

Women speak out against Line 9 reversal, say Grand River watershed at risk

By Chase Jarrett
Writer

An oil pipeline system snaking across Canada is uniting Onkwehonwe across Turtle Island in protest of Enbridge's oil pipeline project.

The "She Speaks" forum stopped at Brantford Laurier Friday.

Moderator Heather Milton-Lighting told the about 40 people gathered the pipelines could put 12 watersheds, including the Grand River and Thames River at risk.

She said the tour is focused on stopping environmental destruction, she says is wrought from both turning tarsands into oil, and now has added concerns associated with transportation of the oil.

Milton-Lighting of Pasqua First Nation in Saskatchewan called on First Nations to stop the development. "We [natives] have a relationship with the Canadian government nobody else has. Be-

cause of that we can stop development," she said.

She was one of four First Nations women who spoke at the forum along with Crystal Lameman of Beaver Lake Cree Nations, Alberta, Vanessa Gray of Aamjiwnaang First Nation, in Ontario and Missy Elliot of Six Nations.

The "She Speaks" meeting comes on the heels of a huge oil project branching into Ontario that has alarmed Six Nations land protectors who fear an oil spill in the Grand River.

In July Enbridge Inc., a North American energy giant, received government approval on a project that will see tarsand oil transported across the Grand River.

Despite Enbridge claims they are consulting with Six Nations, both Six Nations Band Council and the Haudenosaunee Development Institute said they have not been consulted on the project.

Elliot fears the abrasive tar sands oils will break the pipelines and destroy the Grand River. "It's like putting sand paper through these really old pipelines. That's a recipe for disaster," Elliot said. The Line 9 pipeline is at least 30 years old. It is a "twin" of the pipeline that broke and caused the biggest oil spill in U.S. history back in 2010 on Kalamazoo River, says Elliot. Elliot said Enbridge's claim of consulting with Six Nations was a "flat-out lie."

The length of pipeline being reversed runs from Sarnia, to Westover crossing the Haldimand Tract and Grand River south of Cambridge. The line will have a maximum oil capacity of 200,000 bpd. Enbridge plans to bring in oil from Saskatchewan, Manitoba, and Alberta.

She said the Canadian government will sugar coat the development by saying jobs will come from it. She said Six Nations is not safe.