

Chief's Address to the Nation

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from Canadian oil sands projects to Gulf Coast refineries. The State Department is weighing whether to grant a cross-border permit, but the final call is expected to come from the West Wing.

Obama will speak Friday at the Energy Department's Argonne National Laboratory, where he will tout his proposal to steer some revenue from oil-and-gas production into programs to help develop alternative fuel and vehicle technologies. Reps. Jim Matheson (D-Utah), John Barrow (D-Ga.) and Adam Kinzinger (R-Ill.) joined the pro-Keystone event alongside Upton and Sen. John Hoeven (R-N.D.). House Republicans, with support from centrist and oil-state Democrats, have repeatedly passed measures to expedite the federal decision or outright approve Keystone. The project presents a political quandary for Obama because it divides his political base — a number of unions have joined business groups in backing the project, while environmentalists strongly oppose it. Hoeven, backed by Sen. Max Baucus (D-Mont.) and mix of about a dozen other Democrats and Republicans, this week introduced his latest bill to approve Keystone. He predicted the bill will have more than 50 sponsors "very soon" and said he's exploring ways to secure a floor vote, although noted that the GOP does not control the chamber.

"We are looking at what vehicles we might attach it to," Hoeven said, adding that backers are working with Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and Baucus, who Hoeven said is in turn working with other Democrats. In 2012, Hoeven's plan to force approval of Keystone failed 56-42 when 60 votes were needed for approval, a vote that followed President Obama's personal lobbying of some Democrats to oppose the measure. Asked Friday if the bill could attract 60 votes, Hoeven said, "We're in that mid-50 range, I don't know yet." "That is why we are working to build support," Hoeven said Friday. In January, nine Senate Democrats joined Republicans on a letter calling for approval of the project. While bills to force approval are unlikely to reach Obama's desk and would likely face White House opposition, they nonetheless provide a political rallying point for backers to pressure the administration.

Indian Country Today: "Exaggerated Consultation Claims, Factual Errors in State Department's Keystone XL Environment Report Rankle Natives"

Exaggerated Consultation Claims, Factual Errors in State Department's Keystone XL Environment Report
Rankle Natives
Rob Capriccioso
March 15, 2013

Consultation? Depends on your definition. Cultural preservation survey? The Yankton Sioux Tribe, the alleged conductor of said survey, says it didn't happen.

These are just two of the erroneous claims in the U.S. State Department's draft report on the potential environmental impacts of the hotly contested Keystone XL pipeline project regarding Natives, according to American Indian citizens who are perturbed by its representation of tribal acquiescence. The report, released on March 8, indicates that there will be little overall impact on the environment if the Keystone XL project goes forward, even as it potentially crosses Indian country homelands. It says that of the 80 tribes being consulted, 27 are still consulting, 13 are currently not consulting, and 40 are still undecided. But some of the tribal references are of major concern to American Indian citizens who say that contrary to assertions in the report, consultation has been lacking. Moreover, they say, some of the points in the report don't make sense, or are even incorrect. They are urging tribal members to speak up during the 45-day public comments period. "The environmental report contains a lot of false statements, and their idea of consultation is different than the tribes' ideas," lamented Marty Cobenais, a Red Lake Ojibwe organizer with the Indigenous Environmental Network, of the March 1 report. "They say that an e-mail to a tribe counts as consultation, or a phone call [does], but that isn't meaningful consultation. They need to talk to the tribal councils as a whole." If federal officials were to do that, Cobenais said, they would find widespread opposition to the Keystone XL pipeline expansion plans of Canadian developer TransCanada. If approved by President Barack Obama, the pipeline would carry oil sands crude from Canada through a swath of the United States to the Gulf of Mexico. Many tribes along the proposed route have already passed resolutions opposing the pipeline. "The Natives are growing restless," Cobenais said. "It's time for President Obama to open his eyes and look at Native nations and realize there is a problem here. We are tired of getting stepped on." "We believe that President Obama's legacy and our legacy are tied together," added Casey Camp, a Ponca Nation citizen from Oklahoma who says the federal government "has been negligent in their consultation and government-to-government relationship" with her tribe.

"The [Ponca] government remains in the dark about the deadly issues that our people encountered in relationship to the Conoco Phillips refinery and other extractive industry poisons; and now Keystone and KXL are passing through our territory with further reasons and/or excuses to not provide adequate cultural resource surveys in all areas," Camp

said. "The KXL is going to parallel directly our Trail of Tears from our ancestral homelands and bring death and destruction to not only where we are now but also where we came from." Cobenais appreciates the part of the report that predicts the project will create few jobs, while importing much oil overseas and not really enhancing American interests. He envisions the president making a final decision sometime in late summer. Until then, he suggests, there be many more federal public hearings on the proposed expansion.

