

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE)

September 16th Meeting Agenda

The September monthly meeting will be held remotely via Zoom. A link to the meeting is provided in the cover invitation to which this agenda is attached. The meeting will be convened on Thursday September 16th at 6:30 pm.

Old Business:

- Discussion of Brainerd UCC hosting the 'Treaty People Walk for Water' participants visiting Brainerd the weekend of Friday, August 13 - Sunday, August 15th.
- Discussion of the 'Stop Line 3' rally at the State Capitol on Wednesday, August 25th.
- Discussion of the 'Water Protectors' continued resistance to Line 3
- Discussion of the August BLUE/DSA Stop Line 3 vigil held on Saturday August 21st.
- Discussion of the September BLUE/DSA Stop Line 3 vigil to be held on Saturday September 18th at 3:00 pm in Brainerd at the intersection of Washington and East 6th near the historic water tower.
- Discussion of the September BLUE/DSA Stop Line 3 vigil to be held on Saturday October 2nd at 3:00 pm in Brainerd at the intersection of Washington and East 6th near the historic water tower.
- Further discussion of the tribal suit for the rights of the entity 'wild rice' to survive and flourish along the route of Line 3.
- Further discussion of BLUE facilitating a 'plastics audit' on or around Earth Day 2022 in support of the Break Free from Plastics Act.
- Discussion to identify possible future BLUE events or actions.

New Business:

- Treasure's report

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE)

August 12th Meeting Minutes

Brainerd Lakers United for the Environment (BLUE) held our monthly meeting on Thursday, August 12. The BLUE meeting took place at Gregory Park. Dean Borgeson, Judi Schiller, Richard Schiller, Pat Scott, Donna Bowen, Doug Olson, Virgie Bundy, and Roger Grussing joined the meeting.

Virgie, Roger, and Doug are members of Lakes Area Move to Amend (LAMTA). LAMTA is the Brainerd area affiliate of the national Move to Amend movement which seeks to amend the U.S. Constitution to overturn the U.S. Supreme Court's *Citizens United* decision, curb corporate power, and allow for meaningful regulation of campaign contributions.

The Stop Line 3 vigil on Saturday, July 17 went very well. Around a dozen people joined the vigil. The vigil received mostly positive responses from passing motorists.

The August Stop Line 3 vigil will be held on Saturday, August 21. The vigil will be held at the intersection of Sixth and Washington Streets, Brainerd, near the Sawmill Inn. The vigil is scheduled to last from 3 to 4:30 p.m. BLUE and Brainerd Lakes Area Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) are hosting the Stop Line 3 vigil.

Tribal treaty rights attorneys are challenging the construction of Line 3 by invoking entity rights for water and wild rice. This is a fairly new legal concept, which has been used a few times before to challenge environmentally destructive projects. Wild rice is sacred to the Ojibwe. The lawsuit will demand an end to Line 3 construction because it is draining crucially needed water from wild rice beds.

Harming wild rice infringes on the wild rice harvest which is deeply spiritual for the Ojibwe. The lawsuit naming wild rice as a plaintiff and Enbridge and the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as defendants will be heard in Ojibwe tribal court at the White Earth Reservation.

Tribal treaty rights attorneys are also suing on treaty rights grounds in the federal courts. The construction of Line 3 violates treaty rights because it is being done without the consent of the White Earth, Red Lake, and Mille Lacs Lake Ojibwe Bands and the damage Line 3 construction and spills will cause to the environment infringes on the Bands' off-reservation hunting, fishing, and gathering rights. Federal courts tend to be much more sympathetic to treaty rights arguments than state courts because the treaties are legally binding compacts between the federal government and the Indian Nations.

Pat contacted the Pine River-Backus High School principal to ask if Pine River-Backus High School would be interested in a plastics audit. The principal expressed interest and requested more information about the plastics audit.

Central Lakes College (CLC) might show a film about plastic pollution during their Earth Day week next spring.

Dean plans to invite everyone who signed on the signup sheet at the BLUE booth at Arts in the Park on Sunday, June 27 to the Thursday, October 14 BLUE meeting. This is because the October BLUE meeting will be held indoors in the Brainerd United Church of Christ (UCC) Fellowship Hall while the Thursday, September 9th BLUE meeting will be held outside in Gregory Park, weather permitting.

