

The Dakota Access Pipeline: What is it and who are the “water protectors”?

What is the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL)?

The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) would transport 450,000 barrels per day of Bakken crude oil (which is fracked and highly volatile) 1200 miles from North Dakota to Patoka, Illinois. After this, the oil will likely be transported to the Gulf Coast and exported. This pipeline will not create energy independence.

What are the concerns?

An early proposal for the Dakota Access Pipeline called for the project to cross the Missouri River north of Bismarck, ND. The route was rejected because of its potential threat to Bismarck’s water supply. The current route of the DAPL will be immediately upstream of the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation, will cross over the Ogallala Aquifer (one of the largest aquifers in the world) and under the Missouri River twice (the longest river in the United States).

The Missouri River provides drinking water for millions of Americans including the Sioux tribe, as well as irrigation water for thousands of acres of farming and ranch lands. Furthermore, it would cut across treaty lands and through the Standing Rock Sioux’s ancestral burial grounds - an area of utmost cultural and spiritual, and environmental significance. In fact, recent construction has already demolished sacred burial sites.

Despite pressure from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the U.S. Department of Interior (DOI) and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, Dakota Access has failed to consult tribes and conduct a full Environmental Impact Assessment.

The Dakota Access Pipeline is being compared to the Keystone XL because of the threat it poses to the health of the environment and humans.

Who are the “water protectors”?

Since February 2015, the Standing Rock Sioux have tried multiple ways to stop the new route of the pipeline, including filing lawsuits to block construction. The Camp of the Sacred Stones was established on April 1, 2016 as a center of spiritual and cultural opposition to the Dakota Access pipeline. Those at the camp have pledged to stop construction through prayer and nonviolent direct action until adequate tribal consultations and environmental reviews are conducted. The Sacred Stone Camp is located between the pipeline’s proposed crossing of the Missouri River and the water intake valves for the tribe.

To date, more than 300 tribes and first nations officially stand with the Standing Rock Sioux by way of tribal resolutions, letters of support, and tribal delegations who have joined the camp. Entire cities and municipalities such as Santa Barbara, Sebastopol, Seattle, and Minneapolis/St. Paul support the Standing Rock Sioux tribe. Millions of people around the world are standing in solidarity including indigenous groups in South America and organizations such as The United

Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues and Amnesty International, as well as 350.org and other environmental organizations. The Sacred Stone camp has now expanded to both banks of the river and up the road and has housed as many as 7,000 people from all over the world.

On October 23, 2016 hundreds of water protectors from different nations joined in a peaceful procession to the sacred sites destroyed by Dakota Access on September 3rd. They were met by militarized police in riot gear and 141 were arrested. Many people reported that law enforcement then began to spray mace and throw people to the ground. This came approximately seven weeks after Dakota Access brought guard dogs to a similar peaceful procession in which many water protectors were bitten and pepper sprayed by private security.

On October 27th, 2016 over 100 militarized police and the National Guard advanced on a resistance camp established by the water protectors on treaty land and in the path of the proposed Dakota Access pipeline. They used multiple mine-resistant ambush protected military vehicles (MRAPs), a sound cannon, an armored truck, a bulldozer, pepper spray, rubber bullets and bean bags in an attempt to disperse the crowd. There were reports of over 100 arrests, as well as broken bones and injuries due to pepper spray, bean bags, rubber bullets and police violence.

The Standing Rock Sioux tribe and their supporters continue to request support from around the world to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline, and the threat it poses to the environment, their cultural and sacred sites, and human health and human rights. You can get involved locally by:

- Signing up for the Sonoma-NoDAPL mailing list for updates on upcoming actions, fundraisers, meetings, petitions, etc. Email 350sonomacounty@gmail.com to be added.
- Like and check the Facebook page for updates: www.facebook.com/SonomaNoDAPL
- Calling the White House at (202) 456-1111 or (202) 456-1414 and the North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple at (701) 328-2200

You can support the water protectors directly by reaching them here:

- The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe: www.standingrock.org
- Sacred Stone Camp www.sacredstonecamp.org

References: Sacredstonecamp.org (faq sheet); Manning: 'And Then the Dogs Came': Dakota Access Gets Violent, Destroys Graves, Sacred Sites – Indian Country; www.standingrock.org; DAPL Pipeline Interests Try Outrageous Fait Accompli and Destroy Ancient Sites – Huffington Post; Pipeline route first called for crossing north of Bismarck – The Bismarck Tribune; A Strategy to Stop the Funding Behind the Dakota Access Pipeline – Yes! Magazine; Standing Firm at Standing Rock: Why the Struggle is Bigger Than One Pipeline – Nation of Change; Taking a Stand at Standing Rock – New York Times; Thousands Protest North Dakota Pipeline Near Native American Lands – The Huffington Post; 5 things to know about the Dakota Access Pipeline – CNN; Dakota Access Pipeline: More than 100 Arrested as Protesters Ousted From Camp – NBC News, North Dakota pipeline activists say arrested protesters were kept in dog kennels – LA Times.