

Help Protect the Great Lakes from an Oil Spill

Get the Facts and Join the Movement to Shut Down Line 5

FLOW
FOR LOVE OF WATER
2022 FACT SHEET

We are united by our love of the Great Lakes. They provide drinking water for millions of people in the United States and Canada, [drive our economy](#), and define our way of life.

Since 2013, FLOW has helped build a broad coalition—the [Oil & Water Don't Mix](#) campaign—to prevent a catastrophic oil spill in the Great Lakes. The source of this threat is [Line 5](#), the aging oil pipelines crossing the bottom of the Straits of Mackinac, where Lake Michigan meets Lake Huron.

Line 5 is owned and operated by Enbridge, the same Canadian corporation responsible for the 2010 spill of more than [1.2 million gallons](#) of heavy tar sands oil into the Kalamazoo River watershed near Marshall, Michigan. That spill remains one of the largest inland oil spills in U.S. history. It took four years and over \$1.2 billion to clean it up to the extent possible.

We need your help to prevent another Enbridge oil spill in Michigan's fresh waters. Individuals, families, organizations, communities, tribes, businesses, and faith leaders are working together to shut down Line 5 before it's too late. Learn more in this fact sheet and at [ForLoveOfWater.org](#), and take action to protect the Great Lakes.

OUTDATED, DECAYING, AND VULNERABLE:

Line 5 carries nearly 23 million gallons of oil and natural gas liquids each day from oil sands fields in western Canada to refineries in Ontario, using the Straits of Mackinac as a shortcut. Built in 1953 to last [50 years](#), Line 5 is nearly 70 years old and operates in fierce currents on the public trust bottomlands of the Straits. Ship [anchors](#) and other [objects](#) have repeatedly dented and gouged Line 5, and its protective coating was previously [lost in numerous spots](#) as well.

HISTORY OF FAILURE: Outside the Straits, Line 5 has [failed at least 33 times](#) since 1968, spilling more than 1.1 million gallons of oil in Michigan and Wisconsin. An oil spill in the Straits could pollute vast reaches of open water and [720 miles of shoreline](#) along Lake Michigan and Lake Huron, according to the University of Michigan.



Photo by Beth Price

ECONOMIC BLOW: A Line 5 oil spill in the Straits of Mackinac could strike a [\\$6 billion blow](#) to Michigan's economy, communities, and natural resources, and [billions of dollars more in impact](#) to the region's commercial shipping and steel production, according to studies commissioned by FLOW and conducted by Michigan State University experts.

RISKY TUNNEL: Enbridge proposes to bore and blast a 21-foot diameter tunnel under the Straits of Mackinac to house a new Line 5 pipeline, whose fossil fuel contents when burned would release climate pollution each year equivalent to nearly seven new coal-fired power plants. Engineering and geologic experts warn the proposed tunnel construction would [foul the Great Lakes](#) and its operation would pose a catastrophic [explosion risk](#).

SAFER, SMARTER ALTERNATIVES: [Available capacity and flexibility](#) to meet energy demand in the Great Lakes region already exists in the North American energy pipeline system operated by Enbridge and its competitors without threatening our public waters and the economy, according to multiple experts. One of Enbridge's own experts has concluded gasoline prices will rise by about [half a penny](#) in Michigan if the Line 5 oil pipeline shuts down.

TAKE ACTION TO SHUT DOWN LINE 5 & STOP THE ENBRIDGE OIL TUNNEL

In order to protect the Great Lakes and our [public trust rights](#) to use and enjoy them, Governor Gretchen Whitmer [ordered](#) Enbridge to shut down Line 5 by May 2021. The State of Michigan and Attorney General Dana Nessel remain committed to this legal course while Enbridge [defies the shutdown order](#), leaving Line 5 exposed to exceptionally strong currents, lakebed scouring, new anchor and cable strikes, and corrosion. Tribes also continue to oppose Line 5 while asserting treaty rights to hunt, fish, and gather in and around the Straits.

Join FLOW today as we and our allies support the State of Michigan's and tribes' shutdown efforts and build the citizen movement to stop an oil spill disaster in the Straits at the very heart of the Great Lakes. [Alternatives exist](#) for supplying oil and propane, but there is no alternative to the Great Lakes!

Here's What You Can Do:

-  **STAY TUNED**—This best way to stay current on legal actions, news, events, and take-action opportunities is to sign up for email newsletters at ForLoveOfWater.org and OilandWaterDontMix.org — and find and follow FLOW and Oil & Water Don't Mix on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), & [Twitter](#).
-  **STEEP YOURSELF IN THE FACTS**—Visit ForLoveOfWater.org to access our Line 5 articles, reports, videos, webinars, and links to our social media.
-  **SPEAK UP**—We cannot match the advertising budget of oil-transport giant Enbridge, but a chorus of voices will be heard above the spin. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, email your state and federal lawmakers, sign [petitions](#) to decision makers, talk to your friends and neighbors, and display a [yard sign](#). Visit ForLoveOfWater.org for more key facts to include in your messages.
-  **SHOW UP & STAND UP**—Hearings on the proposed oil tunnel are expected to continue this year with the [Michigan Public Service Commission](#) and [U.S. Army Corps of Engineers](#), and those sessions must allow public comment. Stay tuned to FLOW's [email newsletter](#), [website](#), and social media for alerts.
-  **SPREAD THE WORD**—Print and share this fact sheet from our [website](#), along with the other handouts available for download.
-  **SUPPORT US**—Donate to FLOW at ForLoveOfWater.org/Donate/ to help us continue to make the legal, scientific, and common sense case for shutting down Line 5 to protect the Great Lakes.



To view an electronic version of this fact sheet, including links to source content, visit <https://ForLoveOfWater.org/Line5/> or scan this QR code with your cell phone:



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