It will probably be easier for most first-time BLUE meeting attendees to join an indoor rather than outdoor meeting.

LAMTA came out strongly against Line 3 at the Tuesday, July 27 LAMTA meeting. LAMTA members believe Line 3 is a textbook case of a corporation (Enbridge) abusing its power to get its way over the will of the people. (Most Minnesotans who made public comments and attended public meetings about Line 3 opposed building Line 3). Enbridge also contributes massive amounts of campaign donations to Minnesota politicians, essentially buying their support. Many LAMTA members are deeply involved in the Stop Line 3 movement, especially Roger and Virgie. LAMTA publicly opposing Line 3 opens up possibilities of BLUE and DSA working with LAMTA on Stop Line 3 events.

Doug proposed the September Stop Line 3 vigil be held on Saturday, September 4 so as not to conflict with the Brainerd Pride Picnic being held on Saturday, September 18 in Gregory Park. Holding the Stop Line 3 vigil on Saturday, September 4 wouldn't work for most of the BLUE meeting participants, many of whom plan to be out-of-town Labor Day weekend. Instead, most BLUE meeting participants favored holding the September Stop Line 3 vigil on Saturday, September 18. The vigil would not conflict with the Brainerd Pride Picnic because it would start after the picnic ended at 3 p.m. (The Brainerd Pride Picnic, hosted by Brainerd Lakes Pride, a Brainerd area LGBTQ rights group, will be held from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Saturday, September 18).

Doug asked DSA members which date, Saturday, September 4 or Saturday, September 18, worked better for them at the DSA online meeting on Tuesday, August 10. No consensus could be reached among DSA members, with some preferring September 4 while others preferred September 18.

This means the September Stop Line 3 vigil will be held on Saturday, September 18 because this is the date most BLUE members and some DSA members preferred. The vigil will be held from 3 to 4:30 p.m. at the intersection of Sixth and Washington Streets, Brainerd, near the Sawmill Inn.

Treaty People Walk for Water is a walk demanding an end to Line 3 construction and the honoring of Indigenous treaty rights. Treaty People Walk for Water began at Camp Firelight, located north of Itasca State Park, on Saturday, August 7 and concludes with a rally at the State Capitol in St. Paul on Wednesday, August 25. Several environmental organizations are participating in Treaty People Walk for Water, including Honor the Earth, Minnesota Interfaith Power and Light, Rise, and MN350.

Treaty People Walk for Water will be in Brainerd from Friday evening, August 13 through Sunday morning, August 15. Treaty People Walk for Water participants will be staying at the Brainerd UCC during their time in Brainerd. There will be a Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast, lunch, and dinner, and Sunday breakfast at the UCC for Treaty People Walk for Water participants. There could be as many as 60 Treaty People Walk for Water participants in Brainerd the weekend of August 13-August 15.

Treaty People Walk for Water is asking for volunteers to help prepare meals, serve meals, and cleanup after the meals. Members from the Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Fellowship and Underwood Unitarian Universalist (UU) Fellowship plan to help at the Brainerd meals. Pat is a member of the Northwoods UU.

Donna, Pat, and Doug plan to help at the meals. Roger and Virgie plan to donate food and supplies. Dean will provide a Stop Line 3 sign which can be prominently displayed at the UCC.

Dean proposed BLUE make a \$100 contribution to Treaty People Walk for Water. Everyone at the BLUE meeting agreed with this proposal.

Donna participated in the Treaty People Walk for Water walk from Backus to Pequot Lakes. She said most of the passing motorists who responded to the Treaty People Walk for Water supported it.

BLUE will hold our next monthly meeting on Thursday, September 9. The BLUE meeting will be held in Gregory Park. Gregory Park is located at 511 North Fifth Street, Brainerd. The BLUE meeting begins at 6:30 p.m. If bad weather prevents a meeting at Gregory Park, the BLUE meeting will be held in the Brainerd United Church of Christ (UCC) Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m. The Fellowship Hall is located in the downstairs section of the UCC. The UCC is located at 415 Juniper Street, Brainerd, near the southwest corner of Gregory Park

Meeting adjourned at 7:45 p.m.

BLUE Meeting Notes Submitted by Doug Olson