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Washington is unprepared for the risks that tar sands crude oils pose to our waters, local communities, and Southern Resident Orcas

- Washington is already at risk from tar sands oil moving through our state.
- Tar sand crude oil (diluted bitumen) is already moving through Washington by vessel, train, and pipeline and our protections have not kept up with the changing risks these oils pose.
- In addition to being one of the most climate-polluting fossil fuels, tar sands oils can sink when spilled and are virtually impossible to clean up, causing irreparable damage to shoreline communities and vulnerable ecosystems.
- Washington's rule should require more rapid response for companies transporting these oils to respond to spills before they submerge and sink.
- The unique risks of tar sands oil require more stringent protections.
- Ecology must send a clear signal to industry transporting tar sands crude oil that the unique risks it poses will be taken seriously, it will be regulated more stringently than conventional crude oils, and that planning requirements will be made based on the best available science.
- Ecology must act now to increase protections for nonfloating oils, like tar sands oils, with more stringent response time and equipment requirements.
- To protect our waters and communities, Ecology should require a fast, aggressive, and well-coordinated response to contain and recover tar sands crude oils before they submerge and sink.
- Spills of these oils in other states, such as on the Kalamazoo River in Michigan, have had catastrophic results leading to years-long response efforts and limited recovery of sunken oils.
- The draft rule is right to require a faster timeframe for the initial assessment of a spill; however, the rule provides no assurance that the current response times and capability (the amount and type of response resources) will be sufficient to respond to a worst-case spill.
- This rule does not establish the protections we need. The scope is too narrow to update all our needed protections and it fails to establish stronger response requirements for tar sands crude oil.
- Ecology received a clear directive from the legislature to use this rule update to enhance our protections for nonfloating oils.
- This rule does not go far enough to protect our freshwater, marine ecosystems, and shoreline communities, by using outdated models that overestimate our response capacity and by delaying needed improvements.
- The risk of a catastrophic sinking oil spill in our waters and communities is too great. We appreciate Ecology's work to update this rule and urge that they establish the protections that Washington deserves.