Oil and Gas News Briefs
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Lower-cost feedstock gas an advantage for Canadian LNG exports

(Calgary Herald columnist; April 28) - Relatively cheap natural gas feedstock and a stronger political environment. It's clear that many factors — including these two considerations — played a part in Shell making one of the largest acquisitions in Canadian oil patch history with its C$22 billion purchase of ARC Resources this week. The deal could improve the likelihood of Phase 2 of the LNG Canada project moving forward — doubling the export plant's production capacity — but it's also a positive indication for the country's hard-hit gas sector, which has endured years of low prices.

"What it means is the reversal of the decades-long exodus of foreign capital from Canada — at a scale that we've never seen before in the upstream business, which is a huge shot in the arm for the industry," gas producer Advantage Energy CEO Michael Belenkie said April 28. "It's a great sign." Shell is the largest partner in the LNG Canada project near Kitimat, British Columbia, which started up last year. Shell's CEO has referenced the advantage of the discounted price of feedstock gas available in Canada.

Western Canadian gas traditionally trades below benchmark U.S. Henry Hub prices. According to data from TD Cowen, benchmark Alberta AECO spot prices closed April 27 below US$1 per million Btu, while U.S. Henry Hub gas closed at US$2.53 per million Btu. "Not all LNG is born equal," Shell CEO Wael Sawan said. "Canadian LNG is, of course, advantaged by the feedstock … which we see will continue to be at a discount to Henry Hub for a long period of time. … We do think AECO is at a unique advantage."

Rising production in Western Canada over the past year has kept prices low. "It looks like AECO pricing could be quite cheap, relative to the rest of North America, for possibly several more years," said Martin King, a senior gas analyst with RBN Energy.

Shell's purchase of gas producer could signal LNG Canada expansion

(The Canadian Press; April 28) - Global energy heavyweight Shell's plan to buy one of Canada's biggest natural gas producers bolsters the likelihood that an expansion of the LNG Canada plant will move ahead, industry experts say. The deal to buy Calgary-based ARC Resources is valued at C$22 billion, accounting for the target company's debt. It gets Shell access to ARC's holdings in the prolific Montney shale formation that last year produced 374,000 barrels of oil equivalent per day.

And that means a steady supply to feed into the 14 million-tonne-per-year LNG Canada facility in Kitimat, British Columbia, where gas piped from northern B.C. and Alberta is chilled into a liquid, loaded onto tankers and sent to high-demand Asian markets. "It's a good signal for the second phase of that LNG project that the government is looking to speed-track," said Tom Pavic, president of Sayer Energy Advisers in Calgary, calling the Montney a "world-class" resource with attractive economics.

Shell owns 40% of LNG Canada alongside Japanese, Malaysian, Chinese and South Korean partners. The initial phase of the project — the first LNG export terminal in Canada — started up last summer. The partners are contemplating doubling its capacity in a second phase, but a final investment decision has not yet been taken. Phase 2 of LNG Canada has been referred to the federal major projects office, which was set up last year to speed along approvals for projects deemed in Canada's national interest.

Industry nervous of pending gas royalty change in British Columbia

(Bloomberg; April 24) - British Columbia Premier David Eby's government is finalizing a new royalty regime on gas extraction that has caused jitters in the energy industry, with major new liquefied natural gas investments hanging in the balance. A government presentation about a month ago alarmed businesses when it appeared to show they'd pay a larger royalty that would kick in at higher gas prices, according to people familiar with the matter who asked not to be identified because the discussions were private.

The updated proposals also came as a surprise, one person said, because the province has been reviewing its oil and gas royalty system for several years and companies have already made drilling plans for the next year. The new system is "almost complete" and due to come into effect Jan. 1, the provincial Ministry of Energy said in an emailed statement, without responding to specifics or sharing details. As recently as 2023, all of Canada's gas exports went to the U.S., but startup last year of the Shell-led LNG Canada project in British Columbia inaugurated exports to Asia.

The Calgary Chamber of Commerce CEO wrote in a newspaper opinion column that the province's "royalty grab" was putting at risk major LNG projects for which companies are nearing investment decisions. The government uses formulas to calculate the royalty on gas produced, which vary based on factors such as the byproducts it includes.

