January 14, 2021

Dear President-elect Biden,

We, the undersigned group of Indigenous women leaders, call on you to take immediate action to stop the Keystone XL, Line 3, and Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) pipeline projects on day one of your Presidency. These three pipelines pose grave threats to Indigenous rights, cultural survival, Sacred water and land, the global climate, and the public health crises within our communities, which have been greatly exacerbated by Covid-19.

In 2020, we experienced severe climate impacts, with record-breaking heat, wildfires, and hurricanes. Now, as we enter a new Administration, the U.S. must take seriously the climate emergency at hand, and act urgently to meet and exceed the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement. Indigenous knowledge and scientists have made clear that a critical part of stopping carbon emissions in the atmosphere is keeping fossil fuels in the ground. Massive pipeline projects such as Keystone XL, Line 3, and DAPL, are not in alignment with the natural laws or with meeting these commitments.

Combined, these three pipelines would emit catastrophic amounts of carbon dioxide annually\(^1\), increasing major health risks to our Indigenous communities along the pipeline routes. Line 3 alone crosses more than 200 water bodies and 800 wetlands\(^2\), and would irrevocably harm sensitive ecosystems through construction and create immense risk of tar sands spills into these Sacred and protected areas. The previous Administration created devastation to environmental protections that must be rectified immediately.

As construction on the KXL and Line 3 pipelines move forward, Indigenous women are put in danger of further violence\(^3\). Already, our communities are dealing with the epidemic of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) and our families are impacted without the support of federal or state agencies. We still have daughters, aunties, mothers, cousins, and two-spirit relatives who have never been found and whose perpetrators have never been brought to justice. There is clear evidence that the epidemic of MMIW is directly linked to fossil fuel production. Workers from outside our local communities come to construction sites to build pipelines, creating temporary housing communities known as “man camps” near the pipeline route, which are oftentimes on or next to Indigenous Peoples territories. Studies\(^4\), reports\(^5\) and Congressional hearings\(^6\) have found that man camps lead to increased rates of sexual violence and sexual trafficking of Indigenous women and girls, as well as an influx of drug trafficking. Indigenous women leaders along KXL and Line 3 have already reported adverse impacts from the current construction that has happened, all made worse by the COVID-19 pandemic.

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\(^1\) See, for further research, *Drilling Towards Disaster: Why U.S. Oil and Gas Expansion Is Incompatible with Climate Limits*, Oil Change International, January 16, 2019.
\(^2\) Line 3 opponents file federal suit to try to block the pipeline, MPR News, December 28, 2020.
\(^3\) See, for example, *The Darkest Side of Fossil-Fuel Extraction*, Scientific American, October 24, 2019.
\(^5\) *Native American and Women’s Organizations Request UN Help on Sexual Violence*, Indian Country Today.
\(^6\) *Human Trafficking in the U.S.*, C-SPAN, September 23, 2013
Since the onset of the pandemic, Indigenous Peoples across the U.S. are experiencing the devastating impact of the virus’s spread due to colonial policies and practices that have led to historically underfunded healthcare programs and significant health disparities. Moving forward with pipeline construction of Line 3 or KXL will only exacerbate the issues Indigenous communities already endure.

The KXL, Line 3 and DAPL pipelines are also in clear violation of our Treaty Rights and all are moving forward without the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Tribes and Nations. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognizes FPIC as a specific right that pertains to Indigenous Peoples, and allows our Nations to give or withhold consent to a project that may affect our communities and territories.

The KXL project has been opposed by Tribes, land owners, and environmental groups since the very beginning. The proposed Line 3 pipeline route violates the Treaty Rights of the Anishinaabe by endangering treaty-protected wild rice beds and other critical natural and cultural resources in the 1842, 1854, and 1855 treaty areas. DAPL, and it’s parent company Energy Transfer Partner, continue to be met with legal challenges from Tribal Nations along the pipeline corridor, many of which did not consent to the project in the first place. Despite our opposition, these pipelines continue to be built. As you take steps to acknowledge and uphold Tribal sovereignty, FPIC is a clear way forward for aligning U.S. policies with established international and Indigenous Peoples’ protocols.

Below are five actions you can take to uphold Indigenous sovereignty, align your Administration with the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement and exceed its agenda, and keep fossil fuels in the ground.

We request on day one of your administration that you:

1. Fulfill your promise and rescind all permits for Keystone XL pipeline.

2. Order a review of the Section 404 and 408 permits for the Line 3 pipeline.

3. Shut down all DAPL operations and order the Army Corps of Engineers to complete a thorough Environment Impact Statement for DAPL.

4. Issue a Presidential Memoranda to halt construction and operations of the Keystone XL, Line 3, and DAPL fossil fuel pipeline projects, including the construction of temporary housing for workers, also known as “man camps”.

5. Take executive action requiring federal agencies to engage in a process of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent of American Indian and Alaska Native Indigenous Nations, as laid out by the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.

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8 The impact of historical trauma on American Indian health equity, Medical News Today, November 27, 2020.
No more broken promises, no more broken Treaties. We represent Indigenous Nations and Tribes from across the United States all impacted by fossil fuel extraction and pipelines, and we urge you to fulfill the United States promise of sovereign relations with Tribes, and your commitment to robust climate action. Please heed our words, we are the women leaders of our communities and we are calling on you to show us on day one your commitment to fulfilling the U.S. treaty obligations and ending the reign of fossil fuel extraction in our tribal territories.

