

**Minnesota
Environmental
Partnership**



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December 2nd, 2016

President Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave W
Washington, DC 20500

Loretta E. Lynch
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear President Obama and Attorney General Lynch:

We are writing to express our solidarity with the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and the water protectors at Oceti Sakowin Camp. Our support stems from both our solidarity with indigenous peoples over land and water rights, and also from the perspective that this pipeline is a danger to the water and climate systems that we depend on for our health, life and livelihoods.

We support the continuation of the Oceti Sakowin peaceful encampment at the existing site. We urge you to direct the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to retract its threat to remove all persons who remain present on federal land on December 5, 2016.

We respectfully request you to uphold your obligation and duty to de-escalate North Dakota law enforcement's violence, to call for an end to the militarization of its response to the water protectors, and to investigate and halt the civil and human rights abuses that have occurred and continue to take place. The violence on the ground is escalating, and we need your immediate and decisive action.

On November 20, 2016, North Dakota law enforcement used rubber bullets, tear gas, and water cannons in below freezing weather conditions against water protectors who are gathered near the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's reservation in opposition to the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). We are extremely disturbed by evidence indicating the use of concussion grenades, sound cannons, flash bangs, and other military weapons. This level of violence against peaceful protestors is unacceptable and inconsistent with America's values. As representatives of the federal government, it is your duty—both pursuant to your trust obligations to Indian tribes and

your obligation to uphold all American citizens' constitutional rights—to take action to end this unlawful and excessive use of force by North Dakota law enforcement.

The Minnesota Environmental Partnership and the organizations signing this letter urge the Obama Administration and the Attorney General to reconsider the Clean Water Act and Rivers and Harbor Act permits for the pipeline. We are a powerful coalition of conservation and environmental partners focused on protecting our water, our climate, and investing in clean energy. We know that it is essential that the entire pipeline undergo a full environmental impact review, but beyond that, we respectfully urge you to halt construction all together.

The Dakota Access Pipeline will bring oil and gas produced through hydraulic fracturing to market. This particular type of extraction is water-intensive and endangers drinking water at the wells, within communities, and throughout the watershed. The Dakota Access Pipeline will then transport that oil through Native lands, beneath the Missouri River, endangering the drinking water of millions of citizens. The oil being shipped by the Dakota Access Pipeline poses a threat to drinking water at all stages of its operation, whether in the extractive, transportation, refining, or use phases. Furthermore, once the oil is refined and in use, it is a global threat because of the contributions of oil combustion to climate change.

Continuing to invest in pipeline and oil infrastructure will only continue our dependence on this fuel source. We know that to maintain a livable climate, we need to transition our energy and transportation systems away from oil towards other fuels. Rather than additional investment in outdated and dangerous technologies, we need to be investing in the systems of the future. These include public transportation and electrification of personal vehicles, wind and solar power, as well as other innovative technologies.

We know that the Obama administration and the Attorney General are watching the events unfold at Standing Rock, and we also know that you can take action to de-escalate the situation and allow the encampment to continue. We urge you to make the right decision, by protecting our water and climate. We urge you to end the human rights violations happening at Standing Rock, and to stop the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Morse". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Steve Morse, Executive Director
Minnesota Environmental Partnership

Alliance for Sustainability
Center for Biological Diversity

Clean Water Action of Minnesota
CURE (Clean Up the River Environment)

Friends of the Boundary Waters Wilderness
Friends of the Cloquet Valley State Forest
Land Stewardship Project
Lower Phalen Creek Project
Mankato Area Environmentalists
Izaak Walton League of America
Minnesota Food Association
MN350
MPIRG
Pesticide Action Network
Save Lake Superior Association
Save Our Sky Blue Waters
Sierra Club North Star Chapter
Transit for Livable Communities
WaterLegacy

