



**MEDIA ADVISORY
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: December 4, 2015**

CONTACT:

Patty O’Keefe, MN350, patty@mn350.org, 952-221-3977
Thane Maxwell, Honor the Earth, thane@honorearth.org, 612-900-5108

On December 8, 2015, at 12:00pm, the “Duluth 7” will hold a press conference in front of the St. Louis County Courthouse in Duluth, MN. The public is also invited to gather to show support. The “Duluth 7” are the seven individuals arrested for criminal trespassing at the Enbridge offices in Duluth on November 2, as an act of civil disobedience. December 8th is the day of their arraignment. They will give public statements and answer questions from the media.

On November 2, 2015, a group of over 250 people gathered in downtown Duluth to demonstrate opposition to Enbridge’s new crude oil pipeline proposals and the current regulatory process. After gathering at the Hillside Community Center, the group marched down Lake Avenue, singing, chanting, and displaying artwork, and entered the Enbridge office inside the Tech Village to present a letter to Enbridge staff. The letter was signed by five different organizations with thousands of members across the region. It outlined several specific requests for changes to the permitting process, including formal consultation with tribal governments (as required by Enbridge’s official Aboriginal and Native American policy), and postponement of all projects until full Environmental Impact Statements have been completed (as required by state and federal law).

Enbridge staff refused to even look at the letter. The group chanted, sang, and gave statements. A large ceremonial drum was brought into the office and six men played traditional songs that celebrate Anishinaabe culture and its rich history of resilience, and love for Mother Earth. Enbridge staff called the police, and most of the group departed immediately, but seven people sat down calmly on the floor and asked Enbridge again to read the letter. Enbridge staff refused. The Duluth 7 were handcuffed and transported to law enforcement facilities, and released later that night without bail.

Patty O’Keefe, Fossil Fuel Divestment Coordinator for MN350 and one of those arrested, says: “Enbridge breaks laws regularly. They disrespect treaty rights, they have poisoned people’s water, food, and communities, and they break the laws of nature by contributing to climate change. Citizens have woken up and are demanding accountability. It is Enbridge that should be penalized for the crimes they’re committing, not civilians who are trying to engage in dialogue.”

Thane Maxwell, Community Organizer with Honor the Earth and also one of those arrested, says: “We disagree with the logic and the morality of a criminal justice system that prioritizes the rights of private property owners over the rights of our fresh water, our climate, our public health, future generations,

the sovereignty of our region's tribal Nations, and the constitutionally-protected rights of the Anishinaabeg to subsist off the land in territory ceded to the US government in the 1855 Treaty. We call on St. Louis County to avoid spending more public resources protecting Enbridge's so-called "right" to refuse dialogue with the people they are poisoning. Enbridge's process of pushing these pipeline proposals has been aggressive, dishonest, and in direct violation of their own Aboriginal and Native American Policy. And the State of Minnesota's regulatory process is profoundly dysfunctional. We see this as just the latest iteration of a process of colonialist violence that has been going on for over 400 years. Enough is enough."