



More Oil = More Global Warming

We need to do all we can to protect our children's future by reducing the pollution that's driving global warming. A new report tells us that if we burn all the reserves of coal, oil, and gas in the world, temperatures would increase enough to melt all of the ice on Antarctica—resulting in a sea level rise of more than 160 feet.¹ It's imperative that we begin to transition as quickly as possible away from fossil fuels and toward a 100 percent renewable energy future.

Above: USFS Region5. Circle photo: NOAA. Below: Elias Schewel. All: Flickr, CC-BY-NC 2.0.



A dry riverbed in California due to the years-long drought.



Stop crude oil exports

Right now oil companies and their allies in Congress are pushing to lift the decades' old ban on U.S. crude oil exports. Lifting the crude oil export ban could result in 7,600 more wells being drilled per year across the country.² Based on current reserves, U.S. production could increase by 3.3 million barrels per day from 2015 through 2035 if we lift the ban on crude oil exports.³

There's no way around it: increasing the amount of oil we drill will lead to an increase in the carbon pollution that's fueling global warming across the world. Recently, Sen. Elizabeth Warren (Mass.) noted that lifting the export ban would increase worldwide carbon emissions by almost 22 million metric tons per year. This is equivalent to the amount of pollution produced annually by five average U.S. coal plants.⁴ Some projections for increased global warming pollution from lifting the crude oil export ban are even higher.

Toxic spills threaten our families

Currently the majority of crude oil is transported around the country by pipeline, but shipments by rail have been increasing. To keep up with the increased demand, oil trains have grown larger and now tow more tanker cars than ever before.⁵

Already, oil trains pass through many major U.S. cities and population-centers, including Sacramento, St. Louis, Philadelphia, and Albany. Oil trains travel on tracks that run along critical waterways, including many of the Great Lakes, on their way to export terminals in cities along both the east and west coasts.⁶



▲ *Oil spill in Lac Megantic, Quebec, Canada, July 6, 2013.*

Oil train accidents hurt our communities

In 2013, a 72 oil car train derailment in the center of Lac-Mégantic, Quebec resulted in a huge explosion. The tragic accident destroyed more than 40 buildings—a huge swath of the town—and killed 47 people. All told more than 1 million gallons of crude oil were released into the environment.¹²

So far in 2015 there have been three major oil rail accidents. In Mount Carbon, W.V., a rail oil spill led to evacuations and a governor-declared state of emergency. In Galena, Ill., a spill threatened to pollute the Mississippi river. A spill in Heimdal, N.D., forced the evacuation of a town.¹³



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* For references please contact info@environmentamerica.org.

If we lift the ban on exporting crude oil, transporting the increased oil we would produce domestically would require enough trains to span the country from Los Angeles to Boston seven times.⁷

We already have too many oil train accidents. And the problem will only get worse if we start exporting crude oil. In 2013 the amount of crude oil spilled in rail incidents in the United States was more than all the oil spilled in rail accidents from 1975 to 2012.⁸ Based on the number of oil train accidents in 2014 alone, increased oil train transport to account for new drilling from lifting the ban on crude exports could mean more than 140 accidents per year.⁹

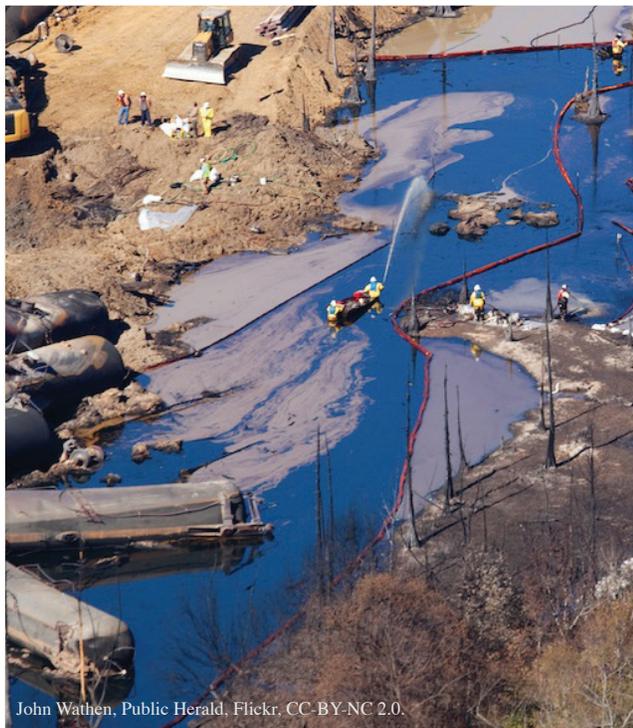
Dr. James Conca, Senior Scientist at UFA Ventures, Inc., describes crude oil as a “nasty material, very destructive when it spills into the environment, and very toxic when it contacts humans or animals.”¹⁰ We owe it to our environment and our families to prevent more crude oil accidents.

We must not increase global warming pollution

The oil industry, which has made lifting the ban on crude oil exports one of its top priorities, is already one of the most profitable industries in the world. Fortune 500 ranks ExxonMobil second on their list of the top 10 companies in 2014, with a profit of \$32.5 billion in 2014.¹¹ And ExxonMobil is far from alone.

Lifting the ban would be a major giveaway to the oil companies. It likely would increase volatility in the oil market, lining big oil’s pockets at the expense of consumers’ health and quality of life.

We need to act boldly and swiftly to stave off the worst impacts of global warming. That includes doing more to quickly wean America from our dependence on oil and other fossil fuels. We cannot allow any policies to move forward that would increase the amount of drilling or our use of oil. The U.S. Congress should oppose lifting the ban on exporting crude oil.



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Staff photo.

▲ Top: The Aliceville, Ala., train explosion. Lower: Gathering support for our work to protect the environment.

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