

# Mid-Michigan Pipeline

Modernizing the natural gas system in  
Washtenaw, Livingston and Ingham counties



## CONSUMERS ENERGY TEAMS WITH MICHIGAN DNR TO PROTECT PARKS DURING SAFE PIPELINE REPLACEMENT PROJECT

Consumers Energy and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) are working closely to minimize impact on the environment and recreational activity as the energy company modernizes its natural gas infrastructure.

Construction is scheduled to start in May 2023 on the first phase of the Mid-Michigan Pipeline project, which will replace 55 miles of pipeline in Washtenaw, Livingston, Ingham, Shiawassee and Clinton counties to improve safety and reliability.

The planned construction route for the first phase covers 30 miles from Chelsea to Williamston, briefly passing through or near portions of:

- The 21,000-acre **Waterloo State Recreation Area** in Washtenaw County.
- The 11,000-acre **Pinckney Recreation Area** in Livingston and Washtenaw counties.
- The 1,100-acre **Unadilla State Wildlife Area**.
- The **Mike Levine Lakelands Trail State Park**, a 34-mile linear trail created from abandoned railroad corridor that stretches between Ingham and Livingston counties and managed by the Pinckney Recreation area.
- The 4.7-mile **Chelsea to Stockbridge Corridor of the Border to Border Trail** managed by the Washtenaw County Parks and Recreation Commission (WCPARC).

Consumers Energy is planning jointly with the MDNR to protect the public and the environment while minimizing inconvenience to park and trail users during this important project.

Here are answers to some key questions you may have:

### **Q: What is the construction project and why is it needed?**

**A:** The Mid-Michigan Pipeline is a two-phase, \$550 million effort to improve energy affordability, safety and reliability for customers by replacing 55 miles of natural gas transmission pipeline in Washtenaw, Livingston, Ingham, Shiawassee and Clinton counties. Consumers Energy is replacing vintage 20-inch pipeline dating back to the 1940s with new 36-inch steel pipeline to help move more natural gas quickly, safely and efficiently.

- **Phase 1:** Chelsea to Williamston, 30 miles (2023)
- **Phase 2:** Williamston to Ovid, 25 miles (2024)

Learn more about the project [here](#).

**Q: Who must grant Consumers Energy permission to construct this pipeline?**

**A:** The project has been approved by the Michigan Public Service Commission. Consumers Energy owns the property easement rights that legally provide the space to safely construct, replace and maintain a natural gas pipeline. In some cases, we'll need to secure additional work space through easement rights from neighboring property owners to ensure we can complete the project safely.

**Q: I am a frequent visitor to the state parks in the project area. Will the parks still be open for use?**

**A:** Yes, the parks and most amenities will remain open and safe for recreational use. Please watch for, and obey, signs and avoid going too close to construction zones.

**Q: What kind of work will be done in the park? What will I see?**

**A:** Consumers Energy plans to replace existing pipeline running north along the east edge of Waterloo State Recreation Area and the west edge of Pinckney Recreation Area (**see attached map**). The utility will use "parallel construction" to install the new pipeline alongside the existing line, which will remain safely buried. Crews of skilled workers from Consumers Energy and the main construction contractor will install the new, larger line. All employees and contractors will be clearly identified and wearing personal protective equipment, including reflective vests to ensure visibility. You'll also see a variety of heavy equipment and vehicles needed for the work. Please stay alert for both workers and machines during construction.

**Q: How long will construction last?**

**A:** Each phase of construction must be complete in time for the full pipeline to deliver natural gas for the next winter heating season.

**Q: Will there be any road, trail or campground closures?**

**A:** Yes. To ensure the safety of park and trail users and our employees, we'll need temporary closures at a few spots along the construction route, primarily for work and equipment crossings. **Please see the attached map for details.** Consumers Energy and the MDNR worked together to determine which closures are necessary and ensure you can continue to safely use the portions of the park that remain open. Closures will be communicated through signage placed on the trail segments and social media channels for individual state parks. Please check there for closure updates throughout the summer. We apologize in advance for the inconvenience and appreciate your patience as we work to complete this important project safely. Here are the expected closures:

- **Green Lake Campground in the Waterloo Recreation Area.** The campground and the access road leading to it will be closed temporarily due to construction. We expect the closure to last less than a week. Please watch the Waterloo Facebook page for timing and details as construction draws closer.
- **Lakelands Trail.** The trail is expected to remain open, though users may experience short delays when construction equipment is crossing the trail. Our crews will use flaggers to alert trail users and direct traffic.
- **Chelsea to Stockbridge Corridor of the Border to Border Trail.** The trail is expected to remain open with a slightly diverted route on the east side of the tunnel under M-52 near Pinckney Recreation Area.

