

**UPDATE: STANDING ROCK MOVEMENT AGAINST THE DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE**  
**BRIEF SUMMARY FOR ANN ARBOR MEETING, DECEMBER 2016**

UPDATE AS OF DECEMBER 1, 2016:

Much has happened in the two weeks since this report was first released (Nov. 18, 2016). A violent clash in the early hours of Nov. 20 resulted in 26 hospitalizations and more than 300 injuries after police sprayed people with pepper spray, tear gas, and water (with temperatures in the 20s), and shot projectiles including rubber bullets, concussion grenades, and tear gas canisters. On Tuesday, Nov 29, lawyers for the tribe asked courts for an immediate injunction to stop law enforcement from shooting water or impact munitions at water protectors. There are fewer out-of-state agencies responding to requests from the Morton County sheriff for help, with agencies in Montana, Minnesota and Wisconsin refusing to come after their constituents complained about excessive use of force and this use of emergency interagency requests that were intended to help in natural disasters.

On Nov. 26, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers announced evacuation orders for the camps, to take effect Dec. 5, but a few days later said they would not force people to leave. Governor Dalrymple announced an emergency order to evacuate the camp Nov. 28 because of harsh winter conditions. Law enforcement at first said they were not going to allow further supplies into the camps, but then backed away from that position. Standing Rock Sioux Tribal Chairman Dave Archambault II said on Nov. 30 that they intend to remain. More than 2,000 veterans plan to visit the camp for four days in solidarity and to form a protective wall beginning this Sunday, Dec. 4. Sunday has also been declared an Interfaith Day of Prayer, with many clergy gathering at the camp.

HOW YOU CAN HELP:

\*\* Leaders of the Standing Rock camps have requested that we pray with them.

\*\* Donate to help with supplies, legal expenses, or travel for veterans at:

<http://standwithstandingrock.net/>

<http://standingrock.org/news/standing-rock-sioux-tribe--dakota-access-pipeline-donation-fund/>

<https://www.gofundme.com/veterans-for-standing-rock-nodapl>

\*\* Contact President Obama, who might be able to stop the pipeline with one of these approaches:

Call the White House and repeat the pleas of the coalition: "We call on the White House to deny the easement now, revoke the permits, remove the DAPL construction workers and order a full environmental impact statement in formal consultation with impacted tribal governments."

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/contact/write-or-call>

Sign a petition asking Pres. Obama to declare Standing Rock a National Monument:

<https://go.ourrevolution.com/page/s/standing-rock-monument>

\*\* Write a letter of protest to one or more of the banks who are financing the pipeline:

<http://www.commondreams.org/views/2016/10/28/how-contact-17-banks-funding-dakota-access-pipeline>

[TEXT OF ORIGINAL FACTSHEET, NOV. 18, 2016]:

WHO, WHAT, WHY

The Dakota Access Pipeline, if completed, will span over 1100 miles and bring fracked oil from the Bakken Oil Fields to a connecting pipeline in Illinois. In the process it will go under both the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. The current route of the pipeline will go under the Missouri River and Lake Oahe within a mile and upstream of the Standing Rock Reservation in North Dakota. The pipeline is being constructed by Energy Transfer Partners (ETP).

An elder of the Standing Rock Sioux tribe, LaDonna Bravebull Allard, and her grandchildren established the Sacred Stone Camp on her property on April 1, 2016 to protest the pipeline, which threatens the only water supply for the reservation and crosses land the tribe considers sacred. The camp is intended to be a center for cultural preservation and spiritual resistance to the pipeline. Since then many others, including indigenous people from around the world, have joined them, until now it is thought to be the largest gathering of Native Tribes in the U.S. in the past 100 years, with an estimated 300 tribes represented. By late September 2016, there were up to 4,000 people at the encampment, with more joining on weekends. The Native Americans leading this effort, including Chairman of the Standing Rock Sioux Dave Archambault II, see it as a spiritual duty; prayer is a focus of their activities and they ask to be called water protectors instead of protestors.

Besides the danger to sacred grounds and to the water supply of the immediate area, some have pointed out other urgent reasons to support actions against the pipeline, including environmental racism and the danger posed to life on Earth by any new project to extract and burn large amounts of fossil fuel.

LEGAL ACTIONS:

In April 2016 three federal agencies, the EPA, Department of Interior, and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, requested that the Army Corps of Engineers do a full Environmental Impact Statement on the pipeline. The Army Corps “fast tracked” the request and approved the permits in July. In response the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe filed a suit against the Corps saying they had neglected to consider the National Historic Preservation Act in their review. In early September, on the same day a court ruled against the Tribe’s suit, the Obama administration said it would not permit further construction on land controlled by the Army Corps of Engineers until there is a full review of previous decisions to see if the pipeline meets current federal policies on the environment. The private company has continued building the pipeline on land not controlled by the federal government.

On Nov. 14, the eve of nationwide protests against the pipeline and in support of the water protectors, a joint statement from the Army Corps of Engineers and the Department of the Interior said they had “determined that additional discussion and analysis are warranted in light of the history of the Great Sioux Nation’s dispossessions of lands.” One day later Energy Transfer Partners filed papers in U.S. District Court asking the court to declare that the project had the legal right to proceed without any further government approvals.

## CLASHES:

The actions of the water protectors are being met with increasing levels of armed resistance by law enforcement officials. Over Labor Day Weekend ETP illegally cleared a path two miles long and 150 feet wide through an area that contained possible gravesites and burial artifacts. Peaceful protestors to this action were met by security personnel using pepper spray and attack dogs, while police watched from a distance.

