



LINE 3 PIPELINE ABANDONMENT: What You Need To Know



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SUMMARY:

Enbridge's Line 3 Pipeline ships Tar Sands crude from Alberta to Superior, WI, spanning over 300 miles across Northern Minnesota, crossing the Leech Lake and Fond du Lac reservations and the 1855 and 1842 treaty areas. Line 3 was built in 1961 and now has significant structural integrity problems. Enbridge's latest public estimates indicate over 900 integrity "anomalies" in the pipeline. Instead of fixing it or removing it, they want simply to abandon the pipeline and build a new one, the "Line 3 Replacement," in a brand new corridor. The State of Minnesota, including the Public Utilities Commission (PUC), has the power and responsibility to regulate pipeline abandonment, but there is currently no process in place. Because Line 3 is the first major crude oil pipeline to be abandoned in the state, there is a risk that the PUC will avoid their responsibility. As it stands now, Enbridge receives powers of eminent domain to build its pipelines, but is not required to assume responsibility for them when they die. They are allowed to leave behind what is likely a superfund site. Tribal members, homeowners, local businesses, and people across the north are standing up to say no, and demand a regulatory process and an insurance requirement.

DEATH OF A PIPELINE:

Enbridge has gathered extensive integrity data on Line 3 throughout its operation. The data shows a high number of integrity anomalies – specifically, corrosion and long seam cracking. All those "structural anomalies" mean there is likely a lot of oil in the soil now. This contamination could become the responsibility of nearby landowners, if discovered. As a result of these anomalies, Line 3 has experienced a number of failures during its 54 years of history. This means that Line 3 requires a high level of integrity monitoring and an extensive on-going integrity dig and repair program. Approximately 4,000 integrity digs in the US alone are currently forecasted for Line 3 over the next 15 years, just to maintain its current level of operation.

REGULATORY FAILURE (AGAIN):

At the state level, there are no abandonment guidelines or definitions for intrastate crude oil pipelines. Any mention of abandonment of pipeline procedures follows the federal guidelines for disconnecting from active service and purging of any hazardous substance. If Enbridge is not required to remove the pipeline and restore the damaged ecosystems, there may never be a full accounting of the on-going and future contamination surrounding the pipeline.



Enbridge oil spill in Cohasset, MN, 2002.

PIPELINE ABANDONMENT IN CANADA:

The US has vague and inadequate laws on pipeline abandonment, and the responsibility to protect landowners and the public from the risks created by abandoned pipelines rests with the states. In contrast, the National Energy Board of Canada thoroughly regulates all aspects of pipeline abandonment, because it found that they pose substantial risks to landowners. For example, it regulates the surveys to identify potential contamination, removal, plugging, or filling abandoned pipelines to ensure that they don't cause drainage problems or sink holes, and has ordered Enbridge to set aside nearly \$1 billion to pay for future abandonment of its pipelines in Canada. It includes info on pipeline corrosion and soil subsidence, recommending any pipeline owner/operator considering the abandonment of a pipeline

to conduct a professional, site-specific analysis to evaluate potential impact. Potential sources of soil and groundwater contamination include:

- substances produced in the reservoir and deposited on the walls of the pipeline;
- treatment chemicals in the pipeline;
- the line pipe and associated facilities;
- pipeline coatings and their degradation products;
- historical leaks and spills;
- possible PCB contamination, from lubricants.

There are also enormous potential hydrological impacts, as abandoned pipelines can transform over time into water conduits. Eventually, corrosion allows water to enter the pipe, which leads to unnatural drainage of areas such as muskegs, sloughs, or marshes, affecting the natural balance of the ecosystem and increasing the risk of soil and water contamination, especially in wetlands, as any water that infiltrates the pipeline is likely to carry residual contaminants.

PUBLIC HEARINGS ON LINE 3:

There is no regulatory process for the proposed abandonment of Line 3, so the public should voice their concerns at the MN Public Utilities Commission's public hearings on the new Line 3 construction permit, and recorded in that docket. See our website for details (honorearth.org) or the PUC website (mn.gov/puc).

The Certificate of Need docket is CN-14-916 and the Route Permit docket is PPL-15-137.

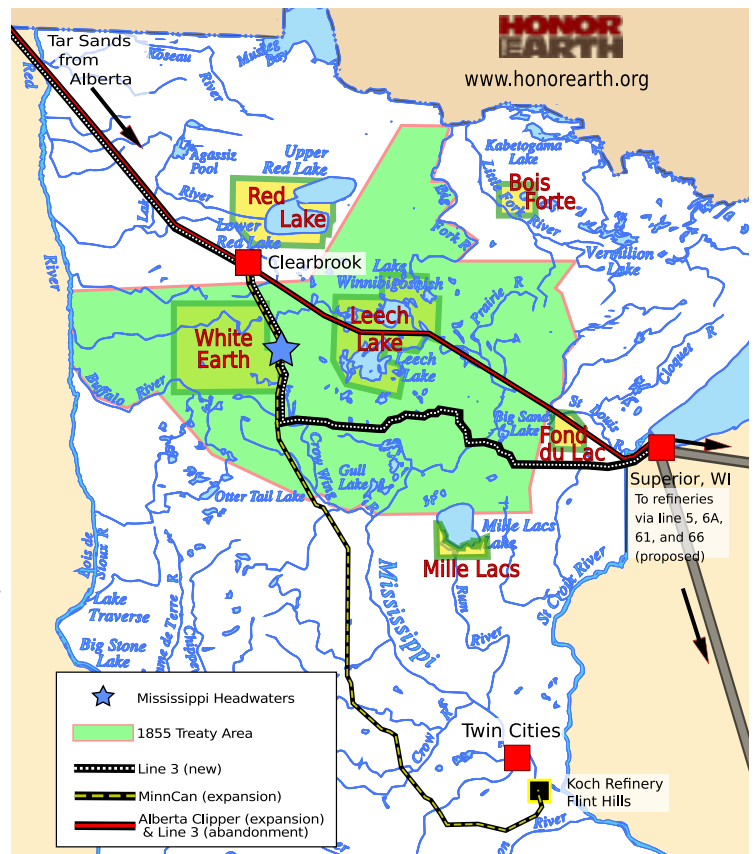
Tribal governments, environmental organizations, and citizens continue to oppose the Line 3 corridor. We expect federal intervention and a protracted legal and regulatory battle over the coming years.

OTHER WAYS TO TAKE ACTION:

1. Join a new group of concerned landowners, Minnesotans for Pipeline Cleanup (pipelinecleanupmn.org). Sign their petition, download a sample letter to send to your officials, attend their free informational meetings.
2. Speak out: Contact your tribal leaders, your City Councilmembers, County Commissioners, and especially Governor Mark Dayton (651-201-3400). Tell them they have a responsibility to protect Minnesota's precious resources, honor our treaties, and work with tribal governments.
3. Join more than 24 landowners and citizens applying to formally intervene in the Line 3 permitting process. This means you are a formal party in the PUC hearings and get to ask questions, comment, etc.
4. Connect with your local environmental groups or faith communities.
5. Write op-ed articles or letter to the editor and publish them in your local newspaper.
6. Help distribute our literature or organize an event.
5. Support our work by donating thru our website, or signing up for a monthly contribution.

MINNESOTA OIL PIPELINE PROPOSALS

As of November 2016



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