



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on February 1, 2017

Army Corps to Issue Approval to Complete Dakota Access Pipeline

Senator John Hoeven (R-N.D.), following a meeting with Acting Secretary of the Army Robert Speer and Vice President Mike Pence on Tuesday, [announced](#) that the Army Corps of Engineers will allow the Dakota Access Pipeline to be completed. He stated,

This will enable the company to complete the project, which can and will be built with the necessary safety features to protect the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and others downstream. This has been a difficult issue for all involved, particularly those who live and work in the area of the protest site, and we need to bring it to a peaceful resolution.



That may be wishful thinking. The decision late last year by the Corps to suspend issuance of permissions to proceed stalled the protest movement for only the moment. That decision, plus North Dakota's typical winter weather, put the protests into temporary hibernation.

But Tuesday's announcement has galvanized the protests once again. With the help of the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU), the tribe said that "Trump's decision to give the go-ahead for the Dakota Access Pipeline is a slap in the face to Native Americans and a blatant disregard for the rights to their land." The tribe added:

[We] will vigorously pursue legal action to ensure the environmental impact statement order issued late last year is followed so that the pipeline process is legal, fair and accurate. We are not surprised to see North Dakota's U.S. Senator John Hoeven issue a statement prematurely championing Trump directives to grant an easement for illegal construction. We stand ready to fight this battle against corporation interests superseding government procedure and the health and well-being of millions of Americans.

Bill McKibben of the protest group 350.org joined the chorus, calling completion of the project "unwise and immoral" because it would contribute to climate change. He went further, threatening obstruction of the project's completion:

The last time around, TransCanada [the company building the Keystone XL Pipeline] was so confident they literally mowed the strip where they planned to build the pipeline, before people power stopped them. People will mobilize again [over Dakota Access].

Trump's memorandum, issued on January 24, directed the secretary of the Army to "instruct the Assistant Secretary of the Army for Civil Works and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) ... to take all actions necessary and appropriate to ... review and approve in an expedited manner ... requests for approvals to construct and operate the DAPL [Dakota Access Pipeline], including easements or



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rights-of-way.” When approved, “notice is [to be] provided to the Congress.”

After stalling and delaying for months on end under the Obama administration, the U.S. Army Corps completed its “review” of the “requests for approval” with remarkable alacrity, issuing its approval to proceed in just one week.

The protests may be temporarily stalled, given the winter weather’s impact on the few remaining protesters still living near the site. Amy Sisk of Prairie Public Radio, a station affiliated with National Public Radio, visited the site where the protesters are hunkered down and reported on Tuesday, “Demonstrations have slowed this winter in the wake of the December announcement that the Army Corps of Engineers would launch a new environmental review of the pipeline.... Protesters vow to continue their stand against the pipeline. But the camp’s future is in limbo, amid flooding concerns after a heavy winter snowfall.”

Image: section of Dakota Access Pipeline being built in Iowa

An Ivy League graduate and former investment advisor, Bob is a regular contributor to The New American magazine and blogs frequently at [LightFromTheRight.com](#), primarily on economics and politics. He can be reached at badelman@thenewamerican.com.

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