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In addition to being one of the most climate-polluting fossil fuels on the planet, heavy tar sands crude oil sinks when spilled into the water and is virtually impossible to clean up, causing irreparable damage to shoreline communities and vulnerable aquatic ecosystems. An oil spill in the Gorge is difficult enough to clean up, a tar sands spill would be virtually impossible.

Washington waters and the Scenic Area are exposed to the risk of oil spills every day. This risk threatens jobs, livelihoods, and wildlife, including the endangered Southern Resident orcas in the Salish Sea and salmon in the Columbia River. With so many current and proposed fossil fuel projects in our region, Ecology must establish the strongest possible protection from oil spills.