



ROSEBUD SIOUX TRIBE

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November 20, 2017

GREETINGS MY FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

Cante wasteya nape ciyuzapelo (I take your hand in friendship). As President of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, I am writing you today regarding a very important issue that effects our Tribe but also all of you as well. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe – also known as the Sicangu Lakota Oyate – is one of the seven tribes that make up the Oceti Sakowin (the Council First of the Lakota People). We are and always have been a free and sovereign nation.

In 2014, TransCanada, Inc., a company that develops and builds oil delivery pipelines, announced that they would construct a pipeline from the Tar Sands Fields in Alberta, Canada, to Steele City, Nebraska, and then on to Texas. The pipeline's path would go directly through traditional land that was guaranteed to the Tribe and the Great Sioux Nation in the Fort Laramie Treaty of 1851 and Fort Laramie Treaty of 1868. The pipeline would endanger the Ogallala Aquifer, which supplies water to millions of citizens, both Natives and non-Natives, who live in that area, and will damage or destroy Sicangu sacred and burial sites. President Obama agreed with the concerns expressed by others and us, and ultimately refused to grant TransCanada the necessary permits to allow the construction to be completed. The election of President Trump changed all of that. TransCanada, through Trump's Presidential memorandum, has now been given a presidential permit to cross the international border between Canada and the US.

The Rosebud Sioux Tribe has an obligation to protect the health and wellbeing of the Tribe's members and to make sure that the United States fulfills its trust obligations to the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. To that tend, the Tribe has retained the services of the Native American Rights Fund to assist the Tribe, to make sure that those public agencies – Federal, State and Tribal – honor our treaties and respect tribal sovereignty as well as our right to free, prior and informed consent. The pipeline has leaked in South Dakota, and any further leak could have devastating consequences not only for the Rosebud Sioux Tribe, but also for the rest of the Oceti Sakowin and our Native and Non-native neighbors.

Officials from the TransCanada Keystone Pipeline Company last week announced a leak of 210,000 gallons of oil leaked in Marshall County, South Dakota, an area adjacent to the tribal lands of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe. TransCanada has not allowed Sisseton tribal officials access to the spill site to assess any potential or actual damage to tribal land and resources. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe supports the efforts of the Sisseton-Wahpeton Sioux Tribe to assess the potential damage to the water and environment and to protect tribal lands from contamination of drinking water.

Nebraska regulators have made a decision to authorize the construction of the TransCanada Keystone XL Pipeline today in spite of the events and massive oil spill in South Dakota. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe publically opposes the Nebraska Public Utilities Commission decision based upon treaties, federal and tribal law protecting our natural and historic resources, and the State's decision to approve pipeline construction in our treaty territory without consulting Tribal nations or obtaining tribal consent.

The Oceti Sakowin and the Rosebud Sioux Tribe have lived up to our obligations under the 1851 and 1868 Treaties of Fort Laramie. The land, water, tribal sovereignty and governmental services were not "given" to us in those treaties, they were bargained for with the blood of our ancestors. We will not dishonor our relatives and unnecessarily endanger our health, safety, and wellbeing. The Rosebud Sioux Tribe will take any and all necessary steps, up to and including litigation, to protect our people, our land and water, and our cultural and historic resources."

Hecetu yelo. (That's how it is).

Please contact me if you have any further questions.

Sincerely,

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

William "Willie" Kindle, President
Rosebud Sioux Tribe

Cc: Rosebud Sioux Tribal Council