



Environmental Groups Urge US Army Corps of Engineers to Conduct Independent Review of Controversial Line 5 Pipeline Proposal

Federal Law Requires Evaluation of Indirect and Cumulative Impacts on Environment and Climate

For immediate release: September 2, 2022

Contact: Peg Sheaffer, MEA Communications Director
(608) 247-9684, psheaffer@midwestadvocates.org

Madison, WI— This week, Wisconsin environmental organizations sent a [joint letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#) urging the agency to undertake a thorough environmental review of Enbridge Energy's controversial proposal to construct a new segment of its Line 5 oil pipeline in northern Wisconsin.

The letter was submitted jointly by Midwest Environmental Advocates, Clean Wisconsin, Honor the Earth, Sierra Club – Wisconsin Chapter, Wisconsin's Green Fire, 350 Wisconsin and the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin.

The environmental organizations are urging the Army Corps—the agency tasked with reviewing Enbridge's Clean Water Act permit application—to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) that is independent of the environmental review process conducted by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR's environmental review has drawn heavy criticism for failing to adequately analyze the harmful impacts of the project.

In their August 29 letter, the organizations reminded the Army Corps of the agency's obligation under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) to analyze all direct, indirect and cumulative environmental impacts of the Line 5 project. Pipeline construction would impact hundreds of wetlands and waterways, while continued operation of the line would facilitate ongoing transportation and combustion of fossil fuels and the release of greenhouse gas emissions. A thorough environmental review, as required by NEPA, is the only way to thoroughly evaluate the extent of those impacts on Wisconsin's water, wetlands and climate.

In addition, the organizations have requested that the Army Corps hold a public hearing on Enbridge's permit application due to the complex nature of the project and the high level of public interest and engagement throughout the DNR's flawed environmental review process.

"Environmental review by the Army Corps represents a critical opportunity for the public to provide input on a controversial proposal that continues to move forward, despite the harm it will cause," said **Elizabeth Ward, executive director of Sierra Club—Wisconsin.**

“Transparency and public participation are essential as the Army Corps determines how it will address significant issues such as oil spills, climate change, and horizontal directional drilling, each of which the Wisconsin DNR failed to adequately address in its review process,” **said Clean Wisconsin Staff Attorney Brett Korte.**

“Given the significant risks associated with pipeline construction and operation, Enbridge's Line 5 proposal must be held to the highest possible environmental scrutiny at both the state and federal levels,” **said MEA Staff Attorney Rob Lee.**

“It’s critical that the Army Corps independently evaluate the claims in Enbridge’s incomplete and inaccurate permit application. The people of Wisconsin have a right to know the full extent of the project’s impact on our wetlands and waterways,” **said Fred Clark, executive director of Wisconsin’s Green Fire.**

“If we are to avoid the worst impacts of climate change, we must put an end to the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure such as Enbridge’s Line 5,” **said John Greenler, executive director of 350 Wisconsin.** “We are at a tipping point, and the time is now to take a stand for a livable environment and a clean and just energy future.”

Paul DeMain of Honor the Earth said, “No further pipeline permits should be given to Enbridge—anywhere in the United States—until they clean up their mess in Minnesota, where they have ruptured aquifers and spilled chemical drilling fluids into our rivers and wetlands. The safety of Wisconsin’s water resources is now at risk.”

Debra Cronmiller, executive director of the League of Women Voters of Wisconsin said, “The expansion of Line 5 would harm northern Wisconsin’s wetlands, streams, and water bodies, as well as the flora and fauna that depend on them. As the climate crisis intensifies, those impacts would be exacerbated by extreme weather events, like floods, that are becoming more common.”

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