**Q: Will construction impact hunting in the state parks and Unadilla Game Area?**

**A:** No. Hunters are expected to maintain access for all scheduled seasons but are urged to use extra caution as our crews will begin preparation work this winter, including tree removal, mowing and brushing. Please avoid marked construction areas, heavy equipment and workers who will be wearing bright reflective vests and hard hats. Use of wood mat roads is prohibited. For your safety, mat roads are for construction traffic only.

**Q: How are you working to protect the environment and local wildlife?**

**A:** Nothing is more important to Consumers Energy than protecting the public, its employees and the environment. The company has a long, proud history of environmental stewardship in Michigan.

- With support from the MDNR and local officials, the company has completed a detailed environmental inventory of the project area – including all wetlands, and stream crossings – and is working with applicable federal, state and local agencies to consider all environmental concerns.
- With the help of Eastern Michigan University, we conducted a study to ensure endangered and protected species of bats won't be present during construction.
- Environmental inspectors will work onsite daily during construction to identify and protect any threatened or endangered species and their habitats. They also will help ensure all conservation measures are met to reduce potential impacts on other wildlife.
- We plan to conduct winter mowing and brushing to reduce potential harm to Eastern Massasauga rattlesnakes.
- A herpetologist plans to help reptiles such as snakes, frogs and turtles that may be impacted. During past pipeline construction projects, we've rescued rare adult turtles and turtle eggs from the right-of-way. The eggs were incubated under the care of a herpetologist and we released the hatched turtles back into their habitat. Learn more [here](#).

**Q: Will any trees have to be removed?**

**A:** Yes. We'll have to remove trees to ensure our crews can perform their work safely and to protect bats and prevent the spread of oak wilt disease. We'll mitigate the environmental impact by working with the MDNR team to carefully select the trees that must be removed and to determine how, where and when to plant the appropriate replacements. We plan to begin removing trees this winter to remove habitat that may attract endangered species of bats and to prevent the spread of oak wilt, an aggressive fungus that impairs the flow of water to the tree's canopy and leaves. This disease kills thousands of oak trees each year in forests and communities throughout Michigan. Infected trees need to be disposed of in a manner that prevents further infections.

**Q: How will you restore the parks and trails so they're "back to normal" afterward?**

**A:** Consumers Energy will work closely with the MDNR and local officials to determine mitigation and restoration techniques specific to the parks and trails to protect the current species residing in the area and to ensure it is restored to benefit them in the future.

We plan to work with the MDNR to determine how many acres of habitat to restore with native plants. We plan to use a special pollinator mix to restore construction areas where new pipeline was buried to create new habitat for butterflies, bees and other pollinators. Learn more about those efforts [here](#). We are also working with the MDNR to restore other areas with appropriate trees and shrubbery. Consumers Energy will continue to maintain the easement after the project with periodic mowing to allow continued access to the pipeline area for monitoring and maintenance.

**Q: How will you test the newly installed pipeline to make sure it's operating safely and properly?**

**A:** We'll follow industry best practices by conducting a hydrostatic test to verify the pipeline will operate as expected at a safe pressure. The test involves filling the pipeline with water and slowly pressurizing it. No natural gas will be in the pipeline, and no digging or excavation is usually required. The testing should not impact neighboring landowners or park users, though we do ask you to stay off the project right-of-way during the 8-hour test period for safety reasons.

**Q: How can I learn more and/or ask questions about the project?**

**A:** There are several ways to find details about the Mid-Michigan Pipeline and the work planned for 2023 in Washtenaw, Livingston and Ingham counties. You can:

- Visit [www.ConsumersEnergy.com/MidMichPipeline](http://www.ConsumersEnergy.com/MidMichPipeline)
- Call us at 888-441-0299
- Email us at [MidMichPipeline@cmsenergy.com](mailto:MidMichPipeline@cmsenergy.com)