



Oil & Water Don't Mix
Keep Oil Out of the Great Lakes

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Campaign to Governor & Attorney General: Shut Down Enbridge's "Line 5" Oil Pipelines & Launch Transparent Public Process to Determine Their Fate

LANSING – In a report released today, Governor Rick Snyder's [Michigan Petroleum Pipeline Task Force](#) went public with recommendations that hold some promise but lack a commitment to an open public process and immediate protective actions, leaving the Great Lakes and Michigan's economy – with one in five jobs tied to abundant, high quality fresh water – vulnerable to a catastrophic oil spill from a pair of aging pipelines that push 23 million gallons of oil a day through the Straits of Mackinac, said leaders of the [Oil & Water Don't Mix campaign](#).

While the state acknowledged for the first time that it, and not just the federal government, has the authority to regulate and even "decommission" the Straits pipelines, groups involved in the campaign said today that Governor Snyder and Attorney General Bill Schuette are failing to uphold their legal duty to protect the Great Lakes by not immediately shutting down Enbridge's aging "Line 5" oil pipelines in light of experts' concerns that the 62-year-old pipelines soon could fail.

In addition, the campaign contends that the state by law must chart the fate of the pipelines in the Straits by conducting an open public process to review risks posed by the pipelines to the environment and economy, and identify and require the pursuit of alternatives that will permanently protect the Great Lakes from a disastrous oil spill. The task force recommends the study of risks and alternatives but without specifying that the process must be public, independent, legally enforceable, and conducted with urgency.

"If you believe these existing pipelines pose an immediate threat to the Great Lakes – and we do – the task force recommendations amount to a rearranging of deck chairs on Michigan's Titanic of oil pipelines, only worse: the threat of Enbridge's pipelines through the Straits are there for all to see. What is needed, and needed now, is to shut down Line 5," said **David Holtz, Chair of Michigan Sierra Club**.

The Oil & Water Don't Mix campaign has raised structural concerns about the twin pipelines installed in the Straits in 1953 just west of the Mackinac Bridge, including that their protective coating and welding are outdated and that waste excreted by zebra and quagga mussels may have corroded and dangerously weakened the steel pipes, according to a [report released May 27](#) by a team of scientists and engineers working with the campaign.

The campaign's efforts and concerns regarding the Enbridge oil pipelines, which lie on the bottom of the Mackinac Straits, have attracted Midwest and national media coverage, including a [prominent feature by CBS-TV in Detroit](#) that ran just before 60 Minutes on Father's Day, and helped push the pipelines into the [top tier](#) of Michigan's [most urgent environmental threats](#).

Governor Snyder [in June 2014 formed the Michigan Petroleum Pipeline Task Force](#) to look at oil pipeline safety issues at the Straits of Mackinac and statewide, appointing Attorney General Bill Schuette and Department of Environmental Quality Director Dan Wyant as co-chairs. By law, Gov. Snyder, Attorney General Schuette, and Director Wyant are legal trustees of the Great Lakes waters and bottomlands and must uphold their duty to protect the public's natural resources from harm and maintain them for the public's use and enjoyment, including for fishing, navigation, and commerce.

[Thousands of citizens](#), and [dozens of environmental groups, businesses](#), Indian tribes, and [communities](#), support the Oil & Water Don't Mix campaign's goal to protect the Great Lakes from a devastating oil spill at the Mackinac Straits, where

Lake Michigan and Lake Huron meet. The campaign has urged Gov. Snyder to immediately assert his legal authority as the state's primary trustee of the Great Lakes waters, bottomlands, and related natural resources, representing some 20 percent of the world's fresh surface water.

