



Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy

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Unsafe condition of Enbridge Line 3 pipeline requires denial of Chippewa NF permit

Enbridge testimony shows Line 3 riddled with corrosion and welding flaws

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA -- Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, Sierra Club, MN350, and Center for Biological Diversity filed comments Monday opposing reauthorization of a permit that could allow Enbridge's existing Line 3 pipeline to operate in the Chippewa National Forest for up to thirty years. Substandard welding and extensive corrosion on thousands of joints risk an immediate tar sands oil spill from the pipeline. The permit being sought by Enbridge would allow a six pipeline corridor, including Line 3, to continue to operate across Chippewa National Forest land. The existing permit expires at the end of 2017. Because of the threat to the Chippewa National Forest, the conservation groups argue Enbridge's special use permit application should be denied, or at a minimum, that environmental review of the application is required.

"Enbridge continues to contradict itself on Line 3," stated Leigh Currie, staff attorney at Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy. "They claim Line 3 is safe enough to operate through the Chippewa National Forest. On the other hand, they are telling Minnesota state regulators that Line 3 is in immediate danger of a tar sands oil spill. We don't think they should be using Line 3's deteriorating safety to blackmail the people of Minnesota into approval of their new route."

Enbridge's testimony to the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission details unsafe conditions currently existing on Line 3. Over 70 percent of the 140,000 pipe joints on Line 3 are corroded, including corrosion deeper than 50 percent of the pipe thickness on over 3,000 pipe joints. Line 3 was built with substandard welding techniques and tape coatings no longer used because they increase the risks of defects and corrosion.

The comments also describe a history of Enbridge acting in bad faith in Line 3 negotiations. Enbridge told Minnesota state regulators and the public they planned to permanently deactivate the existing Line

3 pipeline if a replacement is approved. Then in July 2016, Enbridge negotiated a consent decree in the federal court case on the Kalamazoo tar sands oil spill that would have allowed them to continue using the existing Line 3 pipeline even after it was replaced.

“Enbridge’s testimony filed with the Public Utilities Commission is truly shocking,” stated Kathy Hollander of MN350. “It shows Enbridge is aware of thousands of corroded joints, substandard construction techniques and engineering defects in Line 3. Yet Enbridge continues to place Minnesota at risk by operating the line despite that knowledge and is now asking for an up to thirty-year permit to continue to operate in the Chippewa National Forest.”

"Enbridge's history alone is more than enough to deny reauthorization, and its testimony only adds to the litany of reasons why this permit should not be authorized," said Sierra Club Senior Campaign Representative, Cathy Collentine. "Enbridge is aware of the myriad of issues plaguing this pipeline, yet it continues to operate Line 3, threatening our forests, our waterways, and our communities. There is no alternative, this permit must be rejected."

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATIONS

- **The Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy** is a nonprofit organization using law, science, and research to protect Minnesota's natural resources, wildlife and the health of its people. (www.mncenter.org)
- **The Center for Biological Diversity** is a national, nonprofit conservation organization with more than 1.2 million members and online activists dedicated to the protection of endangered species and wild places. (www.biologicaldiversity.org)
- **MN350** is a Minnesota based spin-off of the global 350.org, dedicated to “building a climate movement by inviting and inspiring Minnesotans to take powerful, collective action grounded in urgency, justice and possibility for our planet.” (www.mn350.org)
- **Sierra Club** is America’s largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 2.7 million members and supporters. The Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. (www.sierraclub.org)

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