Since then, the Morton County sheriff's office has asked for and received assistance from law enforcement from across the state and surrounding states, and Governor Dalrymple has put the National Guard on alert. Law enforcement at the site has become increasingly militarized, with cameras showing tanks, helicopters, and ranks of armed officers in riot gear facing lines of unarmed protestors on foot and horseback, many of them praying. A report from AFSC released in early November describes two conflicts in October resulting in well over 200 arrests:

*On October 22, 2016, hundreds of water protectors walked two miles to a construction site to pray. They were met by a line of police officers who were equipped with batons, less-lethal weapons, pepper spray, and automatic rifles loaded with rubber bullets. Over the course of the day, the police would surround the protectors and deploy pepper spray and batons against them. The protectors asked for time to get their elders and the children out of harm's way. They were denied.*

*On October 23, 2016, acting on Chairman Archambault's claim of eminent domain over the unceded territory, protectors set up a new camp on the land that was disturbed by DAPL on September 3. Four days later, over 300 police from five separate jurisdictions led a militarized forced removal of Lakota, Dakota, and Nakota people. Over three tense hours—using sound cannons, shock grenades, rubber bullets, less-lethal weapons and pressurized pepper spray—this heavily armored, multi-jurisdictional force led an assault on peaceful protectors, some of whom were in a Sweat Lodge Ceremony, and elders who were in a Circle Ceremony praying for peace. Reports indicate that 107 protectors were arrested, including every elder in that Ceremony.*

Protectors have been arrested for their action on several other occasions as well. They have been arrested for minor misdemeanor charges but are routinely strip searched when they arrive at the Morton County jail. Amnesty International has sent a delegation to monitor police response. The United Nations recently sent observers to the site to investigate human rights abuses.

## REACTIONS AND SUPPORT:

Support for the water protectors at Standing Rock is growing among the faith community. The blog Creation Justice lists actions and statements from various Christian groups, including some Friends meetings, FCNL, and QEW (see below for link.) On Nov. 3, more than 500 clergy and people of faith across denominations joined the Standing Rock Sioux Nation in "a day of protective witness in solidarity" (see link to article below).

In early November AFSC released a 36-page report from a delegation who visited Standing Rock at the end of September. Available at [afsc.org](http://afsc.org), it lists a number of suggested actions on pp. 31-32, but in light of the violent clashes that happened after its visit, there is also this urgent plea:

*American Friends Service Committee asks for the immediate intervention of the Department of Justice, including a full investigation of the Morton County Sheriff's department policies, procedures, and actions in engagement with the protectors as well as their treatment in the county jails throughout the state. We also recommend that Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act be reviewed and amended to adhere to the United Nations standard of "free, prior and informed consent" and that all other federal consultation guidelines with Tribes be amended to reach this standard.*

In late October, millions of people "checked in" at Standing Rock through Facebook to show their unity with the protectors after it was rumored that law enforcement was using Facebook to track who was there. On November 7, twenty-six environmental groups sent a letter to a coalition of banks supplying credit for the project asking them to stop the flow of monies.

On Tuesday, November 15, there were demonstrations against the pipeline in some 300 cities, many outside the offices of the Army Corps of Engineers. There are MANY places online that you can sign petitions to support the actions of the Standing Rock Sioux, starting with their website, [standingrock.org](http://standingrock.org).

#### THE CAMP COMMUNITY:

The cooperative aspects of the people camping at Standing Rock have been noted many places. There is a school for children at the camp. Medical services are available. And food is procured, prepared, and served to thousands by volunteers. At last report, many were prepared to stay through the winter.

#### FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

AFSC Special Report "We Are Our Own Medicine: An AFSC Special Report from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's Land and Unceded Territory":

<https://www.afsc.org/document/we-are-our-own-medicine-afsc-special-report-standing-rock-sioux-tribes-land-and-unceded>

Wikipedia articles: "Standing Rock Reservation"; "Dakota Access Pipeline Protests" (updated frequently)

From *The National Catholic Reporter* "Larger Faith Community Comes to Standing Rock in Solidarity":

<https://www.ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/larger-faith-community-comes-standing-rock-solidarity>

Creation Justice Ministries (blog), including lists of actions that can be taken, supporting statements from faith groups, and links to news stories:

<http://www.creationjustice.org/blog/christian-communities-support-standing-rock-sioux-protest-of-dakota-access-pipeline>

BillMoyers.com "Standing Firm at Standing Rock: Why the Struggle is Bigger Than One Pipeline"

<http://billmoyers.com/story/standing-firm-standing-rock-pipeline-protesters-will-not-moved/>

From the *New York Times*, “Environmentalists Target Bankers Behind Pipeline”:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/08/business/energy-environment/environmentalists-blast-bankers-behind-dakota-pipeline.html>

From NPR, “A Navajo Chef Gives a Glimpse Inside the Makeshift Kitchens at Standing Rock”:

<http://www.npr.org/sections/thesalt/2016/11/05/499807252/a-navajo-chef-gives-a-glimpse-inside-the-makeshift-kitchens-at-standing-rock>

From the *New York Times*, another story on food preparation at the camps, “Squash, Rice, and Roadkill”:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/17/us/squash-rice-and-roadkill-feeding-the-fighters-of-standing-rock.html>

A photo story from the BBC “Life in the Native American Oil Protest Camps”:

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-37249617>

Amy Goodman reports on the national day of protest, Nov. 15, 2016, for *Nation of Change*:

<http://www.nationofchange.org/2016/11/17/bernie-sanders-surprise-speech-outside-white-house-rejecting-dakota-pipeline-trump/>

Available online at <http://annarborfriends.org/E&SC%20Reading.shtml>

Ann Arbor Friends Meeting (Quakers)

Environment & Social Concerns Committee

December 1, 2016