

Adirondack Resident Travels To Standing Rock

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Ojibwe Water Protectors Encampment. Photo c Dan Plumley

On Sunday, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers denied the easement permit for the \$3.8 billion Dakota Access Pipeline to cross under a Missouri River reservoir in southern North Dakota near the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation. The pipeline controversy has brought thousands of protesters to an encampment at Standing Rock. One Adirondack resident was at the encampment when the permit denial was announced.

While there was sun and blue skies Sunday at the Lakota Sioux reservation, Adirondack Wild Friends of the Forest Preserve Partner Dan Plumley reports that by Monday temperatures had dropped to 20 degrees or less with 45-mile winds and a blinding snowstorm. Despite the conditions thousands are at the encampment. Plumley arrived last Thursday to stand in unity with the Lakota Sioux and, he says, underscore similar threats to the Adirondacks. "We are facing similar situations in the Adirondacks threatening our water from dirty Bakken crude oil moving across old railroad tracks by the Hudson River, by Lake Champlain, incredible pristine or nearly so water sources. We face the same threat in a sense of our environment being destroyed. And I also went because I have spent a lot of time in my life working with Native Americans and I just could not stand by while they were being abused and disenfranchised of their right to peaceably assemble."



The Sacred Hoop Circle surrounding the entire Oceti Sakowin Encampment. This ceremony took place just prior to the announcement of the Army Corp of Engineer's decision not to grant the easement to DAPL. Dan Plumley (center) is wearing blue.

Plumley has worked with indigenous peoples across the world. He was at the camp Sunday during the celebrations after the Army denied the permit for the pipeline to cross the Missouri River. He says while the decision is being cheered by those in the camp and Lakota Sioux leaders, there is also concern about the entire pipeline and uncertainty about any action the incoming Trump administration may take. "The decision of the Oceti Sakowin encampment is to stay on and sustain the effort and to continue to express their concerns about the entire Dakota Access Pipeline. They hope to carry forward and kill the project, kill the black snake as they call it. Because they don't feel it should be impacting or threatening the water and the health and the ecological integrity of any community."

Meanwhile, three groups in Vermont staged a protest Monday against a bank that invests in the Dakota Access Pipeline. Members of three groups — Central Vermont Climate Action, Central Vermont Showing Up for Racial Justice and the Upper Valley Affinity Group — disrupted TD Bank operations in Montpelier by blocking its drive-through or protesting inside the lobby. Solidarity Action media liaison Madeleine Sharrow says continued action is crucial even after the pipeline permit was denied. "People were celebrating that decision and also understanding that it's just the beginning and there's so much more work to do and that decision could be revoked at any point. And so celebrating a victory and committed to continuing to see this through."