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[00:00:33] **Speaker 1** Bed River Tribal Chairman Robert Blanchard was the first to take the stand. And Chairman, thanks very much for being here.

[00:00:41] **Speaker 2** Thank you for having me.

[00:00:42] **Speaker 1** So what did you most want the judge to know about the impacts of Line 5 and its re-route around the Bad River Reservation, but through nearby wetlands and waterlands? What did you want the most the judge know about those impacts?

[00:00:59] **Speaker 2** Well, you know, this is gonna impact quite a bit of our ceded territories that the reroute has gone within the ceded territory of. Impact is going to be over 100 acres of wetlands, which, you know, will get disturbed. 30 some acres of that will not be usable again, or will be present. And, you know, there's a lot of impacts. Some of it will be through horizontal direct drilling, blasting. Which is going to, you know, a lot of it's going to impact our water resources.

[00:01:49] **Speaker 1** Now, I know the tribe wanted the pipeline removed from your land. Why isn't rerouting it around the reservation proper?

[00:02:02] **Speaker 2** Well, I- All I will do is shift the risk upstream, exposing more of the environment to be put at risk than what is now. But, you know, like I said before, we have ceded territories where we do a lot of hunting and fishing and gathering of medicines and other stuff. So, I mean, that's just going, it's just moving the problem upstream. You know, we'll be downstream from that. And if something were to happen, it will really impact us as people and our way of life.

[00:02:38] **Speaker 1** Enbridge and the DNR say that the permitting process was extensive and thorough. Why are you and others worried?

[00:02:48] **Speaker 2** Well, you know, I wish I could really answer that in detail, but I think part of the problem was the way it was presented to the people. Like it was, I don't know, I think it didn't give the people a chance to really get into the nuts and bolts of it and be able to ask the questions that needed to be asked. And, and. Wasn't right. I felt it wasn't right.

[00:03:23] **Speaker 1** Circling back to something you spoke to a moment ago, during your testimony you spoke about the wild rice harvest. Why is that, and hunting and fishing rights you hold, so key to your community?

[00:03:38] **Speaker 2** Well, we've been harvesting wild rice in the Caucasian sluice for over 100 years. My grandparents harvested down there, and they made rice camps down there. And so that's near and dear to my heart and a lot of other people also. But it identifies us as people, you know, we were brought here for a reason and one of the reasons is to go where the food grows on the water and that was the wild rice and that is quite dear to us and as far as other things, hunting, fishing and gathering, you know, there's a lot of people today that use that resource to provide and put food on the table for their families so it's very important to us.

[00:04:30] **Speaker 1** And what is the connection, Chairman, between the land and water to those rights?

[00:04:38] **Speaker 2** Say that, could you repeat that again?

[00:04:39] **Speaker 1** What is the connection? Why are the waters and the land so important to the protection of those rights?

[00:04:50] **Speaker 2** Well, we also feel that, you know, everything out there is sacred. You know, we use those resources and when we go and harvest and we go hunting or fishing, we take only what we need to do for our families. So, and we also believe that everything out there has a spirit. Every living thing out there has the spirit. You know, and that's what we're protecting is the spirit of that medicine, the spirit that wild rice and the spirit at those waters and lands to, uh, be able for our future generations to be able to enjoy that.

[00:05:28] **Speaker 1** For its part, Enbridge states that they have learned what they do today impacts the next seven generations and that it has a responsibility to care for the land. What's your response to that statement from the CEO of Enbridge?

[00:05:45] **Speaker 2** Well, I don't think Enbridge really understands, you know, they look at it a lot different than we do, you know, they're there for different reasons. And we're there to protect the land, truly protect the land and the resources.

[00:06:06] **Speaker 1** Your Bad River Band is fighting hard over this. What will you do if the Line 5 project is allowed to proceed in this way?

[00:06:17] **Speaker 2** Well, that's the big question. I'm not sure what we'll do. You know, we will keep fighting. But I don't know what the next step would be. Should they be allowed to put the reroute in place? You know that's a question that we are still trying to come up with some answers and probably some way, what are we going to do?

[00:06:48] **Speaker 1** We will be watching. Chairman Robert Blanchard, thanks very much.

[00:06:52] **Speaker 2** Thank you very much for having me.

[00:07:01] **Speaker 1** That was great. We really appreciate your time on this.

[00:07:07] **Speaker 2** Yes, I appreciate you for having me. Um, not that I can think of right now, but, um, like I said, we're just going to keep moving forward and keep fighting.