

## Beluga concerns nix Quebec oil terminal, delays pipeline

April 2 2015

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A scenic view along the St-Lawrence river in Cacouna, Quebec, Canada, on September 23, 2014

Pipeline builder TransCanada announced Thursday it will not build a marine terminal at Cacouna, Quebec, saying increased tanker traffic in the region would have harmed a pod of beluga whales.

The terminal, 200 kilometers (125 miles) northeast of Quebec City, was

to be the end point of the Energy East pipeline, which was originally due to move 1.1 million barrels of oil per day starting in 2018 from the Alberta oil sands and Saskatchewan shale [oil](#) fields in western Canada, for shipping overseas.

"This decision is the result of the recommended change in status of the beluga whales to endangered and ongoing discussions we have had with communities and key stakeholders," TransCanada chief executive Russ Girling said.

The arctic white whale, with its distinctive spherical forehead and smiling mouth, is present in and around Cacouna.

In December, Canadian authorities classified the nearby population of [beluga whales](#) as "endangered."

The population was estimated to number less than 1,000 whales, compared to more than 10,000 in 2004, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada said in a report.

Its decline was attributed to pollution, noise disturbances and industrial development.

TransCanada said in a statement "alternative terminal options in Quebec are being reviewed" along the shores of the Saint Lawrence River.

Quebec and New Brunswick refineries would continue to be connected directly to the Can\$12 billion pipeline, it added.

But the terminal changes mean the [pipeline](#) will now not be operational until 2020, it said.

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