Since 2020, Enbridge has proposed 15 projects to address erosion at the bank of the Bad River near Line 5. All have been denied.

Open Letter to the Bad River Band

It is common for property owners, like Enbridge, to install rocks, trees, sandbags, or other materials to prevent unwanted erosion. In fact, the Bad River Band has done this recently to protect its own property beside a river on the reservation.

Similarly, Enbridge wants to address erosion of the bank of the Bad River near our Line 5 to help ensure pipeline safety until the project to relocate the pipeline around the Bad River Reservation is complete.

We have done our best to explain the urgency and seriousness of addressing this issue, yet in December, Enbridge's latest proposal to reinforce the riverbank using trees was **denied based on inaccurate and incomplete information**. We ask the Bad River Band Tribal Council to directly engage with Enbridge as soon as possible.

Line 5 is essential energy infrastructure that millions of people (including Bad River Band members) rely on and it is irresponsible to delay maintenance. Following a visit to the Meander, officials from the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), the federal agency that regulates pipeline safety, did not call for Enbridge to shut down Line 5, but did urge Enbridge and the Bad River Band to agree on a plan to address erosion at the Meander.

Let's consider the facts.

This is not the first stabilization project on the Reservation. Another pipeline company installed riprap on the bank of the Bad River to protect their property on the Reservation. There have been many others, including one in 2021 where the Band approved a riverbank stabilization project using stone rip rap to protect the Potato River Road – a project with more environmental impacts than Enbridge's proposal.

By comparison, Enbridge's proposal uses locally sourced trees to stabilize 390 linear feet of the bank of the Bad River. Enbridge worked with the Bad River Band's Natural Resources Department and their consultant to develop the design.

Trees are commonly used to reinforce riverbanks. Similar projects have successfully stabilized the banks of the Wild and Scenic Sandy River in Oxbow Regional Park near Portland, Oregon, the Vermilion River near Hastings, Minnesota, and the Root River in Houston County, Minnesota.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) confirms this sort of project has also been used in the state's Driftless Area, to shore up the banks of trout streams. Greg Pils, Director of WDNR's Bureau of Environment Analysis and Sustainability was quoted in a Dec. 22 article from the Milwaukee Journal Sentinel, "This is actually a pretty common waterway banks or waterway bank stabilization measure that the approach has been around a long, long time ... It's a pretty broadly used technology and what they do is use cut trees."

Benefits of the Enbridge proposal using trees to stabilize the bank of the Bad River near Line 5 include:

- ZERO tributary loss
- ZERO long term loss of protected wetlands
- TEMPORARY construction disturbance reduced by use of helicopter
- NO long-term adverse environmental impacts and no ongoing discharge once trees are installed
- EFFECTIVE protection of the riverbank from further erosion while the Line 5 segment relocation project is completed
- Enbridge will remove tree stabilization when requested by the Bad River Band

Enbridge's proposal minimizes impacts during construction:

- Temporary matting will reduce impacts, especially to wetlands
- An aquadam will isolate the work area from flowing water of the Bad River, limiting sediment disturbance
- Construction personnel will access the site by foot to reduce impacts from vehicle traffic
- Erosion and sediment control measures will be installed
- Temporary construction impacts will be fully restored

Let's talk about solutions. We ask that the Bad River Chairman and Council reconsider their denial of our tree revetment project. Let's meet to discuss the denial and address any remaining concerns. Let's work together to get this done!

Email questions to **enbridgeinwi@enbridge.com** or learn more about Line 5 segment relocation on our website **enbridge.com/L5Wis**.

Tom Schwartz
Enbridge, SVP LP Strategic Projects & Partnerships

Bad River Band approved its own riverbank stabilization project using stone rip rap to protect the Potato River Road in 2021.

Artist's rendering of the tree reinforcement project proposed by Enbridge in 2023.

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