

Name: _____

Date: _____

Standing Rock Protests

Instructions: Read the article and write a summary in your own words.

The Standing Rock protests were a campaign undertaken in North Dakota in 2016 and 2017 to halt the construction of the Dakota Access pipeline. Early resistance to the oil pipeline was launched by members of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, who argued it would threaten sacred land as well as their water supply, but over time the demonstrations drew thousands of supporters from all across the United States. The protests culminated in numerous acts of violence, with security workers siccing attack dogs on the demonstrators

and police shooting them with rubber bullets, shocking them with Tasers, and blasting them with water cannons. In response to the campaign, President Barack Obama's administration stopped the pipeline's construction, but this decision was reversed after President Donald Trump took office, and construction was finished in 2017.

Opposition to the Pipeline

Resistance to the oil pipeline started as early as 2014, when the representatives of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe met with Energy Transfer Partners, the Texas-based company behind the project. The company's plan was for the pipeline to run more than 1,100 miles, from a section of the Bakken shale formation in northwestern North Dakota through South Dakota and Iowa and into Illinois. It would run



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less than a mile from the Standing Rock Reservation, through property that many tribe members said still belonged to the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe under the 1851 Treaty of Fort Laramie. It was set to run through a dammed section of the Missouri River that some believed was near sacred burial sites. Many also feared that the location of the pipeline would threaten the reservation's water supply.

Construction plans moved ahead despite their concerns, and North Dakota's government gave its approval in January 2016. On April 1, members of

the tribe launched a protest camp called Sacred Stone. Later that month, they also launched an online campaign under the hashtag #NoDAPL and a petition for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to stop the project. It ultimately received nearly 560,000 signatures.



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Nevertheless, the Corps of Engineers approved the project that July, claiming it would have minimal impact on the environment. The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe sued the agency in federal court, and meanwhile, thousands of supporters of the protesters—both Indigenous and non-Indigenous—started flocking to the protest sites. They physically blocked construction, sometimes with horses, and in August they managed to shut the project down temporarily. By mid-August, at least 28 had been arrested. Greg Wilz, North Dakota's homeland

security director, ordered the removal of state-owned trailers and water tanks that were supplying protest camps with drinking water.

The conflict continued to escalate in the late summer and fall. By early September, it had grown into the largest single gathering of Native Americans in over a century, with members of more than 100 tribes represented. Tribal leaders reported that in one incident, six people were bitten by the dogs of a private security firm and at least 30 were pepper sprayed. By then construction had resumed and had destroyed Indigenous burial sites, according to the leaders of the protest. The presidential candidate Jill Stein was arrested for participating in the protests, and the journalist Amy Goodman was charged with trespassing while she covered them.

Outcome

The tribe's request for a court injunction was rejected in September 2016. Several federal agencies, including the Department of Justice, asked Energy Transfer Partners to voluntarily pause the project. Obama's administration also took more forceful measures to stop the project, including denying a federal easement for the pipe to run beneath Lake Oahe in central North Dakota.

In January 2017, just four days after taking office, President Trump signed executive orders both to let construction on the Dakota Access pipeline resume and to begin work on a previously denied Keystone XL pipeline extension. Journalists noted that Trump had received more than \$100,000 in campaign donations from Energy Transfer Partners's chief executive and was himself an investor in the company. North Dakota Governor Doug Burgum set February 22, 2017, as the deadline for the main protest site to be cleared out. On February 23, police and national guard members marched into the camp and cleared it by force. The original encampment, Sacred Stone, was within the Standing Rock Reservation and remained intact.

Construction on the pipeline was finished over the following months, and it began carrying oil that June. Nevertheless, many activists, lawyers, and scholars have celebrated the protests. Daniel Fixico,

Summarize the article about the Standing Rock protests. In your responses, be sure to:

- Identify the main idea and key details.
- Describe significant facts, events, and people.
- Cite evidence from the text and use complete sentences.

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