

# Canoe Family joins Standing Rock opposition to pipeline

The N'Chi Wanapum Canoe Family of Warm Springs last week joined the Standing Rock Sioux in opposition to a controversial oil pipeline. Tribal Councilwoman Carina Miller also made the journey in support of the Sioux tribe.

The Canoe Family held fundraisers to make the trip to North Dakota, joining the tribal paddle down the Missouri River.

The protest against the Dakota Access pipeline drew thousands of supporters from many tribes across Indian Country. The Warm Springs group had a great experience, showing solidarity with the Standing Rock.

The Dakota Access pipeline would disturb a lake that is sacred to the Standing Rock Sioux. A lawsuit by the tribe sought to halt the construction, but the court ruled in favor of the Texas-based company that plans to build the \$3.8 billion, four-state pipeline.

After the court issued its ruling, the federal government stepped into the controversy, ordering construction to stop until the Army Corps of Engineers can revisit its previous decision on the matter. The move by the federal government was rare, and came as a surprise even to the Standing Rock Sioux legal team. Whether this latest development will lead to a permanent resolution of the conflict will become clear in the near future, as the legal process continues.

### Federal support

Here is the statement by the Department of Justice, the Department of the Army and the Department of the Interior:

*We appreciate the District Court's opinion on the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act. However, important issues raised by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and other tribal nations and their members regarding the Dakota Access pipeline specifically, and pipeline-related decision-making generally, remain. Therefore, the Department of the Army, the Department of Justice, and the Department of the Interior will take the following steps.*

*The Army will not authorize constructing the Dakota Access pipeline on Corps land bordering or under Lake Oahe until it can determine whether it will need to reconsider any of its previous decisions regarding the Lake Oahe site under the National Environmental Policy Act or other federal laws.*

*Therefore, construction of the*



Courtesy photos.

Joining Standing Rock Sioux protest: You can see the N'Chi Wanapum Canoe Family with the flag of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs to the right.

*' This case has highlighted the need for a serious discussion on whether there should be nationwide reform with respect to considering tribes' views on these types of infrastructure projects. '*

Statement by the Justice Department, the Department of the Army and the Department of the Interior:



The N'Chi Wanapum Canoe Family joined the paddle down the Missouri River.



Tribal Councilwoman Carina Miller at the North Dakota



pipeline on Army Corps land bordering or under Lake Oahe will not go forward at this time.

The Army will move expeditiously to make this determination, as everyone involved—including the pipe-

line company and its workers—deserves a clear and timely resolution. In the interim, we request that the pipeline company voluntarily pause all construction activity within 20 miles east or west of Lake Oahe.

Furthermore, this case has highlighted the need for a serious discussion on whether there should be nationwide reform with respect to considering tribes' views on these types of infrastructure projects.

Therefore, this fall, we will invite tribes to formal, government-to-government consultations on two questions: (1) within the existing statutory framework, what should the federal government do to better ensure meaningful tribal input into infrastructure-related reviews and decisions and the protection of tribal lands, resources, and treaty rights; and (2) should new legislation be

proposed to Congress to alter that statutory framework and promote those goals.

"Finally, we fully support the rights of all Americans to assemble and speak freely. We urge everyone involved in protest or pipeline activities to adhere to the principles of nonviolence. Of course, anyone who commits violent or destructive acts may face criminal sanctions from federal, tribal, state, or local authorities.

The Departments of Justice and the Interior will continue to deploy resources to North Dakota to help

state, local, and tribal authorities, and the communities they serve, better communicate, defuse tensions, support peaceful protest, and maintain public safety.

In recent days, we have seen thousands of demonstrators come together peacefully, with support from scores of sovereign tribal governments, to exercise their First Amendment rights and to voice heartfelt concerns about the environment and historic, sacred sites.

It is now incumbent on all of us to develop a path forward that serves the broadest public interest.



Red Warrior Camp, the largest camp at the protest site.

## House action on tribal youth, tourism bills

Legislation to improve the lives of Native youth and boost tribal tourism efforts were set for passage this week in the U.S. House of Representatives.

The Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act (S.246), and the Native American Tourism and Improving Visitor Experience Act (NATIVE Act - S.1579,) were being considered under a suspension of the House rules, meaning the bills are considered non-controver-

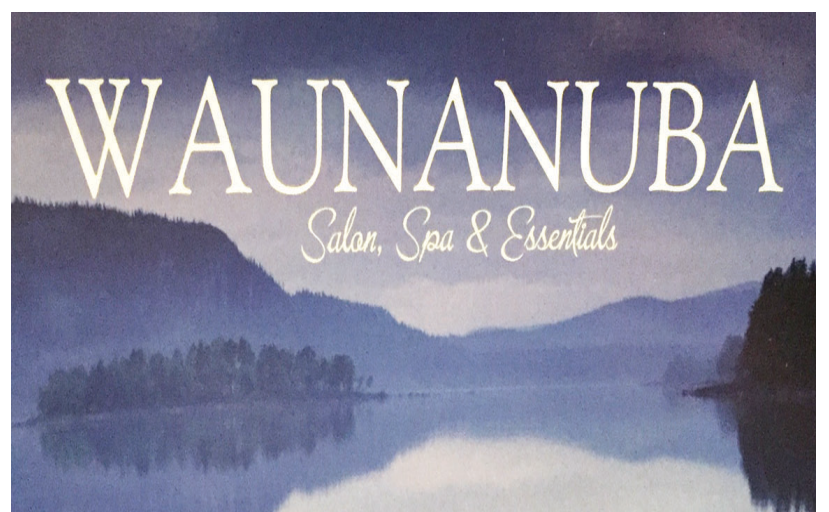
sial and are expected to pass by near-unanimous consent among lawmakers.

S.246 creates a commission that will study ways to improve health, education and other outcomes for American Indian youth. The bill passed the Senate in June of last year, so action in the House puts it one step closer to becoming law.

S.1579 requires the Department of Commerce and the Department of the Interior to update their management plans and tourism strate-

gies to include tribes. It passed the Senate on July 13, so it's also close to becoming law.

The two bills are supported by tribes, lawmakers from both parties and the Obama administration. Despite broad support, both have been altered in key ways during the legislative process. For instance, when it was introduced, S.246 authorized \$2 million for the Alyce Spotted Bear and Walter Soboleff Commission on Native Children Act, a provision that was removed.



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