

HDI talks with Enbridge despite huge oil spills

By Jim Windle

SIX NATIONS — Judging by the growing environmental disasters created by oil pipelines cross-crossing Turtle Island, the Haudenosaunee Development Institute's "conversations" with Enbridge, and any other oil sands venture, may turn out to be a matter of money before morals.

News out of Rapid City South Dakota reveals growing Native concerns over a massive oil spill of bitumen from the Alberta oil-sands, which has sparked further protest by Yankton and Rosebud Sioux tribes and non-Native environmentalists allies.

The "black snake", which is what area tribes call the TransCanada Corp.'s Keystone XL Pipeline, was protested after the Chinese-owned Plains Midstream Pipeline leaked an estimated 1.5 million gallons of toxic diluted dilbit (diluted bitumen) just south of Ft. McMurray before the leak was finally repaired.

The spill surpasses that of the largest inland oil spill ever in the United States, the Enbridge oil spill, which polluted Michigan's Kalamazoo River in 2010, and is still the subject expensive and troublesome cleanup efforts.

It is not the first and most certainly not the last time the Chinese-owned company has had to clean up its mess. The Ft. McMurray spill by China National Offshore Oil Corp. Ltd., as well as for the May 19 pipeline rupture near Santa Barbara, California, which dumped 100,000

gallons of oil, closing Pacific Ocean beaches for a month, are only a few of the larger spills reported.

Another report says that between 1999 and 2010 Enbridge had 804 spills that dumped 161,000 barrels of oil onto lands and into water.

The total number of barrels of oil spilled in 2010 alone was 34,122, the equivalent of more than one million U.S. gallons.

Line 6B, at Romeoville, Ill. spilled 9,000 barrels, or more than 250,000 gallons of crude into an industrial area.

Enbridge Line 9, which runs through Kingston on its route between Sarnia and Montreal, and will cross the Grand River was built with the same corroded protective coating as suspected as the cause of the Romeoville spill.

The Keystone XL tar-sands crude-oil pipeline is planned across 314 miles of Lakota Territory, through the South Dakota counties of Harding, Butte, Perkins, Meade, Pennington, Haakon, Jones, Lyman and Tripp.

According to Associated Press, Owe Aku (Bring Back the Way) founder Debra White Plume, one of the promoters of the actions to prevent pipeline expansion, submitted testimony to the commission, noting that all the tribes in South Dakota have said "no" to the Keystone XL Pipeline.

"Now it is your turn to say no," she said. The line would cross many important parts of the Mississippi watershed, as well as community water supplies, she said.



Pipeline spills across indigenous territories have raised concerns about plans to cross the Grand River with the bitumen pipe locally.

The Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN), representing the people near the Ft. Mc-

Murray spill, spoke out against the increasing mining and transportation of tar-sands oil in its

ancestral territories, including the boreal forests of Alberta.

"A spill this size into

the muskeg, which is an important part of the eco-system in the region and houses many of our medicines, berries and habitat for species our people rely on for sustenance, is extremely serious," AFCN Chief Allan Adam stated in the Associated Press release.

Enbridge will be hosting an open house on Wednesday, Aug. 12, at the Six Nations Tourism Building in the Assembly Room between 3 pm and 7 pm. The reason for the meeting is to calm local concerns about the safety of their pipelines.