



USET

SOVEREIGNTY PROTECTION FUND

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October 21, 2016

President Barack Obama
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Mr. Denis McDonough
The White House
Chief of Staff to the President
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
dmcos@who.eop.gov

Ms. Jo-Ellen Darcy
Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works)
108 Army Pentagon
Washington, DC 20310
joellen.darcy@us.army.mil

Dear President Obama,

Dear Mr. McDonough and Assistant Secretary Darcy,

We write of behalf the 26 member Tribal Nations of United South and Eastern Tribes Sovereignty Protection Fund, Inc. (USET SPF) to oppose the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL). We stand in solidarity and support of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe (SRST) and other communities in their fight against this dangerous and destructive pipeline.

USET SPF member Tribal Nations share Standing Rock's deep concerns regarding the deleterious impacts of the pipeline. If allowed to proceed, DAPL has the potential to cause irreparable harm to public health, water quality, and sacred sites. As Tribal governments and Native people, we are charged with the protection of our homelands, our citizens, and all that is sacred to maintain our way of life for generations to come. It is our solemn duty to protect the lands that hold the bones and spirits of our ancestors. Therefore, we cannot stand by as both are desecrated in the name of profit, and without regard to treaty and trust obligations.

DAPL is set to run through land that is sacred to SRST and other Lakota peoples. Federal law requires that sacred places be protected in consultation with Tribal Nations, but the Army Corps of Engineers has not complied with that requirement in permitting DAPL. We are pleased that the Administration is reexamining the decisions leading up to the issuance of permits and initiating consultation with Tribal Nations to ensure that this never happens again. However, the Administration must go further to ensure that sacred places will not be impacted if DAPL proceeds.

First, we request that this Administration halt all construction permits on DAPL while it conducts a full Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Lake Oahe crossing, which must include meaningful consultation with Tribal Nations. Further, the Dakota Access pipeline does not have the easement from the Corps of Engineers to cross Lake Oahe. As the trustee to SRST and all Tribal Nations, we urge this Administration to deny the final easement until further review of the project is guaranteed.

Your Administration has a trust obligation to protect the sacred sites, water resources, and public health of all Tribal Nations. If DAPL is to move forward, it must happen without impact to the Tribal Nations of the Great Plains. Moreover, we encourage this and future Administrations to reflect upon the failures that allowed this error in permitting to occur. Please count USET SPF as a willing partner in all efforts to guarantee that the sacred places of Tribal Nations are afforded the same respect and reverence as other places of worship throughout the United States.

Sincerely,



Brian Patterson
President



Kitcki Carroll
Executive Director

CC: USET SPF Executive Officers
Wanda James, USET SPF Deputy Director
Karen Diver, Special Assistant to the President for Native American Affairs
Tracy Goodluck, Senior Associate Director, White House Office of Public Engagement and Intergovernmental Affairs
Morgan Rodman, Executive Director, White House Council on Native American Affairs