Australian prime minister rejects push for new taxes on LNG exports

(Bloomberg; April 29) - Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said his government wouldn't "undermine" existing liquefied natural gas exports with new taxes, warning that doing so during a global energy crunch would risk investment and fuel security. Pressure has been mounting to increase the tax on LNG producers, as companies profit

from higher prices after the war in Iran cut about a fifth of supply from global markets. Meanwhile, the conflict has also seen Australia grapple with refined fuel security concerns, leading to a diplomatic push to secure shipments from suppliers in Asia.

"Our gas exports are directly linked to our national fuel security, and the middle of a global fuel crisis is the worst possible time to jeopardize these relationships, all the investment that underpins it," Albanese said in Perth. "That is why I can confirm that the budget will not undermine existing contracts on gas exports." The announcement will be a relief to the industry. Aaron Morey, head of the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia, and Woodside CEO Liz Westcott said they welcomed the news.

"One of the things that's really important for investment is no surprises," Albanese said, adding that investment into the gas sector ensures energy supply for both the domestic market and for exports. Australia is one of the world's largest LNG exporters, shipping almost 80 million tonnes last year, mainly to Asia. Sen. David Shoebridge of the Greens Party, which had pushed for the new levies, attacked the decision, posting on social media: "Another budget for the 1% and stuff everyone else. TAX THEM."

Bountiful natural gas gives U.S. economic edge over other nations

(Bloomberg; April 29) - As the Iran war strangles natural gas supplies, countries across Asia and Africa are rationing fuel and enduring blackouts. In Europe, the conflict is raising the risk of an energy crunch this winter. Thousands of miles away, in the heart of U.S. shale country, gas is so plentiful that producers have to pay buyers to take it off their hands. Drillers in the Permian Basin of West Texas and New Mexico have helped make the U.S. the world's largest oil producer. In the process, they've also glutted the region with natural gas, which is extracted there as a byproduct of crude.

There's so much gas, in fact, that it exceeds available pipeline capacity to get the fuel to customers or export terminals on the Gulf Coast. The result: producers literally can't give it away. Permian gas prices aren't merely cheap — they're negative. In other words, sellers are paying customers. While it's not the first time that gas contracts in the region have gone subzero, prices are now lower than ever. The phenomenon feeds into the broader U.S. market. Benchmark U.S. natural gas futures, already low by international standards, have slipped 10% since the Middle East conflict began.

With new pipelines set to start up this year, negative Permian prices won't last forever. But they reveal a gas bounty so massive that it's not only insulating the U.S. from war-driven energy shocks but creating an economic tailwind. Cheap supplies of gas give the U.S. an edge over countries facing fuel shortages. "This comparative energy security is beneficial for domestic industry that relies on gas as a feedstock or form of industrial-grade heat, and increasingly power-hungry industries such as AI and data centers," said Chris Louney, director of global commodity strategy at RBC Capital Markets.

Bangladesh coal-fueled power generation exceeds gas for first time

(The Daily Star; Bangladesh; April 27) - Bangladesh's coal-fired power plants have, for the first time, outpaced gas-based generation, marking a major shift in the country's power mix amid declining domestic gas supply and stagnant LNG imports. Gas has historically been the largest primary fuel source for electricity. But falling output from local fields, limited imports of costly liquefied natural gas and rising use of imported coal have changed the picture. According to Power Development Board data, coal-fired plants supplied the highest share of electricity shortly after the daytime peak on April 26.

Bangladesh's installed power generation capacity currently stands at 28,494 megawatts, of which 12,194MW (43%) is from gas and 7,629MW (27%) from coal. However, shortages in gas, coal and furnace oil mean many plants remain underutilized. Three coal plants under maintenance or facing shortages are expected to raise output by early May. This is likely to make coal's dominance regular.

Badrul Imam, honorary professor at Dhaka University's Department of Geology, said the country's increasing dependence on imported LNG and coal is the result of years of weak focus on domestic gas exploration and production. "The country historically relied on its own indigenous gas resources, which had long supported power generation at relatively low cost, but insufficient investment and policy attention gradually pushed the energy sector toward imported fuels," he said. "Imported LNG is expensive, while coal carries environmental costs despite being relatively cheaper than LNG in some cases."

