

The experiences you created

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A summary of our published Line 3 stories so far, and some of our favorite moments from the trip.

[Emily Atkin](#)

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Happy hump day, paid subscriber fam. As we come up on the end of HEATED's dedicated coverage of the Line 3 pipeline (we still have a couple more pieces in the works, but will return to covering other things next week), I wanted to send you a brief special note summarizing what we've put out so far, and thanking you for making it happen.

This was my first reporting trip in over a year. I almost forgot what it was like. I almost forgot how much of a difference it makes to watch a person's face while they speak about their lives; to feel the energy pound and radiate in their voice; to have them show you the places that are special to them; to put feet on the ground where a pipeline is being built.

Pictures and writing can tell you a lot. But they cannot tell you everything. I don't know how to convey the difference between simply seeing the photos below, and seeing the photos below on Aimee Sutherland's camera, sitting in a freezing cold car while a large group of water protectors sang and prayed for the Mississippi River outside. But there is a difference. And it felt big.



A dirt road in Cass County, Minnesota, just east of the Moose River, before Enbridge started construction on Line 3. Photo: Aimee Sutherland.



That same spot in Cass County, Minnesota, just east of the Moose River, after Enbridge started construction on Line 3. Photo: Aimee Sutherland.

We met Aimee, a dogged monitor and documenter of Line 3's construction for the group Watch the Line MN, through a woman named Rita Chamblin. Rita is a liason for Minnesota Interfaith Power & Light who also holds trainings on how to legally monitor Line 3's construction.

Rita was an invaluable source of wisdom and knowledge on our trip. She gave my research assistant and I necessary context and history about the area; introduced us to some of the indigenous leaders fighting the pipeline; forwarded us important documents (that we'll show you soon!); and took us to the Headwaters of the Mississippi, which the pipeline would cross through.

There is a difference between showing you the picture of the Headwaters and being there, the starting place of our second-longest river, remembering everything you learned in elementary school about the Mighty Mississippi, standing with people who would give anything to protect it. Again, I don't know how to convey it. But it felt big.



The sign by the Headwaters of the Mississippi River, connecting to Lake Itasca, Minnesota. Source: Emily Atkin



If you look close enough, you can see Chris by the trees on the right. Source: Emily Atkin.

I wish we could have done more; seen more; talked to more people. The pandemic made it harder to get out there and really connect. Everything has to be done outside, and it was very, very cold. My fellow upstate New Yorkers will laugh at me—but it's true! There was rarely a

day I could stay put for more than three hours, hand and feet warmers be damned. But being out there at limited capacity was better than not being there at all.

I was asked in an interview recently how this trip made me feel—specifically, whether it made me feel sad. The only thing that made me feel sad was the fact that the pandemic likely prevented many reporters, activists, and others from seeing this fight for themselves for the last year. It's likely one reason why there hasn't been much attention to Line 3. It made me think of how many other stories have not been told over the course of this pandemic. That's what made me really sad.

But it never makes me sad to tell a story, because I believe stories are how we change the world. This trip made me feel re-inspired by that belief, and grateful that so many people cared enough to share it with me. So thank you for being a subscriber to this newsletter, and allowing us to tell whatever small part of this story we can.

Here are the pieces we've produced so far. And after the jump, a bullet-pointed list of Chris's favorite moments.

Why Line 3? Why now?

A summary of the basic issues surrounding the Line 3 pipeline, and why they are coming to a head this month.

The rationale for direct action

Opponents of Line 3 say the game was rigged from the start—and that putting their bodies on the line is the only option left to stop it.

"Kenneled, strip searched, shackled and held"

Tribal attorney Tara Houska describes a mass arrest of 26 water protectors, where officers "took selfies" with a ceremonial lodge "and laughed as they cut it into pieces."

Enbridge is "funding and incentivizing" Minnesota police

Line 3's mostly female, indigenous opponents say they're being constantly tracked and harassed by local cops bankrolled by the Canadian oil giant.

Minnesota newspapers are plastered with Enbridge ads

73 percent of the publications we picked ran at least one Enbridge ad over the course of the week. Coincidentally or not, there also wasn't that much positive coverage of protesters.

Jane Fonda is mad at Joe Biden

HEATED spoke with the famous actress and climate activist, who also visited Northern Minnesota this week, about the administration's silence on Line 3.

And now, here's a list of my research assistant Chris's favorite moments from our Minnesota trip, bullet-pointed and presented without context or explanation. (I'll explain more in the comments if you ask).

- Going through our audio recordings and finding one consisting solely of Emily saying "Motherfucker!" repeatedly and then, after an extended pause, asking how my pen worked.
- A golden hour spent standing in mud alongside newborn lambs and puppies as big as ponies.
- Getting an unsolicited e-mail from Enbridge shortly after arriving in Minnesota that was like, "Sup, heard you're around?"
- Witnessing the power of a Paramore beanie to win hearts and minds.
- Multiple instances of Minnesota folks saying, "I don't know if there's anything I can tell you that will be helpful," before proceeding to describe a very compelling series of events and personal experiences.
- Participating in a prayer ceremony and being asked, "Did you ever imagine you'd become part of the story?"
- Making a slight detour so Emily could pose in front of a meat shop.

Catch of the Day:



Fish's favorite moment of the trip was when I came home.



OK, that's all for today—thanks for reading HEATED! If you'd like to share this piece as a web page, click the button below.

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