Enbridge’s line 5 pipeline, an actor-network approach to understanding power, ally-ship and indigenous exclusion in the Great Lakes region across the US/Canada border

This conceptual map aims at tracing the topographical space within which Indigenous peoples in the Great Lakes Area resist against Enbridge, the Canadian multinational fossil fuel transport company that operates line 5. The map makes visible the interactions and stakes of different actors in the network constructed around the controversial line 5 pipeline that traverses Lake Michigan and Lake Huron (half of the latter is in Canadian territory and the other half in US territory). Historically, the Great Lakes has been inhabited by Indigenous tribes and active colonization has to some extend pushed them into reserves (Canadian nomenclature) and reservations (USA nomenclature). While oil and other derivatives cross the border with relative ease, political support and protection, Indigenous peoples whose communities have been slashed by this border, have a much harder time crossing it. Moreover, if the aging pipeline leaks, both lakes will be polluted beyond repair and the damage will be enormous for all of the stakeholders but especially for Indigenous peoples for whom the Great Lakes area holds cultural significance. Where in the network is there non-alignment and therefore inaction? What is the position of indigenous rights in this struggle?

Many banks from around the world have investments in Enbridge’s pipelines. BNP Paribas, Bank of Montreal, National Bank of Canada, Bank of China are just a few examples.

In 2010 an Enbridge pipeline spilled oil into the Kalamazoo river, one of the worst inland oil spills in the USA.

Sharp edges such as #NDAA2018 and #StopEnbridge can connect the two movements on social media. With the media attention that ENA garnered, putting issues regarding Enbridge and US politics on the spotlight, the movement against Enbridge leverage the support that NDAA2018 obtained and the people it educated.

Oil and Water Don’t Mix, Indigenous Environmental Network, 350.org, Sierra Club... served the U.S. Departments of Transportation and the Pipeline and Regulatory Federal Safety Administration that their map was considered by its author to be a work in progress.

Opponents of the pipeline argue that a small portion of the oil is used in Michigan, while the state shoulders most of the risk, and the proponents argue the importance of the pipeline in the energy landscape of Michigan. 25 communities in Michigan have passed a resolution calling on Governor Rick Snyder and Attorney General Bill Schuette to stop the oil flowing through line 5.

Rick Snyder, the governor of Michigan is a Republican, business executive, venture capitalist and accountant. Despite recommendations to cease the operation of line 5 by a risk consulting firm and by its advisory board, he supports its continued activity.

Despite the recommendations made by a risk consulting firm to the Michigan government, the Line 5 pipeline has never been shut down. However, the localвелишкы communities and their local businesses have been fighting against the pipeline since 2012. The map makes visible the interactions and the stakes of different actors in the network constructed around the controversial line 5 pipeline that traverses Lake Michigan and Lake Huron (half of the latter is in Canadian territory and the other half in US territory).

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References

This reference section is as central to the map as any other part of it and should not be crammed on the corner, in a small font. The reader of this map is highly encouraged to actively use this section to further their research, to learn more, to go deeper and to understand the sources used.

A  Mazasca Talks (Money Talks) 
https://mazaskatalks.org/thebanks#banks

B  Letter to banks 

C  University of Michigan’s Graham Sustainability Institute 
http://graham.umich.edu/water/project/mackinac-oil-spill

D  Michigan State department of environmental quality 
https://www.michigan.gov/deq/0,4561,7-135-3313_3677_3702-10865--,00.html

E  Boundary Waters Treaty 

F  FLOW’s report on energy supply alternatives for UP 

More in depth report: 

G  #KeepItInTheGround worldwide movement 
http://keepitintheground.org/

H  National Wildlife Federation 

I  Letter from Binational Public Forum organizers 
https://freshwaterfuture.org/watchdog/lake-superior-binational-forum-funding-has-been-eliminated-by-us-epa

J  Banks financing Enbridge 
https://www.ran.org/the-understory/whos-banking-enbridge/

Further Readings


Banks financing Enbridge are for the most part multinational corporations headquartered in the countries above.