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Another Voice: Fossil fuel pipeline projects are misguided and dangerous

**By Agnes Williams
and Victoria Ross**

Our indigenous sisters and brothers, and allies, at Standing Rock have our deep gratitude for their courage and wisdom. People have flocked there in large numbers – more than 10,000 some weekends – to stand with the Lakota for clean water, equal treatment under the law and for life as it exists on Mother Earth, for the good of the Seventh Generation to come.

Enbridge and other corporations want to build the Black Snake – the Dakota Access Pipeline or DAPL – to carry extremely dirty tar sands oil to U.S. refineries. This misguided project was already rejected by and for the people of Bismarck, N.D. When the plan became putting it downstream by the reservation, the Lakota blocked this criminal venture with their bodies and camp. Indigenous people and allies came from far and wide to stand for the water and the creation, and against quick corporate profits.

The brave and amazing people there have withstood governmental violence – rubber bullets, tear gas, compression cannons and water blasts in subfreezing temperatures.

The violence at Standing Rock has only been in one direction – the government and corporate agents have been violent to the prayerful people standing in nonviolent direct action for the common good.

Pipelines leak! North Dakota has an official website that has documented more than 300 leaks in the state alone in the past year.

DAPL and Keystone XL are attempts to seek whatever profits possible from the fossil fuel industry.

We have local pipeline problems, too. The proposed Northern Access Pipeline is an attempt by National Fuel to cash in on fracking by piping natural gas from Pennsylvania to Wheatfield for processing and export to Canada. We cannot allow that pipeline to be approved: It would cross 180 streams, 270 wetlands and seven ponds. For more information, please go to niagarasierraclub.com/issues/.

Then there's the Kiantone Pipeline here, another Enbridge project. It was mentioned by the Environmental Protection Agency as dangerous due to poor upkeep.

National Fuel allowed a leak to continue in Franklinville for over a year. Such heinous irresponsibility is truly shocking. We'll be showing a film shortly about an even worse situation in Michigan.

Climate change is not debatable. At least 97 percent of

scientists say it is happening. President Trump's nomination of Scott Pruitt, a climate change denier who has sued the EPA 11 times, as head of that agency is outrageous.

Furthermore, there's no safe way to move oil and gas. Bomb trains, trucks, pipelines are all hazardous. Our government should employ people in making a quick and smooth transition to renewables, not try to force-feed us the last of fossil fuels.

Agnes Williams is coordinator of Indigenous Women's Initiatives. Victoria Ross is executive director of the Western New York Peace Center. Both are with the Interfaith Peace Network and Buffalo Stands with Standing Rock Water Protectors.