IEA expects tight global LNG supplies through 2027

(Business Recorder; April 24) - Liquefied natural gas supplies are likely to remain strained through the end of 2027 due to disruptions and infrastructure damage from the U.S.-Iran war, the International Energy Agency said April 24. Energy prices have soared since Tehran effectively closed the Strait of Hormuz to Gulf tanker traffic and began striking oil and gas targets in neighboring countries in retaliation for U.S.-Israeli attacks. "The combined effect of short-term supply losses and slower capacity growth could result in a cumulative loss of around 88 million tonnes of LNG, about 4.2 trillion cubic feet of natural gas, between 2026 and 2030," the Paris-based agency said in a new report. "While new liquefaction projects in other regions are expected to offset these losses over time, the impact will prolong tight markets through 2026 and 2027."

However, soaring prices could depress demand for gas, with many countries already announcing energy-saving steps that could drive demand for renewable energy. "The demand side is set to play a key role in balancing the market, particularly in Asia, where fuel switching is already picking up alongside energy-saving measures," the IEA said.

Pakistan suffering from LNG supply shortage

(Bloom Pakistan; April 29) - Pakistan is facing a severe escalation in its gas crisis as the lack of liquefied natural gas cargoes has pushed the supply shortfall beyond 600 million cubic feet per day, significantly impacting key industrial sectors including power generation and fertilizer production. According to Sui Northern Gas Pipelines, the overall gas supply has dropped sharply to around 700 million cubic feet per day, compared to nearly 1.2 billion per day before recent regional tensions and supply disruptions.

This steep decline has forced authorities to prioritize limited resources, leaving industrial consumers with reduced allocations. The power and fertilizer sectors, heavily dependent on uninterrupted gas supply, are now operating at minimal fuel availability, raising concerns over electricity generation costs and agricultural input shortages ahead of key crop seasons. Domestic consumers have also been affected, with gas pressure reduced across several regions. However, Sui gas officials maintain that supply is being managed to ensure availability during three main meal times in households.

Energy analysts warn that prolonged LNG delays could further worsen the situation, increasing reliance on expensive alternatives such as furnace oil and imported fuels, which may add pressure on electricity tariffs and inflation.

China's imports of LNG headed down to lowest level in 8 years

(Bloomberg; April 29) - China's imports of liquefied natural gas are expected to hit the lowest in eight years, according to ship-tracking data compiled by Kpler, as higher prices triggered by the Middle East war dampen demand. Deliveries to the world's biggest LNG importer are expected to be around 3.5 million tonnes in April, about 30% lower from a year earlier, according to Kpler, which tracks shipping data. If confirmed by official Chinese numbers, that would mark the lowest monthly level since April 2018.

Re-exports have also dropped. The country did not resell any cargo in April, according to ship-tracking data compiled by Bloomberg, a stark difference from just a month before when such sales reached an all-time high of more than 700,000 tonnes. That suggests the higher cost of spot LNG is outweighing profits from reselling shipments. Spot prices of the fuel in Asia are about 70% higher than pre-war levels.

Chinese demand has remained soft over the past year as buyers shy away from expensive LNG to rely on cheaper piped gas. The trend could continue this year given skyrocketing prices due to the war, which have already led some importers to cut back purchases and rely on alternatives for power.

U.S. will pay two more energy companies to drop wind power projects

(The Hill; April 27) - The Trump administration will pay two energy companies to abandon their offshore wind ambitions and invest in fossil fuels instead. The Interior Department announced on April 27 that it would issue a refund to Global Infrastructure Partners, which is part of BlackRock and Golden State Wind, for the money they paid for the opportunity to build offshore wind — if they give up their wind leases and invest in fossil energy projects instead.

The news comes after the department struck a similar deal with TotalEnergies in March and is part of the administration's crusade against wind energy. Under its deal, Global Infrastructure Partners has committed to invest up to $765 million, which it originally spent on its offshore wind lease, in a U.S.-based liquefied natural gas facility, the Interior Department said. In exchange, the department said it will cancel the wind project lease and reimburse the company for what it invests in the LNG facility, which the department did not identify. Global is a partner in two U.S. Gulf Coast LNG export developments.

Golden State Wind will be eligible to receive up to $120 million in reimbursed lease fees based on how much it invests in U.S. oil and gas, energy infrastructure or LNG projects around the Gulf Coast. Golden State Wind is a joint venture between Ocean Winds and Reventus Power. Ocean Winds is a joint venture between international energy transition company ENGIE and EDP Renewables. Reventus Power is a portfolio company of the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board.