Respectfully,

Casey Camp-Horinek, Ponca Nation, Environmental Ambassador, Women’s Earth and Climate Action Network (WECAN) Senior Project Leader/Board Member

Joye Braun, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, Community Organizer with the Indigenous Environmental Network

Faith Spotted Eagle, Ihanktonwan Dakota, Oceti Sakowin, Brave Heart Society Elder

LaDonna Brave Bull Allard, Lakota historian, member of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, and founder/landowner of Sacred Stone Camp

Winona LaDuke, White Earth Nation, Executive Director, Honor the Earth

Tara Houska, JD, Couchiching First Nation Anishinaabe, Founder, Giniw Collective

Simone Senogles- Chi-noodin Ikwe, Red Lake Anishinaabe, Leadership Team, Indigenous Environmental Network

Mysti Babineau (makadewaa-binesi), Anishinaabe, Red Lake Band of Ojibwe

Kandi White, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arikara, Native Energy & Climate Campaign Coordinator with Indigenous Environmental Network

Michelle Cook (Dineh), Divest Invest Protect

Vivian Billy, Ponca Tribe of Oklahoma, President/Founder MMIP of Northern Oklahoma.

Cherri Foytlin, Dine’/ Navajo Nation, L’eau Est La Vie Camp

Monique Verdin, United Houma Nation, Another Gulf is Possible

Nina Berglund (Wanagi Thawacipi Win), Northern Cheyenne & Oglala Lakota, Youth Leader and Activist

Judy Wilson, Secwépemc, Chief of Neskonlith Indian Band & Union of BC Indian Chiefs Executive Member
Mechelle Sky Walker, Omaha Tribe of Nebraska, Indigenous Environmentalist & Political Activist

Harmony Lambert, Chumash Nation, Vice President of the Board & Direct Action Trainer at the Indigenous Peoples Power Project (IP3)

Eriel Tchekwie Deranger, member of the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation and Executive Director of Indigenous Climate Action

Ellen Gabriel, Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk Nation), Turtle Clan, Indigenous Activist

Jennifer K. Falcon, Fort Peck Assiniboine Sioux, Indigenous Environmental Network

Alison Iakonnhiio Ehara-Brown, (Mohawk), Grandmother Advisor, Idle No More SF Bay

TaŠina Sapa Win, Mnicojou, Itazipčo, Hunkpapa Lakota of the Cheyenne River Lakota Nation, Co-founder/CEO of the Cheyenne River Grassroots Collective

Tpiziwin Tolman, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Josephine Thundershield, Standing Rock Sioux Tribe

Kathy Red Dog, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Winona Ruth Charger, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Charlene Aleck, Tsleil Waututh Nation, Sacred Trust Initiative - Opposition to Trans Mountain Pipeline Expansion

Deborah Parker, Tulalip Tribal Citizen, Board of Director, National Indigenous Women’s Resource Center

Grace Wilson, Ponca, Member of Ponca Pathata Society, Signatory on the Indigenous Women of the Americas Defending Mother Earth Treaty

Suzoni Camp, Ponca, Member of Ponca Pathata Society, Signatory on the Indigenous Women of the Americas Defending Mother Earth Treaty

Julia Horinek, Ponca, Hereditary Drum Keeper, Ponca Pathata Society, CCC4EJ, Board Member, Signatory on the Indigenous Women of the Americas Defending Mother Earth Treaty

Suzaatah Horinek, Ponca, Member of Ponca Pathata Society, Northern Oklahoma MMIW Vice President, Signatory on the Indigenous Women of the Americas Defending Mother Earth Treaty

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Jesse Cardinal, Metis/Cree, Kikino, Keepers of the Water

Ashley (McCray) Engle, Absentee Shawnee Tribe Of Oklahoma/Oglala Lakota Nation, Indigenous Environmental Network Green New Deal Organizer, Stop the Plains All American Pipeline founder

Isabella Zizi, Northern Cheyenne, Arikara, Muskogee Creek, Idle no more SF Bay, signatory on the Indigenous women of the Americas Defending Mother Earth Treaty

Cleo Reece, Fort McMurray (Alberta) First Nation

Lisa Duff, Lakota (Oglala Sioux), Street medic/physical, emotional and physical health from Standing Rock camp medic area

Kanahus Manuel, Secwepemc & Ktunaxa Nations, Secwepemc Women Warriors, Tiny House Warriors

Alexis Bunten, Yup'ik and Unangan, Co-Director, Bioneers Indigeneity Program

Paula Looking Horse, Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate, Director of Karl Ladue Wodakota Foundation

Angeline Cheek "Tate Ska Washte Win" Lakota/Dakota from the Fort Peck Assiniboine & Sioux Tribes, Indigenous Justice Organizer, ACLU

Amber LeBeau, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe

Alaina Bald Eagle, Dine/Navajo Nation
Jacqueline Garreaux, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
Karen Little Wounded, Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe
HolyElk Lafferty, Mni Coujou, Oglala, Sicangu
Swan American Horse Hopkins, Hunkpapa/Yantonai/Oglala
Judith LeBlanc, Caddo Tribe of Oklahoma, Director, Native Organizers Alliance
Alice WhiteCloud, Cheyenne, Tulsa Indian Coalition Against Racism
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Bre Jackson, Oglala Lakota, NDN Collective
Mary Bowman, Hunkpapa Lakota, NDN Collective
Kim Pate, Eastern Band Cherokee/Mississippi Choctaw Descendent, NDN Collective
Tiana Begay, Diné, NDN Collective
Heather Montoya, Bay Mills Indian Community, NDN Collective

Gabrielle Strong, Sisseton-Wahpeton Dakota, NDN Collective

Michelle Fox, Gros Ventre/Blackfeet, NDN Collective

Nikki Pieratos, Bois Forte Chippewa, NDN Collective

Alberta Eagle, Oglala Lakota, NDN Collective

Jade Begay, Tesuque Pueblo/Diné, NDN Collective

Krystal Two Bulls, Northern Cheyenne/Oglala Lakota, NDN Collective