

Friends of the Headwaters, a group of people from across Hubbard County, was organized out of concern about Enbridge, a Canadian corporation, and its plans to build a 30 inch pipeline through the Mississippi Headwaters and Hubbard County.

We are NOT NIMBY alarmists. We are alarmed about a surrogate Keystone that Enbridge is routing through the Mississippi Headwaters, a compromised aquifer, and some of the cleanest lakes in Minnesota. Currently Hubbard County is a place where we see trumpeter swans. We don't want to see swans covered in oil.



The Enbridge route crosses the Mississippi River Headwaters near Itasca State Park. It then proceeds south and east through Hubbard County home to some of the clearest and cleanest lakes in Minnesota. It will cross the Straight River watershed and the already compromised Straight River aquifer which made up of shallow, sandy, porous soils.

If Enbridge had a spill in the Fishhook River Watershed or in one of the creek crossings near the lakes north of Park Rapids, that spill could affect Island, Eagle, Potato, and Fishhook lakes. Enbridge spills or leaks average about 380,000, gallons of oil a year.

In their advertising, Enbridge claims a stellar safety record. However, Enbridge's 2010 Kalamazoo spill in Michigan was at least 800,000 gallons, and it spread 30 miles. Minnesota's Hay Creek is less than 10 miles from the Fishhook River and the community of Park Rapids. See this article describing the Kalamazoo spill. <http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20120626/dilbit-diluted-bitumen-enbridge-kalamazoo-river-marshall-michigan-oil-spill-6b-pipeline-epa>

Our group has watched what happened in Kalamazoo, a community that crossed its fingers and hoped for the best from an Enbridge pipeline. According to Inside Climate News, Kalamazoo is still trying to get Enbridge to clean up this 2010 spill. <http://insideclimatenews.org/news/20131202/enbridge-could-be-forced-boost-pipeline-safety-mich-after-water-violations> And Enbridge hasn't been particularly cooperative or forthcoming. <http://grangehallpress.com/Enbridgeblog/2014/02/23/they-just-havent-been-very-forthcoming-with-us/>

Pipelines fail. Over the course of their 25-30 year life spans, most pipelines have some issues or "incidents," and some of those issues have terrible consequences for our land and water. This is an EPA study, heavy on the science and bewildering to the layperson.

http://www.epa.gov/ncea/pdfs/bristolbay/bristol_bay_assessment_final_2014_vol1_chapter11.pdf However, as stated in its summary of the Environmental Impact Statement: "In each of the three scenarios, there would be a greater than 99.9% chance that at least one of the three pipelines carrying liquid would fail during the project lifetime."

A retired MPCA tech advisor now working with Friends of the Headwaters, described the EPA's EIS, cited above, in this way: "Suffice it to say the EIS concluded that these pipelines are virtually guaranteed to leak or rupture multiple times over a thirty year life time and most of these will be used longer than that. We just don't know when or where or how much, it is like Russian roulette with all the chambers loaded, we just don't know which way the gun will be pointed when it goes off."



Controlled burn after 6,000 barrels of oil spilled from ruptured Enbridge pipeline in Cohasset, Minnesota in July, 2002. Photo: US National Transportation Safety Board.



An Enbridge pipeline carrying crude oil from Saskatchewan to Chicago exploded, killing two workers trying to make a repair in Clearbrook, Minnesota in 2007.