Risk and Transportation of Crude Oil in the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Region

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The Great Lakes Commission

- Interstate compact agency
- Established in 1955 (Great Lakes Basin Compact)
  - Members: Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin
- Ontario and Québec joined in 1999 as associate members
- Commissioners include representative from all state and province members
- Observers: Federal agencies, NGOs, bi-national organizations, tribal governments
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River
Great Lakes and St. Lawrence River
Oil refining in the basin
How oil moves to and through the region
Major incidents in the region
Understanding risk

- Probabilities of a spill
  - Over 300 billion gallons of oil transported annually in Canada and the U.S.
  - Between January 1, 2013 and Nov 20, 2016: 58 spills of more than 1,000 gallons, over 8 million gallons total

- Impacts of a spill influenced by:
  - Size
  - Mode of transportation
  - Type of oil
  - Location
  - Response capacities
  - Timing
Understanding risk

- Absolute vs. relative risk
- Differing risk considerations, perspectives and interests among affected stakeholders
- Approaches and actions to assess and evaluate risk will vary based on perspectives and concerns
Understanding risk

- We have to look at the “big picture” and consider every piece of the puzzle
- How can we do this?
  - Establish a group where all stakeholders are represented
  - Try to reach an agreement on a definition of risk
  - Work as a group to identify the best strategy to minimize risk, taking into consideration all perspectives
Final thoughts

Oil industry is an important economic driver

Oil moved via different modes

Risk and potential impacts vary with each mode

Different perspectives and approaches

We have to look at the “big picture”
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