

## Superior Rivers Watershed Association Position Statement in Regard to the Proposed Enbridge Line 5 Reroute Through the Bad River Watershed.

Enbridge's proposed Line 5 reroute calls for approximately forty-one miles of thirty-inch diameter pipeline transporting light crude and natural gas liquids through the Bad River Watershed. According to permit filing information Enbridge provided to the Public Service Commission (PSC) and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the proposed reroute corridor through this water-rich area will impact 184 streams, waterbodies, and wetlands. Many of these are Class 1 and 2 trout streams, some designated as Outstanding or Exceptional Resource Waters by the DNR, or identified as critical brook trout habitat by the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Members of the Superior Rivers Watershed Association (SRWA) are long-time stewards of Lake Superior watersheds and support the mission of protection and restoration of our clean water resources. Water quality data collected by SRWA volunteers and staff have contributed to the designation of 363 stream-miles of Outstanding and Exceptional Resource Waters in the Bad River watershed. In addition, our culvert/fish passage restoration program, in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and Patagonia Foundation's World Trout Initiative, have reconnected over thirty miles of high-quality cold water streams within the watershed.

The Superior Rivers Watershed Association's position is that transportation of hazardous materials, including pipelines carrying oil, gas, and other toxic fluids, should avoid crossing Lake Superior's watersheds. When that is not possible, all precautions should be taken to minimize the potential for harm to water quality. Of concern to SRWA is that the proposed re-route will increase the potential for water quality degradation by increasing the number of streams and wetlands it will cross.

SRWA is committed to continuing our solid history of collecting and disseminating scientifically robust water quality data in order to protect the water resources in and around the path of the proposed pipeline reroute. Aside from the potentially devastating localized effects of pipeline leaks or spills, impacts such as removal of

shading vegetation cover at pipeline stream crossings, erosion caused by construction and maintenance activities, hydrologic impacts of blasting through bedrock or directional boring under stream beds, construction of maintenance access roads, and pipeline exposure and destabilization are of concern. All of these potential impacts would affect our region's clean water ecosystems in devastating ways. Yet none of these impacts are well-understood in terms of their possible extent or how effectively they could be responded to.

In addition, extensive stream-miles and wetlands critical to the water and cultural resources of the Bad River Band of Lake Superior Chippewa all lie directly downstream of the proposed pipeline reroute. Beyond the immeasurable local and regional significance of these waters, the Kakagon/Bad River Sloughs ecosystem was designated a Wetland of International Importance by the United Nations Ramsar Convention in 2012. This globally unique ecosystem supports wild rice, diverse Lake Superior and inland fisheries, controls flooding, filters pollutants from water, and much more. With so much of what defines this area as a special place at stake, this is not a decision our community should consider without being fully informed.

In order to provide the community with critical information, SRWA is currently evaluating the proposed pipeline reroute and will use this data to help define pre-project conditions and, should the project go forward, provide benchmarks to measure change. Working with our regional partners, new water quality monitoring sites are being identified and pre- and post-project monitoring strategies are being developed.