U.S. a net exporter of crude for first time since World War II

(Reuters; April 29) - The U.S. became a net exporter of crude for the first time since World War II as the country shipped a record volume of oil to refiners scrambling for new supplies after the Iran war cut off flows from the Persian Gulf, the U.S. Energy Information Administration said on April 29. Europe and Asia have increasingly become dependent on crude from the Americas after the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran triggered the largest-ever disruption to the global market and halted shipping via the Strait of Hormuz.

Total U.S. crude exports climbed to a record 6.44 million barrels per day, marking a 1.64 million-barrel-per-day increase from the week prior. Net imports of crude oil, or the difference between imports and exports, fell by 1.97 million barrels per day to minus 688,000, the first time it turned negative on a weekly basis, meaning outflows surpassed imports. On an annual basis, the U.S. was last a net exporter of crude in 1943, while on a monthly basis the country was last a net exporter in 1944.

"Domestic production was unchanged. It was all about the export numbers. Those barrels are going overseas rather than into storage," said Bob Yawger, director of energy futures at Mizuho. Total exports of crude oil and petroleum products touched a record 14.18 million barrels per day, up 1.298 million from the week prior.

UAE decision to quit OPEC weakens the production cartel

(Wall Street Journal; April 28) - The United Arab Emirates said it would leave OPEC, dealing a heavy blow to the oil cartel as the war in Iran scrambles alliances and investment priorities among the world's top oil producers. The sudden departure of OPEC's third-biggest producer — with production capacity of 4.8 million barrels per day — further weakens a bloc that despite producing up to four of every 10 barrels pumped worldwide has been hobbled by internal disunity and the rise of American oil output.

The war in Iran has piled more pressure by exacerbating rifts among the Arab countries at the core of the group and by closing the Strait of Hormuz, through which the group's biggest producers export most of their oil, making it impossible for the group to influence the market during its biggest supply shock. The UAE is in a relatively privileged position with the ability to circumvent the blockage in the strait by routing more than half of its oil exports across the country. Withdrawing from OPEC will give it more freedom to make investments to expand its output and adjust to the uncertain future of the waterway.

The Gulf monarchy will also exit OPEC+, a group of major oil producers that includes Russia, and gradually increase production afterward, it added. The exit takes away 13% of OPEC's production capacity, according to figures by the International Energy Agency, damaging the organization's market management capabilities. Alongside Saudi Arabia, the UAE is one of the few members with meaningful spare capacity, which is the ability through which the group exerts market influence and responds to supply shocks.

Iran running out of capacity to store oil during blockade

(Wall Street Journal; April 27) - Iran is scrambling to find new ways to store its oil, hoping to avoid a crippling production shutdown as a U.S. naval blockade bottles up its exports and negotiations to end the war remain deadlocked. With oil backing up at home, Iran is reviving derelict sites known as "junk storage," using improvised containers and trying to ship crude by rail to China. The unusual steps are aimed at delaying an infrastructure crisis and blunting Washington's leverage in the standoff.

The war between the U.S. and Iran has turned into a race to see whether Tehran's oil industry or global energy consumers crack first. Every barrel that can't leave the country through normal export channels must go somewhere: into a tank, onto a ship, into an improvised storage site — or remain underground. Iran hopes to avoid the risk of having to turn off the spigots and deepen its revenue losses, said Sanam Vakil, Middle East and North Africa program director at Chatham House, a nonpartisan London think tank.

The blockade of the Strait of Hormuz has sharply reduced the amount of oil that Iran, a net energy exporter, has been able to load on tankers, commodity analytics firm Kpler said. Only five cargoes have been observed since the blockade, bringing the average down to 567,000 barrels a day between April 14 and April 23. In February, before the

war, Iran exported on average 2 million barrels a day. With limited ability to load crude onto ships, Iran's national oil company has already begun reducing output.

Analysts debate how long it will take Iran to hit "tank tops" — industry parlance for running out of room to store the crude it pumps — but many think it could happen in less than two weeks. Iran's onshore oil inventories have swelled by 4.6 million barrels to roughly 49 million barrels under the blockade, according Kpler.

