



LINE 3 AND THE PIPELINE SYSTEM

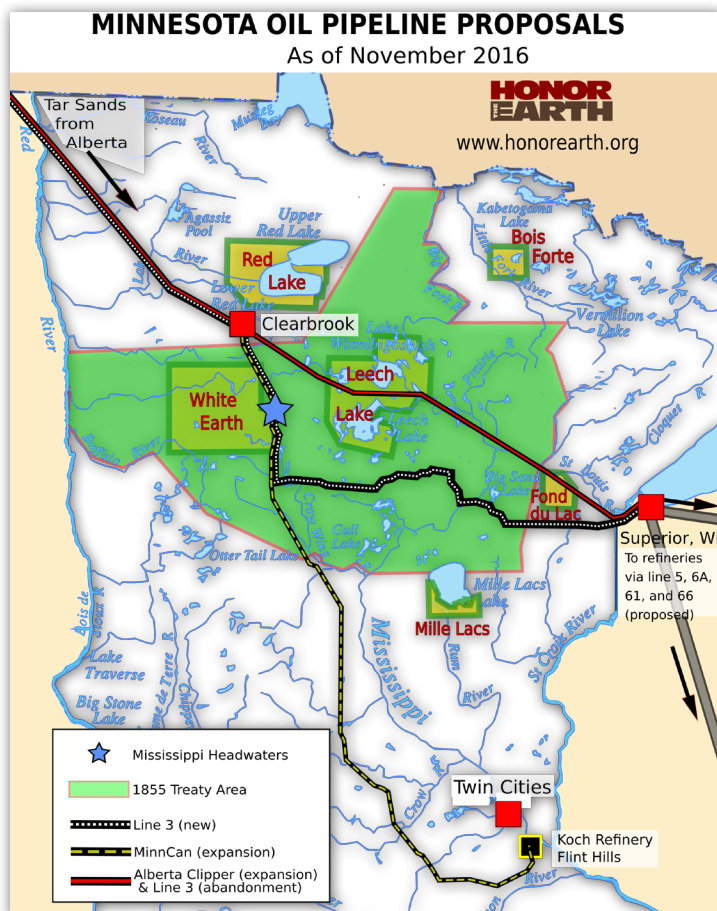
Enbridge, Canada's largest pipeline company, is proposing to abandon its old leaky "Line 3" pipeline through northern Minnesota and build a higher capacity pipeline along a new route. It will carry Canadian tar sands oil, an extremely dirty fossil fuel. This project won't improve our energy security. It will threaten Minnesota's waters and wild rice. The state is currently going through Line 3's permit process.

Q: WHAT IS THE STATUS OF THE EXISTING LINE 3?

Line 3 is one of several crude oil pipelines that cross Minnesota. It carries dirty Canadian tar sands oil, entering Minnesota at the northwest corner of the state and proceeding 300 miles southeasterly to Duluth/Superior. It is roughly 50 years old and deteriorating. Enbridge can only run the pipeline at half capacity because of its structural flaws. If not replaced, Enbridge says the existing pipeline will need 10-15 "integrity digs" per mile to investigate problems in the next 15 years.¹ That's the equivalent of one dig every city block for the length of the pipeline.

Q: WHAT IS THE PROPOSAL?

Enbridge calls it a "replacement project," but it is much more than that. The current Line 3 has been limited to 390,000 barrels per day because of structural problems. The new Line 3 would be a larger diameter pipe carrying 790,000 barrels per day, doubling the current carrying capacity. That is more than a replacement. Further, Enbridge would reroute Line 3 through much of Minnesota. That means the entire length of the existing Line 3 through Minnesota would be abandoned in place to deteriorate in the ground.² That isn't a "replacement" either.



Q: Some people say that pipelines are the safest mode of crude oil transportation. Is that true?

Transportation options include pipelines and rail. Each has its own unique risks. But just because one option is considered "safer" doesn't mean it is safe. The blog Think Progress says pipelines are "safer": "if your idea of safety is defined by the frequency of accidents, regardless of how large the accidents are. If, however, you think massive releases of oil into the environment pose a greater risk to human health, [then] pipelines are the greater evil."³

More importantly, we need to ask whether more oil pipelines are needed. The United States became a net exporter of refined petroleum products in 2011.⁴ Citizens Acting for Rail Safety issued a statement calling new oil pipeline construction "short sighted" because of the current oil glut and the fact that our society is transitioning to a cleaner economy.⁵

Q: WHAT IS ENBRIDGE'S SAFETY RECORD?

