



**Official Statement**  
regarding *Standing Rock Sioux Tribe v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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RICHMOND- September 15, 2016 The National Association for Ethnic Studies (NAES) applauds the decisive action of the Department of Justice, the Department of the Army and the Department of the Interior regarding *Standing Rock Sioux Tribe v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers*.

The Army decided not to authorize construction of a pipeline bordering or under Lake Oahe on an Indian reservation in North Dakota, “the site of the largest gathering of Native Americans in more than 100 years,” according to [BBC News](#).

The Dakota Access Pipeline Project is a new approximate 1,172-mile, 30-inch diameter pipeline that will connect the rapidly expanding Bakken and Three Forks production areas in North Dakota to Patoka, Illinois. NAES has previously expressed its lack of support for the project given its disruption of indigenous lands. Meanwhile, indigenous people from across the US are living in camps on the Standing Rock reservation as they protest the construction of a new oil pipeline.

“This project, financed by the Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners, despite its alleged \$3.7 billion investment in 8,000 to 12,000 local jobs, is disastrous to indigenous communities in the region. We simply do not support it and we affirm the decision of the United States government, particularly given the thousands of demonstrators, including many sovereign tribal governments that have voiced serious concerns about the environment and the sacred sites, said Ravi K. Perry, president of NAES.

NAES values serious tribal input in the development of any further infrastructure projects sponsored by private companies and/or government resources. This dialogue, we assert, should occur at the outset, not as an afterthought. We regret that indigenous communities have had to even plead a case as simple as one that advocates for the environment and the protection of sacred lands. The unseemly ignorance of many who began this project concerning how their proposed construction route would disrupt indigenous sacred sites highlights the importance of ethnic studies education. The brazen disregard of those sites as evidenced in the decision of U.S. District Judge James Boasberg in Washington is deplorable and reeks of the same inexcusable practices across centuries of government seizure of Indigenous lands.

Activism in support of the halted construction has spurred many Twitter hashtags: #NODAPL #WaterIsLife #NoDakotaAccess, for example. “We believe government infrastructure projects, even with projected long term benefits for all, must be weighed against the cost to groups of ethnic identity significance, such as the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe,” said Perry. NAES proudly supports the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and other tribal nations and their members regarding protecting the waterways, lands and sites that would be disrupted by the Dakota Access pipeline.

*The mission of the National Association for Ethnic Studies (NAES) is to encourage activities and scholarship in the field of Ethnic Studies. In promoting social justice and equality, NAES serves as a forum for promoting Ethnic Studies research and scholarship, curriculum design, conferences, and assistance to Ethnic Studies programs to develop civic minded and culturally informed communities and people.*