Public anxiety over energy shortages pressures Japan's leadership

(Bloomberg; April 27) - The Iran war is putting pressure on the Japanese government to consider energy-saving measures, a challenge for Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi as she seeks to calm public anxiety over potential shortages. Japan stands out among countries heavily dependent on energy from the Persian Gulf, having so far refrained from calling for conservation measures seen in other countries. The nation has relied on releases from its strategic oil reserve, while seeking alternative sources of supply. The government is mindful of not hurting economic growth or spurring consumer panic.

The public appears keen for more action though. Some 74% of those surveyed in a recent poll by Nikkei and TV Tokyo said energy-saving is needed. In another poll last week by broadcaster ANN, 64% of people said the government should call for conservation measures. "The public is very conscientious, so when the government makes a request, people tend to make a real effort to comply," Trade Minister Ryosei Akazawa said at a press briefing on April 24. "We should be careful not to exaggerate things or spread horror stories that make people overly anxious," he said.

Takaichi has said repeatedly that Japan has enough oil for the time being and that the country has secured stable supply into next year. However, the country has not been immune from the knock-on impacts of the war, now in its ninth week. A shortage of naphtha has led to a major toilet maker suspending new orders for some items and is also hitting petrochemical and other home-fixture firms.

Japan's top power generator says LNG needs covered through July

(Reuters; April 27) - JERA, Japan's biggest power generator, has secured adequate liquefied natural gas inventories through July to cover Middle East supply disruptions caused by the U.S.-Israeli war with Iran, an executive said on April 27. JERA, also Japan's top LNG buyer, handles about 35 million tonnes annually of imports and trading, of which roughly 27 million tonnes are used domestically. About 5% of its Japan-bound shipments pass through the Strait of Hormuz, where the conflict has disrupted shipping.

"At present, we have sufficient stock to last until July," Masato Otaki, an executive officer, told reporters. Otaki did not comment on any specific trading actions, but its trading arm has the flexibility to swap, buy or sell with other companies or through the spot market. "Depending on how long the blockade continues, we will need to adjust our procurement strategy flexibly," Otaki said.

In February, JERA signed a 27-year deal with QatarEnergy for 3 million tonnes per year of LNG from the North Field South expansion project starting in 2028. Otaki said JERA has not been fully informed by QatarEnergy about the full impact of the conflict, including on construction schedules, and will closely monitor any implications for procurement contracts while communicating with the supplier.

Orders for new LNG carriers will rebound this year after weak 2025

(Reuters; April 27) - Global orders to build liquefied natural gas carriers are set to rebound this year after a 2025 slump as growing LNG output and vessel fuel efficiency drive demand, industry executives and analysts say. The rise in orders is offsetting concerns that supply disruptions from the U.S.-Iran war may reduce near-term shipping demand and pressure freight rates. Since late last year, shipbuilders in South Korea and China have received more orders, with 35 new LNG builds contracted in the first quarter, according to consultancies Poten & Partners and Drewry.

By comparison, 37 LNG carriers were ordered in all of 2025, with a record 171 orders placed in 2022, Drewry data shows. Each tanker costs $250 million to $260 million and takes more than three years to build. New LNG production in the U.S., Africa, Canada and Argentina will generate tanker demand, along with a push toward fuel efficiency and accelerated demolitions of older vessels, said Pratiksha Negi, Drewry's lead analyst for LNG shipping, with steam turbine and diesel-electric ships expected to be phased out.

The global fleet numbers over 700 vessels. The growth of U.S. LNG production and flexible LNG supply creates trading patterns that require more shipping, said Fraser Carson, principal analyst for global LNG at Wood Mackenzie. U.S. LNG is typically sold on a free-on-board basis with destination flexibility, allowing mid-voyage diversions that can tie up vessels for longer. Meanwhile, the demolition of steam-propelled LNG carriers has accelerated since 2022 to a record 15 vessels last year, Drewry data showed, due to poor economics and tighter emissions regulations.

China builds its largest LNG carrier to date

(China Daily; April 26) - China on April 26 delivered its biggest independently designed and built liquefied natural gas carrier to date, marking a breakthrough in the country's ability to build the large vessels. The carrier, Celsius Georgetown, departed for

Singapore after completing delivery at a dock of China Merchants Heavy Industry (Jiangsu) Co., the shipbuilder said.

