



**Committee of Advisors  
to the  
Great Lakes Fishery Commission**



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**Resolution 22-01: A RESOLUTION CALLING FOR ALTERNATIVES AND  
BEST AVAILABLE TECHNOLOGIES TO EFFECTIVELY  
ELMINATE THE RISK OF AN OIL SPILL FROM LINE 5  
IN THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC**

**WHEREAS**, in 2014 the Great Lakes Fishery Commission U.S. and Canadian Committees of Advisors passed “A RESOLUTION URGING THE REPLACEMENT OF THE STRAITS OF MACKINAC PIPELINE”;

**WHEREAS**, there has not yet been any action taken that would effectively eliminate the risk posed to the Great Lakes environment by Line 5;

**WHEREAS**, the Enbridge Energy Inc. owned pipeline, Line 5, runs beneath the Mackinac Bridge in the Straits of Mackinac, an ecologically sensitive and vulnerable area with fast-moving currents and frequent ice-cover;

**WHEREAS**, the existing pipeline was constructed in 1953 and consists of two parallel pipelines that are each 4 miles long and 20 inches in diameter;

**WHEREAS**, the pipeline is structurally unsupported in many areas, has known damage from an anchor strike in 2019 despite being in a no anchor zone, shows loss of protective coatings, and is subjected regularly to intense environmental stressors;

**WHEREAS**, Enbridge was responsible for the 2010 oil spill in the Kalamazoo River, the largest spill on record in the lower 48 states, which resulted in roughly one million gallons of dilbit being released into the river and on-going clean-up costs estimated at \$1 billion USD;

**WHEREAS**, a federal review found that the Kalamazoo River spill was a result of Enbridge failing to repair known pipeline defects and a lax government oversight of pipeline maintenance and spill-response plans;

**WHEREAS**, the response time to shut down the malfunctioning pipeline that resulted in the Kalamazoo River spill was seventeen hours;

*The opinions expressed here are those of the independent committee of advisors and not necessarily those of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission. The Committee of Advisors consists of both U.S. and Canadian representatives, from indigenous, commercial, recreational, academic, agency, environmental, and public fishery interests in the Great Lakes Basin. Advisors provide advice to the Great Lakes Fishery Commission; U.S. advisors are nominated by the State Governors, and appointed by the commission. Canadian advisors are appointed by the commission.*

**WHEREAS**, a spill could occur during winter months when the Straits and parts of Lake Huron and Lake Michigan freeze over, which would make detection and clean up of a spill much more difficult;

**WHEREAS**, spill modelling has shown that the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile length of shoreline oiling from a worst-case spill is 60 miles under the assumptions described in the 2017 report Alternatives Analysis for the Straits Pipelines commissioned by the State of Michigan and that such a spill could hit land anywhere within a 1,000 mile zone of possible exposure with significant impacts on the environment and health that go well beyond the shoreline oiling area and could extend into the lower lakes; and

**WHEREAS**, an oil spill in the Straits of Mackinac could result in significant negative impacts to birds, fish, amphibians, reptiles, mammals, and aquatic plants in the spill area; impact fishery restoration, fish habitat, and the health of the ecosystem; and result in economic impacts in the billions of dollars from lost recreation, tourism, and commercial fishing opportunities, as well as impacts to residential properties and increased costs of municipal water testing and treatment.

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the binational committee of advisors of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission call on all appropriate authorities to eliminate the current serious ecological, human health, and property risks posed by Line 5 in the Straits of Mackinac by requiring alternatives and best available technologies to effectively eliminate the risk of an oil spill; and

**THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the binational committee of advisors of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission call upon the Great Lakes Fishery Commission to carry this recommendation to all appropriate parties.

Passed unanimously by U.S. and Canadian advisors  
(Michigan agency advisors abstaining)  
June 1, 2022