Fueling the Debate: Striking a Balance

Overview:
Students will participate in a simulation as stakeholders in this issue and create a documentary to present facts, opinions and suggestions to the commission.

Grade:
12

Curriculum requirements:
Native Studies 30 Unit 1: Aboriginal and Treaty Rights
Native Studies 30 Unit 4: Economic Development

Links to Canadian National Standards for Geography:
Essential Element 4: Human systems
• Cooperation and conflict in the division and control of Earth’s surface

Essential Element 5: Environment and Society
• Use and sustainability of resources

Time required:
Five to seven 50-minute periods

Supplies required:
• maps (treaty, natural resources, transportation grids)
• digital cameras and video cameras, computers, microphones

Learning outcomes:
By the end of this lesson students will be able to:
• recognize Aboriginal understandings, rights and treaty obligations that underpin current and future energy resource and land use projects;
• assess the exploration, production and transportation of energy resources currently underway in the province and suggest possible alternatives;
• determine the best course of action and location for current and future energy resource and land use projects after considering a variety of perspectives (Aboriginal, local residents, energy exploration company, energy transportation company, agriculture sector, etc).

Introduction:
Provide students with the following scenario:
The current government ministry in charge of natural resources is undertaking a major review of the oil and gas energy sector. A special task force has been commissioned to hear from all of the people of the province who are potentially impacted by any changes in policy and practice with regards to production and consumption of oil and gas. The province is being pressured to support more aggressive production and consumption projects and is tempted by the benefits of increased royalties to help pay for crumbling infrastructure, new hospitals and schools, but it also knows there are environmental and cultural costs to consider if it lends its approval to more projects. The province wants to know: What are the benefits and risks of increasing oil and gas production and consumption and is it possible to effectively manage and control the risks enough to harness the benefits?

Ask: Who might be interested in presenting their perspective to this special task force?
• Aboriginal peoples
• Land owners/users (farmers)
• Alternate energy supporters (wind, solar, nuclear, coal, bio-fuels, geothermal, hydrogen)
• Oil and gas exploration companies
• Oil and gas extraction companies
• Oil and gas transportation companies (truck, rail, pipelines)
• Refineries
• Local citizens not directly connected but impacted

Ask: What types of information might they want to have access to in order to prepare their arguments?
• Treaty maps and treaty documents (to know what has been promised and what is legally required)
• Natural resource maps (to know where oil and gas deposits currently exist and could be explored, possible future development sites)
• Transportation maps (to show current distribution routes by rail, truck and pipeline and to help suggest alternate/expansion routes in the future)
• Information about exploration, production and consumption from major oil and gas companies currently operating in the province
• Access to University scientists who specialize in these areas (emails, interviews, guest speakers)
• Documentaries and interviews with business people and local community
• Websites
• Canadian Atlas Online – Oil and Gas (www.canadiangeographic.ca/atlas)
• www.centreforenergy.com/AboutEnergy
• http://www.capp.ca/canadaIndustry/oil
• http://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy/home
Development:
Create a 5-7 min documentary video to share facts, concerns and opinions to the task force about your perspective relative to the key question:

What are the benefits and risks of further increased oil and gas production and consumption and is it possible to effectively manage and control the risks enough to harness the benefits?

Ensure your video has maps to illustrate your facts, technical information to explain key points and appropriate visuals to support your argument. The task force will assess each entry on the following criteria:

- A summary of how the oil and gas industry is connected to the location/situation being represented (historical background, synthesis of current points about production and consumption, anticipated future trends);
- Recognition of benefits and risks of continued and increased oil and gas production;
- Statement about ability to manage and control risks in order to see benefits;
- Alternate solutions to provide for energy needs if risks are deemed too great or to provide a range of options;
- Final recommendations the panel should consider in order to best meet the needs of current and future Saskatchewan residents.

Conclusion:
Hold a “special task force” video screening:
The special task force members could be part of the local community or school who could offer feedback to the students. They could provide a “ruling” to indicate how the province may potentially react to the evidence submitted in the documentaries.

Students could create a summary statement with their own “ruling” after viewing all of the videos/evidence – how would they respond if they were part of the special task force after reviewing the evidence?

Lesson extension:
Share the videos with members of the public on YouTube, Teacher tube or other social media sharing sites to gather additional feedback.
Assessment/evaluation:
A rubric can be created to assess any of the following aspects of the video project.

Pre-Production
• Preparation and location of reference material (meets the required amount, shows a range of perspectives, summary notes to highlight learning)
• Story board/organization of the flow of the video story (demonstrates thinking about key components of the video)

Video Production
• Content (contains essential criteria listed in the prompt)
• Technical (attends to appropriate use of visuals, graphics, audio, text features, video techniques) in order to tell the story and be persuasive

Post – Production/Viewing
• Student summary response created as a “ruling” from the special task force to determine the best course of action and location for current and future energy resource and land use projects in the province after considering the variety of perspectives and information shared.

Additional resources:
• Canadian Geographic: June 2012 – Energy Smarts (www.canadiangeographic.ca/magazine)
• “Energy Use in Canada” map
• Websites:
  Indian Act

  Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada
  http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100010002

  Office of the Treaty Commissioner – Saskatchewan
  (maps of treaty boundaries)
  http://www.otc.ca/ABOUT_TREATIES/Treaty_Map/

  Ministry of Energy and Resources - Saskatchewan
  http://www.er.gov.sk.ca/oilgas