Enbridge has one of the worst safety records of major pipeline companies and was called out as incompetent by the National Transportation Safety Board for its role in the massive 800,000 gallon spill in Michigan's Kalamazoo River in 2010. Enbridge's pipelines had more than 800 spills in the U.S. and Canada between 1999 and 2010, leaking 6.8 million gallons of oil.⁶

Q: WHAT ARE THE MAJOR CONCERNS ABOUT LINE 3?

- **Leaks and ruptures:** In spite of promises, pipelines eventually leak or burst – and that threatens Minnesota's waters. The proposed new pipeline corridor runs through the Mississippi headwaters and the heart of Minnesota's lake country, threatening the state's \$12.5 billion tourism economy. It crosses farmland and comes within a few miles of several organic farms which have consistently opposed the project.⁷
- **Difficult repairs:** The route passes through remote wetlands which would be inaccessible to emergency cleanup equipment in the event of a spill.⁸ They would have to create new roads.
- **Abandoned Line 3:** Under the plan, the old Line 3 would be filled with nitrogen and sealed (but we already know it has many structural flaws). Future land owners would face risks. For instance, an underground pipeline in the water table could crack, letting surrounding water pour in. It could drain a wetland or river, moving water miles away. Landowners may be stuck with the bill.⁹ Further, the “new” Line 3 will eventually age and become obsolete, too, another pipeline left in the ground to rot.
- **Treaty Rights:** The pipeline will violate U.S. treaty agreements with the Anishinaabe people. The treaties granted Anishinaabe people rights beyond reservation boundaries, such as the right to hunt, fish and harvest wild rice. Line 3 runs through this treaty territory.¹⁰

Q: WHERE DO THINGS STAND IN THE APPROVAL PROCESS?

The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (PUC) is expected to release a draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in May. Citizens will have 60 days to respond through written comments and public hearings. Based on public comment, the state will issue a final EIS sometime in late summer or early fall. This fall, the PUC will hold a formal hearing on Line 3. It is expected to issue its final decision sometime in May-June 2018.

For more information or to get involved:

- See the Sierra Club North Star Chapter website: <http://www.sierraclub.org/mn> and Facebook: SierraClubMN
- Attend one of the monthly “Beyond Oil and Tar Sands” volunteer committee meetings, fourth Tuesday of the month, 6:30 p.m. at the Sierra Club office, 2327 East Franklin Ave., Minneapolis. All are welcome!
- Request a Speaker on Line 3 for your organization or classroom. Contact Committee Coordinator Natalie Cook at natalie.cook@sierraclub.org or 612-259-2445 with this, or for other questions.

¹ Enbridge's Line 3 Replacement Project Summary: http://www.enbridge.com/~//media/Enb/Documents/Projects/Line%203/ProjectHandouts/ENB_Line3_Public_Affairs_ProjectSummary.pdf?la=en

² Honor the Earth: Enbridge Line 3 Pipeline: What you need to know, <https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/honorearth/pages/2329/attachments/original/1481597789/factsheet-LINE-3.pdf?1481597789>

³ Data: Oil trains spill more often, but pipelines spill bigger. Think Progress, Feb. 18, 2015: <https://thinkprogress.org/data-oil-trains-spill-more-often-but-pipelines-spill-bigger-9533009d4aba#.loopzx2kr>

⁴ FAQ, U.S. Energy Information Agency

⁵ Citizens Acting for Rail Safety: Statement Against New Oil Pipelines: <http://saferails.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/CARS-Statement-on-Pipelines.pdf>

^{6,7,8,9} Enbridge Over Troubled Waters, Sierra Club: <http://80feetisenough.org/uploads/documents/Enbridge%20Over%20Troubled%20Water%20Report.pdf>

¹⁰ Honor the Earth: Enbridge Line 3 Pipeline: What you need to know