



NEWS RELEASE



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Groups Urge Wisconsin Citizens to Demand Full Environmental Assessment Prior to Enbridge Line 61 Tar Sands Expansion

Madison: Enbridge Energy Company, a large Canadian pipeline owner, is proposing to *triple* the capacity of Line 61, its pipeline that travels through Wisconsin from Superior to Flanagan, IL. If approved, the pipeline will increase from an initial 400,000 barrels per day (bpd) to 1.2 Million bpd of corrosive tar sands oil. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is currently considering an air permit for the expansion—the only state-wide permit the pipeline needs. 350 Madison, Pledge of Resistance-Madison, and Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter are urging citizens to demand the DNR study all impacts, including air, water, and climate effects.

“If this planned expansion is allowed,” stated Dr. Carl Whiting of Pledge of Resistance, “It would carry significantly *more* tar sands oil than the highly contested Keystone XL. We urge our fellow citizens to tell the DNR to deny the permits for expansion of the Enbridge Line 61, and to instead conduct a full environmental assessment. We also ask citizens to request that the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources hold public hearings in affected counties on this proposed project and its potential environmental impacts.”

The only public hearing regarding the proposed expansion took place last Monday (May 5) in Superior. “This pipeline and its expansion jeopardize Lake Superior, other lakes, rivers, and waterways along the route. Citizens should be invited to weigh in on the potential impacts with hearings near the path of the pipeline,” explained Elizabeth Ward, Conservation Programs Coordinator for the Sierra Club-John Muir Chapter.

The **deadline for public comments** regarding the air permit (Permit No. 13-DFC-129) is **Monday, May 19, 2014**. Wisconsin citizens can email, or send regular mail letters to:

Don C. Faith, III,

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Bureau of Air Management,

101 S. Webster Street, Box 7921 Madison, WI 53707-7921, Attn: Don C. Faith, III.

Comments can be e-mailed to don.faithiii@wisconsin.gov.

MORE

Enbridge Energies has a dismal safety record, with approximately 800 pipeline-related incidents since 1999, including a rupture in Grand Marsh (Adams County), Wisconsin, in which an estimated 50,000 gallons of oil spilled and 17,000 tons of soil were contaminated.

More notoriously, Enbridge is known for the largest tar sands oil spill in history, when a pipeline erupted and spilled 840,000 gallons of tar sands oil into a wetland that leaked into the Kalamazoo River during a planned shutdown in 2010. Four years later, the spill has still not been successfully cleaned up, despite an expenditure of over \$800 million; the Environmental Protection Agency recently ordered the river be dredged again. This spill resulted from a failure in a pipe with a flow-rate one-sixth of the Line 61 proposal that runs through the state of Wisconsin. "Tar sand oil is very different from traditional 'light' oil, making the potential for a spill and the concerns worse," explained Ward, "tar sands oil is incredibly dense, so if there is a contamination in a waterway, it does not float, making clean-up much more difficult. Additionally, it must be mixed with a chemical compound to move it through pipelines, which makes the likelihood of a rupture higher."

With the controversial Keystone XL Pipeline through Nebraska facing an uphill battle, Wisconsin has become a new battleground state for the issue of Alberta tar sands oil. "We're asking the people of Wisconsin to think about what they stand to gain from this expansion versus the risks we'll be incurring," said Harry Bennett of 350 Madison, a statement with which Whiting agreed: "The potential problems with this expansion could be more risk than Wisconsin citizens are willing to bear for a product that will be shipped out and sold on the international market. We hope the DNR listens to the request for a full study and more hearings in order to hear how much we're actually willing to risk."

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Founded in 1892 by John Muir, the Sierra Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization. The Sierra Club's mission is to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out those objectives. The Sierra Club – John Muir Chapter is made up of 15,000 members and supporters working to promote clean energy and protect water resources in Wisconsin.

350 Madison is the local branch of 350.org, an international grassroots organization that is mobilizing a global climate movement. 350 parts per million (ppm) of CO2 is the number that leading scientists say is the safe upper limit for carbon dioxide in our atmosphere. To get there, we need a different kind of ppm - a "people powered movement." Learn more at 350madison.org or 350.madison.wi@gmail.com.

Pledge-of-Resistance-Madison is a diverse Madison, Wisconsin based group, part of a nationwide organization dedicated to fighting climate change by resisting the KXL pipeline and the exploitation of Alberta tar sands oil. The science is clear: We can either burn the Earth's existing reserves of fossil fuel or continue to live on this planet. We cannot do both, and we are willing to engage in peaceful civil disobedience if necessary for the sake of this, and future generations. The Pledge of Resistance is being led by CREDO, Rainforest Action Network and the Other 98%. - See more at: <http://nokxl.org/who-are-we/#sthash.bB5W6nxq.dpuf>

ADDITIONAL TAR SANDS INFORMATION:

1. This pipeline flows through and threatens with potential tar sands crude oil spills the watershed for two of the Great Lakes, Superior and Michigan, part of the largest fresh water resource on the planet. Line 61 also crosses the Wisconsin River, a tributary of the Mississippi River. We are already living with an unreasonable risk the pipeline poses as is; to allow an increase is both foolhardy and dangerous.
2. Despite their assurances of vigilance and rigorous safety practices, it took Enbridge a full 17 hours to realize the rupture in Michigan had taken place and shut down the line. After this historic spill, Enbridge Energies was cited by federal regulators from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), with 24 violations and handed a \$3.7 million fine.
3. Expanding tar sands pipelines could have a devastating impact on world-wide climate. According to top climate scientist, James Hansen (former director of NASA's Goddard Space Center), the continued expansion of tar sands extraction and infrastructure would mean "game over for the climate."
4. Line 61 connects to international pipeline Line 67 or the 'Alberta-Clipper' pipeline, traveling from Alberta, Canada to Superior, Wisconsin. There is a concurrent proposal to increase this pipeline's capacity as well. [For more information, see the report, "All Risk No Reward: the Alberta Clipper Expansion".](#)
<https://content.sierraclub.org/beyondoil/sites/content.sierraclub.org/beyondoil/files/AlbertaClipperReport.pdf>
5. A [full map of the pipeline can be found on Enbridge's website:](#)
[http://www.enbridge.com/~media/www/Site Images/Projects/Construction/Line 61 Wisconsin Phases 1 2-06 21.jpg](http://www.enbridge.com/~media/www/Site%20Images/Projects/Construction/Line%2061%20Wisconsin%20Phases%201-2-06%2021.jpg)