

Enbridge oil pipeline over Grand could devastate Six Nations water

By Mari Reeve

OHSWEKEN - Approximately 50 people gathered at the GREAT Theatre to hear information about Enbridge's Line 9 - which runs through Six Nations territory.

Line 9 begins in Aamjiwnaang First Nation, otherwise known as Sarnia, and ends in Montreal. In June, Enbridge plans for Line 9B to begin pumping toxic diluted bitumen through the pipeline all the way to Montreal.

A Line 9 pipeline spill would affect over 9 million people along the pipeline, possibly polluting over 100 communities from small towns to large urban centres like Toronto. Presenters at the event said that 18 of those communities are indigenous territories and 11 of these First Nations communities were ignored with no prior, informed consent of the toxic materials that will flow across their lands.

Speakers at the event shared that according to Enbridge's own inspection tools there are 12,961 findings of cracks, dents, or corrosion damages along the pipeline. There have been obvious warning signs and red flags. Like the current record of 35 pipeline



ruptures over 40 years of Line 9's existence, or Enbridge's pipeline 6B spill in July of 2010.

Line 6B, which is almost identical to Line 9 in age, construction, and operation, burst and contaminated the Talmadge River in Minnesota. Diluted bitumen from the pipeline in what was recorded as the biggest inland oil spill in US history.

Bitumen rolled down the Talmadge and into

the Kalamazoo River in Michigan. Presenters at this week's event confirmed that even today, five years later, Enbridge's clean up from that spill is not yet complete and there have been no public reports or government efforts to inform the people of the ongoing environmental and health effects of the spill.

There has been vocal community resistance all along Line 9, such as an occupation of sites that cross the Grand River,

one action even leading to 6 arrests in Westover. Still Line 9 and many other pipelines continue to operate daily and are in the process of being built.

Considering the track record of these pipelines protesters have a strong argument. A 'pipeline for the economy now, worry about the consequences after' mentality leaves water, food and land security at high risk. Why spend money protecting the water or land?

Presenters also

shared that there is also no Canadian government agency or department that is responsible for cleaning up environmental disasters. And there is little is known about the process of oil spill clean up. This means that there is likely no action plan in place to protect the Grand River from an environmental disaster much like the Talmadge River.

MAP ABOVE: Line 9 Peoples Map: Map of 40-year-old Line 9 beginning in

Aamjiwnaang (Sarnia, ON). Line 9B is where the toxic diluted bitumen would be reversed through the pipeline, beginning in Westover and continuing through to Montreal. A pipeline spill would affect over 9 million people and 100 large and small communities, 18 of them are Onkwehon:we territories. Map from Rabble News, 'Ethical Enbridge? The real story of Line 9 and the tar sands giga-project, 2013', by SONIA GRANT, SAKURA SAUNDERS, and DAVE VASEY. Source: <http://rabble.ca/news/2013/01/mcethicaltm-enbridge-line-9-and-tar-sands-gigaproject>

Tar Sands Pipeline Map: The current and proposed Canadian and U.S. oil company pipelines, which carry tar sands oils. The proposed TransCanada Keystone XL pipeline would cross the U.S.-Canadian border and six U.S. states. Map taken from 'The Facts on Oil Sands Report 2012', produced by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers. Source: <http://response.restoration.noaa.gov/about/media/what-are-increased-risks-transporting-tar-sands-oil.html>