



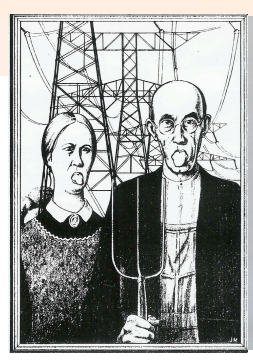
NAWVO NEWS

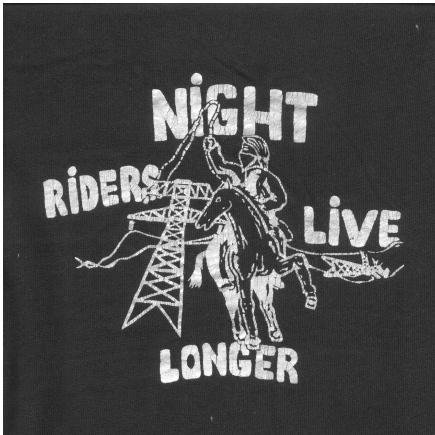


MINNESOTA FARMERS FIGHT FIRST BATTLE OF AMERICA'S ENERGY WAR



40th Anniversary West Central Minnesota Powerline Protestors Reunion





Powerline: The First Battle of America's Energy Wars

40 years ago and more, a fight over a massive +400kV dc powerline raged across West-Central Minnesota and North Dakota. That fight was memorialized in a book with the above title by our good friends, the late Senator Paul Wellstone, and his co-author, the late Dr. Mike Casper. The Protest was driven by massive opposition to corporate fraud and corruption as coal mining and private electric utility interests bamboozled a couple of hick power coops into doing their dirty work, and the power coops, with plenty of help on multiple fronts from Minnesota's state government, created multiple new dimensions of abuse as they

attempted to have their way with communities all along the line route, and across the fields and pastures of their own electric coop members. Those farmers and their communities fought back heroically in what became one of the largest, if not the largest, most protracted, bitter, and expensive (at least from a corporate loss-of-property perspective) incidents of civil unrest in the history of the Upper Midwest, not counting the original genocide, and the struggle reverberated across the country and around the world.

The Elders of that Protest are now all long gone, may they rest in peace, the remaining protesters are now geezers, and their children are mostly well into middle age. Many of the lessons available for learning from that time remain enshrined in rule and statute. For example, routing and citing requirements for energy facilities are more equitable and sophisticated, and Certificate of Need criteria are more reflective of over-all societal requirements. Other lessons available for learning, not so much. Most notably, corporate cartel interests still dominate decision-making regarding how energy services get delivered. But even there, arguably, we're making progress with the advent of Community Solar Gardens and growing prospects for Inclusive Financing, whereby anyone who pays an energy bill can use that bill to finance energy management improvements. (The Inclusive Financing concept is pretty simple. If you make energy management improvements, by definition, you are reducing your energy bill. So you take a fraction of the savings to reward yourself for making the improvement, and use the remaining fraction of the savings to pay off the cost of the improvement over time.)

All this is pertinent because without the Powerline Protest, there would be no North American Water Office. At the time of the Protest, NAWO co-founder Lea Foushee was State Chair of the Sierra Club in North Dakota and fighting the Falkirk mine-mouth plant and powerline as hard as she and the communities she helped organize could fight. Then, the Sierra Club, and all the other national environmental organizations jerked the rug out from under local and regional struggles all across the country to focus opposition against the Alaska Pipeline. Powerline opposition in North Dakota collapsed, and Ms. Foushee moved to Minnesota, where she met George Crocker who was working with Powerline Protesters who had their headquarters in Lowry, Minnesota. Recognizing that the fight begun by the first battle of America's energy wars was just beginning, they teamed up, founded NAWO, and got married a few years later.

Anyway, just before COVID-19 shut things down, Powerline Protesters had a wonderful reunion at the Legion Hall in beautiful Downtown Lowry, pop. 299, on March 7, 2020. It was great to be with such good friends and special people for a few hours again.



NORTH AMERICAN WATER OFFICE

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Enbridge Line 3 Comment

We have no confidence that our opinion counts to the Corporate Reich. We do, however, still stand in opposition to this socialized murder of our plant relatives, our relatives with fins, wings, two legs and four, and all other living creatures that will be harmed by this project. The soul of our sacred Mother Earth does not matter to governments or the insatiable addiction to living large and flaunting it in the faces of the most disadvantaged. Mother Earth is viewed as a commodity, to be bought and sold to the highest bidder, not unlike Indigenous women who will be raped and murdered in the man camps that will descend upon the Enbridge Line 3 route.

Cloaked in the presumption of Environmental Justice the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) still affords limited free speech. There is no justice in this process. There is no respect given to those whose way of life relies on wild rice, fish and wild medicines in the forest.

Minnesota's clean waters will be contaminated to a calculated "acceptable level of risk". After NAWO participated in the MPCA's wild rice rule proceedings for more than six years, the Law Judge cited NAWO's comments that the agency and its staff demonstrated a failure to understand the significance of wild rice to Minnesota's Anishinaabeg Peoples. The Enbridge Line 3 project's 401 water permit further documents this lack.

In summation "As ye sow, so shall ye reap" Galatians 6:7, or in modern vernacular, "If we burn, you burn with us".



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Harbingers of Covid -19



(c) Lea Foushee

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