Indian activists have also found parts of the report that appear to be misleading, such as its listing of a cultural preservation survey being performed by the Yankton Sioux Tribe. Tribal officials there have told State that no such survey was done, and the department has backtracked on that claim. "In the opinion of the Treaty Council here at Ihanktonwan, consultation is not concluded. In fact, it is has not even started with General Council," said Faith Spotted Eagle, a tribal elder. She called the report's assertion that the state department had consulted more than 150 times with the Yankton Sioux "a bit ridiculous," adding, "They have counted e-mails, notices, phone calls, meetings with [Tribal Historic Preservation Officers] who are regulatory, not nation-to-nation bodies." Moreover, the state department had "decided where Natives could survey arbitrarily and did an excellent job of dividing the tribe by dangling small amounts of fragmented survey funds to poverty-stricken communities," Spotted Eagle said. "This document...shows considerable risk and impact upon First Nation, tribal and indigenous community cultural resources along the route, and [the report] is also incomplete," said Kandi Mossett, also an organizer with the Indigenous Environmental Network. "This is cause for serious concern." Mossett note that anti-pipeline organizations have listed multiple concerns of tribes and communities, which include worry over potential impacts to groundwater resources from spills, pollution, wetlands and wildlife destruction, and safety and sacred site issues. Mossett said that now is the time for American Indians to make their voices heard if they want to prevent the development. "The State Department is currently putting the pressure on the general public to comment and hold them accountable to make the right decision," Mossett said, adding that people should read the document and participate in the 45-day commenting period.

"Many of our sacred sites, our water and our generations will be affected by this immensely oppressive act by

two governments who never healed from their 'post conflict' experience when they were oppressed in Europe," Spotted Eagle said. "This pipeline will not happen in the Oceti Sakowin lands!" For a look at what oil sands development is doing to the environment, see the slide show Athabasca Oil Sands in All Their Terrible Glory.

Read more at
<http://indiancountrytodaymedianet.com/2013/03/15/exaggerated-consultation-claims-factual-errors-state-departments-keystone-xl-environment>

- SHORT TAKES**
- * April 23, Grand Opening of our Cultural Center at 10:00 a.m.
 - * March 4-7, Washington DC - Represented our Sac & Fox Nation as Area Vice-President Southern Plains Region at the NCAI Executive Council Winter Session.
 - * March 13, Las Vegas, NV - Represented our Sac & Fox Nation at The National Center for American Indian Enterprise Development RES as a panelist / Leadership - United Tribal Organizations: United South and Eastern tribes (USET), Affiliated Tribes of the Northwest Indians, and United Indian Tribes of Oklahoma, Kansas, and Texas (UINOKT).
 - * March 14, Norman, OK - Represented our Sac & Fox Nation at the «To Bridge a Gap» Conference as a panelist / Trans Canada Panel.
 - * March 18, Oklahoma City, OK - Attended a statewide tribal leaders meeting to discuss Tobacco Compacts. A letter of unity was signed by twenty heads of tribal nations addressed to Governor Fallin; history was made with this document as UINOKT is the basis of the tribes in Oklahoma forming an allegiance to address common initiatives.
 - * March 21, Washington DC - Testified on behalf of our Sac & Fox Nation before the House Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies appropriations Subcommittee on the FY-2014 Budget submitting a Tribal Specific Budget request in the amount of \$4.8 million to fully fund the Sac and Fox Juvenile Detention Center.
 - * March 25-26, New Orleans, LA - Attended the 4th Annual Native American Health Care Conference with staff as liaison to our Black Hawk Health Center.
 - * April 2-4, Washington DC - Representing our Sac & Fox Nation on the Department of Interior Self Governance Advisory Committee (DOI-SGAC) quarterly meeting.
- I appreciate the honor and privilege of representing our Nation as Chief in many capacities and in so many arenas of Indian Country. Aho!
- Sincerely,
George Thurman, Principal Chief

Sac and Fox Nation **April 23, 2013**
Cultural Center 10:00 a.m.
Grand Opening




Opening Ceremonies

- Sac and Fox Nation Honor Guard Post Colors
- Welcome - Principal Chief George Thurman
- Special Guests - Representatives from HUD and Corp of Engineers
 - Ribbon Cutting
 - Tour and Refreshments




Sac and Fox National Public Library
open house



Celebrating 25 Years

Come Eat, Celebrate & Enjoy

Tuesday, April 23, 2013
11 a.m. - 1 p.m.

