

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**MONDAY NOVEMBER 20, 2006**

Contact:	Brent Denzin, Attorney Midwest Environmental Advocates (608) 251-5047 ext. 1 Cell (734) 649-9111	Lori Grant, Policy Project Manager River Alliance of Wisconsin (608) 257-2424 ext. 111
----------	---	--

### **Proposed Crude Oil Pipeline Threatens Wisconsin's Environment**

Conservation Groups concerned about the State's rapid review, initial findings for oil pipeline proposal

Madison— Last week, a united group of conservation organizations filed comments with Wisconsin's Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers stressing the need for an Environmental Impact Statement before approving a 322-mile crude oil pipeline project in Wisconsin. The crude oil pipeline, proposed by Enbridge Energy, Inc., will extend from Superior to Delavan, Wisconsin, crossing 242 rivers and streams and 74 miles of wetlands. Construction activities are expected to disturb 1,265 acres of wetland, clear 262 acres of wooded wetland, and clear cut 1,930 acres of upland forest. Despite these impacts, DNR appears poised to issue a "finding of no significant impact" for the project which means permits can be issued without the completion of a full Environmental Impact Statement.

"The construction of a new pipeline will have an enormous impact on some of Wisconsin's most pristine wetlands and rivers," says Lori Grant, Policy Project Manager at River Alliance of Wisconsin. "Wildlife habitat will be cleared and outdoor recreation area used for hunting and fishing areas will suffer."

By the end of the project, approximately 3,900 acres of land, including 48,400 feet of river bank will be transformed into a construction site. DNR estimates that 30 tons of sediment can erode off every one-acre construction site. The 3,900 acre pipeline site could cause up to 117,090 tons of sediment (roughly 14,600 dump trucks) to erode from the pipeline construction site into our state's waters. Enbridge has no plans to replant the 1,930 acres of trees that will be lost.

Once operating, Enbridge pipeline exposes pristine areas to the threat of a crude oil spill. Enbridge pipelines spilled roughly 252,000 gallons of crude oil in Cohasset, MN in 2002, and more than 3.3 million gallons of crude oil into the Canadian environment since 1990. Wisconsin has experienced at least seven spills from Enbridge pipelines since 1999.

"In addition to the direct impacts of the construction activity and the risks of a crude oil spill, the project seems to undermine the State's efforts to reduce petroleum use," says Brent Denzin, attorney at Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc.

Currently, 10 Wisconsin counties fail to meet EPA standards for ozone, largely due to gasoline combustion. As set forth in a recent Executive Order, Governor Doyle has set a firm commitment to

reduce the State's petroleum use the next 3-10 years. If built, the new pipeline will allow Enbridge to increase distribution of oil to the Midwest states by 400,000 barrels per day.

“At the very least, the DNR and public should take a hard look at the likely consequences of clear cutting these pristine areas,” says Brent Denzin. “These impacts are significant and deserve a thorough analysis.”

If DNR maintains its position that the pipeline impacts are “insignificant,” Enbridge Energy could receive the first set of permits by Thanksgiving.

\*\*\*\*

### **FAST FACTS**

- The proposed Enbridge Energy Oil Pipeline will cross the following natural areas:
  - the Namekagon River, a national wild and scenic river, which is also an Outstanding Resource Water (ORW), and Section 10 Waterway as defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers;
  - four other ORWs (Maple Creek, Badger Creek, Tributary #3 to Swan Creek, and Swan Creek);
  - nine Exceptional Resource Waters (ERWs) (Alder Creek, Big Weirgor Creek, Jump River, Lynn Creek, Sevenmile Creek, Main Creek, Carter Creek, Little Roche a Cri Creek, Fordham Creek, and Allen Creek - three of which will be crossed more than once);
  - seven other section 10 navigable waterways (Nemadji , Chippewa , Thornapple , Black , Wisconsin , Fox (crossed twice), and the Rock rivers) AND;
  - Eighteen trout streams, including 8 Class I trout streams, 6 Class II trout streams, and 4 Class III trout streams.
  - 361 acres of wetlands
- Three federally-listed endangered or threatened species, the bald eagle, gray wolf, and Karner blue butterfly, are known to populate areas near or within the pipeline route. Specifically, bald eagles are known to nest in areas within one quarter mile of the pipeline.
- The proposed pipeline will travel through Douglas, Washburn, Sawyer, Rusk, Chippewa, Taylor, Clark, Marathon, Wood, Adams, Marquette, Colombia, Dane, Jefferson, and Rock Counties.
- Governor Doyle's Executive Order # 141 proposes to reduce oil consumption due to its environmental impacts and the increasing availability of renewable, clean fuel technology
- Concerned residents can call their state representative and Jeff Schimpff (DNR Office of Energy) (Phone: (608) 267-7853)
- Midwest Environmental Advocates, Inc. is a non-profit environmental law office committed to protecting the public's right to clean air, clean water, clean government, and responsible land use.
- The River Alliance of Wisconsin is a non-profit, non-partisan group of citizens, organizations, and businesses dedicated to advocating for the protection, enhancement and restoration of our rivers and watersheds.
- Joint comments were submitted by MEA, Wisconsin Wetlands Association, River Alliance of Wisconsin, and Sierra Club's John Muir Chapter.