



OGLALA SIOUX TRIBE



January 24, 2012

CONTINUED RESISTANCE AGAINST THE KEYSTONE XL PIPELINE

As most of Indian country is aware by now, the proposed Keystone XL pipeline received a harsh blow from the State Department and President Obama last week. On January 18, 2012, the Department of State announced its recommendation that the Presidential Permit for the 1,700 mile pipeline project be denied. Because of legislation passed in December that required a decision on the permit within 60 days, Congress prevented the State Department from performing due diligence and completing the additional reviews it felt were necessary to make an informed decision.

The President agreed with the Department of State recommendation and denied the permit. For this, the Oglala Lakota Nation is grateful. But we are also leery of the false hope this decision might create. President Obama made a point of including the basis for his decision in his press release. The permit denial was not because of the environmental hazards of the pipeline. It was not because of the threats the inevitable oil spills would pose to human health. It was not because of the reality that the pipeline will create only a few thousand temporary jobs and few if any permanent jobs, or that most of the oil brought into the United States will be shipped right back out of the country as soon as U.S. refineries perform the dirty work to process the tar sands crude oil. Although these facts clearly show that the pipeline would not be in the national interest, the President chose to base his decision on a procedural issue – allowing TransCanada to simply re-file its application for a Presidential Permit.

Without a doubt, we are thankful for the temporary reprieve granted to our sacred Mother Earth. But we are likewise cautious about what is to come in the near future for our dear Mother. As Rosebud Sioux Tribal President Rodney Bordeaux recently stated, we must remain vigilant. This is most certainly not the end of the road for the Keystone XL. In the past few months we have witnessed desperate and unconventional measures being used by Congress to impose the will of the wealthy elite on the American people to try to ensure themselves a steady revenue stream of dirty oil money. Several members of Congress are already discussing ways to legislate around the Presidential Permit

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requirement to allow construction of the Keystone XL pipeline to start as soon as possible – in spite of the President’s recent decision.

For these reasons, and for the sake of Mother Earth and our future generations, on behalf of the Oglala Lakota I am now urging all Indigenous Nations to come together and unite in opposition to the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. As Individual Nations we are strong, but as Nations united for a common cause we are stronger. The fight against this pipeline is far from over, we must become as one to protect our mother, the earth, and future generations. On behalf of the Oglala Lakota, I ask each and every one of our relatives from other tribes and nations to stand with us in unity and solidarity to protect what is sacred.

In respect of Mother Earth and our Future Generations,

Tom Poor Bear, Vice President, Oglala Lakota Nation