

The Public Trust Doctrine

One day after Minnesota Governor Tim Walz approved the final state permits for Line 3, Governor Gretchen Whitmer of Michigan, [revoked the 1953 easement](#) that allows Enbridge to operate pipelines through the Straits of Mackinac, a narrow waterway that connects Lake Michigan and Lake Huron. Governor Whitmer acted under the state's public trust doctrine, which requires state authorities to protect the Great Lakes. Enbridge's Line 5, has been in operation since the 1950s.

"Enbridge has routinely refused to take action to protect our Great Lakes and the millions of Americans who depend on them for clean drinking water and good jobs," [Governor Whitmer said in a statement](#).

In 2010, Enbridge's Kalamazoo oil spill occurred sending 850,000 gallons of tar sands oil into the water. The spill had continued for 17 hours before it was noticed by Enbridge. Cleanup took 5 years. The largest US inland oil spill however was not in Michigan, it was in Minnesota. [On March 3, in 1991, the Line 3 pipeline ruptured near Grand Rapids, Minn., spilling over 1.7 million gallons of oil.](#) Minnesota Governor Tim Walz is not protecting the Public Trust, nor the waters and future of Minnesota.

In the meantime, the vision for the future is really being actualized by Native people in the north. That's to say that the Red Lake Nation has moved ahead with 200 kw of solar and is moving towards a 2 megawatt project. Here at [Honor the Earth](#), at our [8th Fire Solar](#) manufacturing facility, we produce solar thermal panels destined to reduce heating bills in northern homes. We installed on three reservations and are selling these panels nationally. With our community, we produced food for the villages, and a bountiful wild rice crop- that's local resilience and food security. And, with our colleague organization, [Anishinaabe Agriculture](#), we continue working to create an Intertribal hemp cooperative, recognizing that fiber hemp provides an amazing opportunity for a New Green Revolution. We are ready for the transition. It's not just a bad pipeline project, it's the wrong future plan.