Rather than immediately shut down Line 5 in the Straits and conduct a public review of the risks from and alternatives to the oil pipelines under the state's [Great Lakes Submerged Lands Act](#), as the campaign has sought, the task force is recommending the state increase basic oversight by invoking its powers under the [easement](#) it granted Canadian-based Enbridge in 1953 to use state bottomlands under certain conditions and standards. In summary, the task force in its report released today issued:

- Specific recommendations regarding the Straits Pipelines:
 1. Prevent the transportation of heavy crude oil through the Straits Pipelines.
 2. Require an independent risk analysis and adequate financial assurance for the Straits Pipelines.
 3. Require an independent analysis of alternatives to the existing Straits Pipelines.
 4. Obtain additional information from Enbridge relating to the Straits Pipelines.
- Statewide recommendations:
 1. Coordinate mapping of existing pipelines among state agencies.
 2. Ensure that state agencies collaborate on emergency planning and spill response.
 3. Ensure coordinated emergency response training exercises and drills.
 4. Ensure regular state consultation with the federal Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA) on hazardous liquid (including petroleum) pipelines.
 5. Consider legislation requiring state review and approval of oil spill response plans, improved spill reporting, and more robust civil fines.
 6. Evaluate whether to establish a Hazardous Liquids Pipeline Safety Program in Michigan.
 7. Consider legislation or rulemaking to improve siting process for new petroleum pipelines.
 8. Consider issuing an Executive Order creating an Advisory Committee on Pipeline Safety.
 9. Create a continuing Petroleum Pipeline Information website.

"While the Task Force report readily admits to the extraordinary risk posed by the Straits pipelines and acknowledges that the state has legal authority to shut them down, the threat to the Great Lakes increases by the day by the state failing to take immediate action," **said Liz Kirkwood, executive director at FLOW (For Love of Water)**. "Enbridge's operations have been cloaked in secrecy and vague reassurances for far too long."

Enbridge was made infamous in 2010 when its Line 6b pipeline corroded and spilled 1 million gallons of heavy oil into the Kalamazoo River watershed near Marshall, Michigan, taking four years and \$1.2 billion to clean up, though some oil remains in the environment beyond the reach of current recovery techniques. Enbridge's oil pipelines in the Mackinac Straits are about 20 years older than its failed Kalamazoo pipeline.

"The state must do everything it can to prevent a disastrous oil spill in the Great Lakes, rather than count on the unproven ability to clean up oil in wide-open freshwater or under several feet of ice in the dead of winter," **said Jim Lively, program director at the Groundwork Center for Resilient Communities**. "Shutting down Enbridge's oil pipelines in the Straits must be the first step because of the magnitude of the harm they pose."

A July 2014 study by the University of Michigan called the Straits "the [worst possible place](#) for an oil spill in the Great Lakes" and [depicted the prospect of a plume from a million-gallon oil spill](#) in the Straits stretching for 85 miles – from Lake Michigan's Beaver Island to Mackinac Island to Rogers City down the Lake Huron shore.

Mayor Margaret Doud of Mackinac Island, the mayors of Traverse City and Grand Rapids, and most recently, the Cheboygan County Board of Commissioners have [sent formal letters to the governor](#) calling for state action on the oil pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac. Several Indian tribes in Michigan also have raised concerns and called for the shutdown of the oil pipelines in the Straits.

"The fact that these are just recommendations demonstrates the need to do more to protect our most valuable resource, because of the risk to the Great Lakes that the pipelines pose," **said Nic Clark, state director of Clean Water Action**. "It's time for Governor Snyder to stand up for our Great Lakes economy and shut down Line 5."

For more information:

[Web](#) – Campaign's online presence:

- www.OilandWaterDontMix.org
- www.facebook.com/oilandwaterdontmixcoalition

[Fact Sheet](#) – Campaign’s 2015 fact sheet: “Shut Down Enbridge’s ‘Line 5’ Oil Pipelines in the Straits of Mackinac”

[Slides](#) – Campaign’s Dec. 15, 2014, slide presentation to the Michigan Petroleum Pipeline Task Force.

[Letter](#) – Campaign’s July 1, 2014, letter to Gov. Snyder.

[Video](#) – University of Michigan summer 2014 simulation of a Straits of Mackinac oil spill.

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