The vessel, 980 feet long and 157 feet wide, has a capacity of about 3.6 billion cubic feet of gas supercooled into a liquid. It is equipped with a dual-fuel propulsion system. Lu Jinlong, manager of the large LNG carrier program at China Merchants Heavy Industry, said the company has secured orders for six such ships. The remaining five are under construction, with a second ship expected to be delivered in three months, he said. The building of LNG carriers, with the specialized construction to keep the supercold gas in liquid form, has long been dominated by shipyards in South Korea.

Reflagged LNG carriers could be used to move Russian gas

(gCaptain; April 28) - Four recently reflagged liquefied natural gas carriers linked to new Turkish-controlled entities are heading north in the Atlantic, in what analysts say could mark a new push in Russia's effort to expand its constrained export fleet. Vessel tracking data shows Kosmos and Merkuriy steaming north off the coast of Portugal, while Luch and Orion are following currently off West Africa. In recent days Luch started signaling the Russia's port city of Murmansk as its intended destination.

The four vessels — formerly part of Oman's Asyad Shipping fleet — were sold en bloc earlier this year for roughly $110 million, according to company disclosures and shipbroking sources. Since then, they have undergone multiple renamings, brief reregistration under the Indian Register of Shipping, and eventual transfer to the Russian flag and maritime register. Shipping databases and industry reports indicate that the new controlling interests behind the vessels are linked to Turkish entities, although the ultimate beneficial ownership remains opaque.

The acquisition of relatively aging, conventional LNG tonnage — all were built in 2005 or 2006 — aligns with a broader Russian strategy seen in 2024, when Russia's largest LNG producer, Novatek, and affiliated interests embarked on a buying spree for second-hand carriers to bolster export capabilities amid sanctions constraints. That need is becoming increasingly urgent. Analysts at Vortexa and CHNL estimate Russia may require around 30 additional LNG carriers to sustain exports from its projects.

British Columbia community supports review of LNG health impacts

(CBC News; Canada; April 29) – The city council in Terrace, British Columbia, has voted to support a call from a local physician requesting an assessment of the impact of the liquefied natural gas industry on human health. Flaring has been ongoing at the LNG Canada terminal in Kitimat, B.C., about 33 miles south of Terrace, since last year as the

project comes online. The company says it's a safety measure to burn gas during operational phases and is not expected to be routine during regular operation.

In a letter shared with Terrace council at the April 27 meeting, Dr. Marie-Lyne Bourassa said she has been "deeply alarmed" by a recent report of documents showing the volume of gas flared at the LNG Canada plant between October and January surpassed what its permit allows. She requested the council back her request for a comprehensive study of the health impacts of the LNG industry, explaining that economic development needs to be balanced with oversight and accountability.

"Provincial and federal governments are forging ahead with plans to massively scale up the LNG industry in B.C., despite never having comprehensively studied its health impacts," wrote Bourassa. Terrace is the fourth municipality in British Columbia to ask the province to conduct an independent cumulative health impact assessment on the industry. Hazelton, Dawson Creek and Squamish have all made a request.

B.C. Supreme Court hears arguments against gas pipeline approval

(Financial Post; Canada; April 27) - A Gitxsan hereditary chief and environmental groups are challenging a 2025 British Columbia decision that kept a long-delayed 465-mile gas pipeline alive. After a five-year extension to an environmental certificate granted in 2019, the pipeline had to be "substantially started" — meaning moving beyond planning into actual development, such as land clearing — by November 2024. The province announced in June 2025 that the pipeline had met that threshold based, in part, on how much the developer Prince Rupert Gas Transmission had spent to advance the project.

If the Nisga'a Nation-backed C$12 billion pipeline had lost its environmental certificate, it would have had to undertake a new environmental review. That would have been a major obstacle for the C$10 billion Ksi Lisims LNG project, a floating liquefied natural gas facility the pipeline is to supply. The proposed LNG project in a remote area north of Prince Rupert will liquefy gas delivered by the pipeline from northeast British Columbia for export to Asia. It was added to Canada's major projects fast-track list last November.

Two weeks have been set aside in B.C. Supreme Court for hearings, which started April 27, for challenges to the "substantially started" pipeline status. Charlie Wright says he filed the challenge as hereditary chief of the Luutkudziiwus, one of the Gitxsan's dozens of house groups which oversee clan territories. Other Gitxsan hereditary chiefs have supported the project and signed benefit agreements. In responses filed in court, the province, the Nisga'a and the pipeline company reject the claim that the line was not substantially started and that the Luutkudziiwus was not properly consulted.