decision last month that ruled energy companies have to pay back their secured lenders before paying to clean up old wells in the case of a bankruptcy. The AER is very concerned about a possible flood of old wells into the Orphan Well Fund. In the bulletin dated June 20, the AER said the rule changes were intended to "minimize the risk to Albertans." Carolyn Wright, an energy lawyer for Burnet Duckworth and Palmer (BDP), said she is concerned that the rule will have the opposite effect during a time when many energy companies are scrambling simply to survive. "Those

parties that were looking for opportunities to keep themselves alive and afloat. It's gone away now and those parties are typically left with no option but to fold up their tents," said Wright. In a note to clients on Tuesday, BDP said the rule change would have "a chilling effect on the rise in transaction activity in a province that is struggling to get back on its feet following a two-year long rut in commodity prices." AER spokesman Ryan Bartlett said companies can improve their LMR by cleaning up old wellsites, posting security or revamping their proposed well transactions. The regulator acknowledged its regulations may "inconvenience some stakeholders" but pointed out it wants to work with industry and the province to develop broader permanent regulatory measures. Gary Leach, the head of Explorers and Producers of Alberta — which represents junior energy companies, said that he is concerned about the rule change. He says he also understands that the regulator is trying to strike a balance that protects the Orphan Well Fund, but still preserves a functioning marketplace for purchase and sale of oil and gas assets. "When there's not enough money to go around, and that's the quintessential point in an insolvency, someone else gets stuck with the bill, said Leach. "So what we have here is interim measures by the AER to provide some stability and guidelines on who they will permit to acquire assets while the issues that erupted from the Redwater decision are sorted out." Before the Redwater case was decided, the AER had priority in the case of a bankruptcy. Any producing assets that had value had to pay for the cleanup of inactive wells. But the Redwater decision cut the link between a company's "good wells" and its "bad wells," allowing the good ones to be sold off and the bad ones to be passed onto the Orphan

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Well Association. On the flip side of this issue, Barry Robinson has long been sounding the alarm about the growing number of abandoned and inactive wells in Alberta. He's happy that the AER is tightening up the rules, but thinks the regulator should go further. "These are reasonable as an interim measure," said Robinson. "However, in the long run, the LMR is still fundamentally flawed in how it calculates deemed assets and deemed liabilities. I still think that the long-term solution is regulated timelines [for cleanup of old wells] and full security."

Alberta coal communities look at what future holds as age of coal comes to end Impact of phase-out expected to

be felt by everyone in some towns built around the fossil fuel. Coal-dependent communities in Alberta are taking a hard look at their future as the age of coal in the province starts to draw to a close. For Grande Cache, Alta., the closure of its coal mine last year and the looming final shutdown of Maxim Power's Milner coal-fired power plant has put the very future of the town itself in question. Mayor Herb Castle says the town council has requested that the regional government study whether Grande Cache, about 430 kilometres west of Edmonton, should dissolve and become part of the municipal district of Greenview. "They will examine all our finances, our infrastructure, our longer-term needs, and say either you're viable

or you're not viable," he said.

Castle said council has been considering the move for a couple years, with federal regulations already requiring the Milner plant to shut down at the end of 2019.

But the loss of 400 jobs from a nearby coal mine because of the collapse of the global steel-making coal industry has brought new urgency. "We're in the cellar. Our economy is shrinking. We have people who have walked away from houses and mortgages because they can't afford them," said Castle. The loss of hundreds of jobs in the town of about 4,300 people means everyone will be affected, he said. "The long-term effects here will be felt at the grocery store and the garage, because our population is decreasing from a loss of employers and subsequent employees. So it's felt pretty much everywhere," said Castle. Hanna, Alta., about 220 kilometres northeast of Calgary, isn't scheduled to lose its biggest employer until 2030, when Atco Power and TransAlta's Sheerness coal-fire power plant will be forced to close under new provincial regulations. But that's a decade earlier than expected under the federal regulations, and given the uncertainty in the power market, mayor Chris Warwick isn't sure it will even stay operating that long. When the power plant and the mine that feeds it do close, the town of about 2,700 people will lose 200 well-paying jobs and many will have to move elsewhere with their families, said Warwick. "You start taking families out of town and now you're talking about 300, 400 people, so that's a major impact," he said. The town has started looking at its options, and is launching studies on the impact of the Sheerness closure and how officials in Hanna will create jobs and

keep the economy going. Warwick says they'll be looking at everything from the tourism potential that could stem from revitalizing some historic railway workings to increasing water supplies to boost agriculture options beyond largely ranching. He added he hopes the province will help fund the studies as part of the \$195 million from the carbon tax promised for coal community transitions and indigenous communities, but so far hasn't heard any details. Peter Miller, the mayor of Forestburg, Alta., says he too is eager to hear funding details from the province, and has asked Alberta's economic development minister, Deron Bilous, to visit the town. Forestburg faces the loss of about 65 jobs from its population of 880, plus dozens more in surrounding communities, when Atco's Battle River power plant closes. "They keep talking about helping these communities transition, but they've been kind of long on words and short on action," said Miller. Bilous's spokesman, Jean-Marc Prevost, said in an email that the government is getting ready to speak with the communities.

"We recognize each community affected by the Climate Leadership Plan has unique challenges and opportunities as they transition away from coal," said Prevost.

"Throughout the summer a series of consultations will get underway to listen to workers and community leaders on the best kinds of supports to make the transition easier."

For Castle, those consultations can't come soon enough.

"We have told them we are quickly approaching a very difficult circumstance here, and that was several months ago," he said.



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 #4 Waino's Kivimaa
 Moonlight Bay Road
\$339,000
 3 BDRMS Year round cabin
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 1001 - 1003 Trelayne Place
\$275,000
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 Year round cabin
 Double detached garage.
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 (Turtle Lake Lodge Cres)
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\$325,000
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 3 BD, 1 BA
 Year round cabin
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