

Student 6: High Not Achieved

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The Dakota Access pipeline, funded by the Energy Transfer Partners corporation, is supposed to be built from the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota through South Dakota, Iowa, and Illinois. It is meant to transport up to 570,000 tons of crude oil per day along a 1,172-mile route. If completed, its path would cut through grounds sacred to the Standing Rock Sioux tribe.

Pipeline protests were reported as early as October 2014, when Iowa community and environmental activists presented 2,300 petitions to Iowa Governor Terry Branstad asking him to sign a state executive order to stop it. The Sac & Fox Tribe of the Mississippi in Iowa also objected to the route and formally lodged their opposition in early 2015. On April 1st 2016, a group of people erected tepees and tents near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation to try and stop the gas pipeline operator from bulldozing sacred sites and polluting the water to construct the pipeline. By August, the social justice and human rights action had grown. There was now a "spirit" camp, Rosebud, near Sacred Stone, and many camps within camps, to accommodate a population that had swelled to at least 3,000. Another large camp, Oceti Sakowin, or Seven Council Fires, was set up across the Cannonball River, most of them from Native American tribes across the country.

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The pipeline has united a number of different interest groups with a variety of objections, but Native Americans have been at the center of the opposition, particularly the Standing Rock Sioux tribe. Environmental activists were involved as were celebrities and public figures.

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LaDonna Brave Bull Allard, believes that that they have to stand up and protest so as to protect the land for the future. She said "We are expendable people. We always have been. But we have the answers on how to save the world. We have the answers on how to live with this earth. We have to stand up and share that knowledge."

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