

EDITORIAL: Down the pipes

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Just who did we elect last year? It's an increasingly pressing question as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau finds himself staring down 981 kilometres of Kinder Morgan pipeline.

The National Energy Board recommended approval of the Trans Mountain project in much the same way the chef's special usually earns the approbation of your waiter.

The NEB process sometimes seemed farcical, with its limited scope and so much emphasis given by the board to the supposed benefits yet scant attention to the very valid critiques.

There will be economic benefits from the pipeline, notably thousands of construction jobs. But when those jobs are finished, we'll be left with a huge swath of land over the pipeline upon which nothing can be built.

And while it is true the risk of a catastrophic spill is remote, the risk is nonetheless real.

We have no doubt Kinder Morgan will implement every possible safeguard to keep their black gold from escaping the pipeline and painting the coastline. But human beings, from the Lac-Mégantic rail disaster to Chernobyl, have proved over and over just how fallible we can be.

And if the safeguards are all successful and 890,000 barrels of oil are safely exported every day, we still won't have averted an environmental catastrophe, only invited a different one in the form of climate change.

When Trudeau ran for office, there were three words emblazoned on nearly every sign promoting the federal Liberal party: Real Change Now.

When they make their decision on the pipeline this December, we get to find out if they meant it.

What are your thoughts? Send us a letter via email by clicking [here \(http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter\)](http://www.nsnews.com/opinion/send-us-a-letter) or post a comment below.

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