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Remember Who We Are

**STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBAL CHAIRWOMAN JANET ALKIRE
STATEMENT ON THE JURY VERDICT AGAINST GREENPEACE**

March 25, 2025

As Chairwoman of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, I take offense to the jury verdict in the Energy Transfer SLAPP lawsuit against Greenpeace. We expect more from North Dakota judges and members of the jury from our neighboring communities.

Energy Transfer's claims in this case were ridiculous. They were wholly disrespectful of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, our ancestors, and our youth, who started the movement in 2016 to protect our water from an oil spill from DAPL. Neither Greenpeace nor anyone else paid or persuaded Standing Rock to oppose DAPL. Our young people and our elders urged us to protect our water and *unci makah* (grandmother earth). That is what happened, and is happening still.

Energy Transfer's false and self-serving narrative that Greenpeace manipulated Standing Rock into protesting DAPL is patronizing and disrespectful to our people. We understand that many Morton County residents support the oil industry, even out-of-state pipeline companies such as Energy Transfer. But we are your neighbors, and you should not be fooled that easily.

Energy Transfer does not know us. They don't know who we are - an Indigenous Nation that has survived every attack because our ancestors are with us.

Greenpeace did not manipulate Standing Rock, but Energy Transfer has manipulated Morton County.

DAPL crosses our Treaty and aboriginal land for hundreds of miles. Our ancestors occupied this land for thousands of years before North Dakota came into existence. The land between the Heart and Missouri River are our unceded Treaty lands under the 1868 and 1851 Fort Laramie Treaties. Our aboriginally-occupied territories extend east to the James River and beyond. That is a historical truth. If Greenpeace can be held liable for telling the truth about Sioux Nation Treaty rights, then we are all in trouble.

The construction of Fort Rice on our northern boundary in 1864 was a violation of the Fort Laramie Treaties. This required our Tribe to be vigilant. No one should be surprised that warrior society burials are found in this area, near the pipeline route. And do not insult our cultural experts, who have wisdom over matters most residents of Morton County or bureaucrats at the State Historical Society know absolutely nothing about. Energy Transfer and its lawyers should be ashamed of themselves. Everyday North Dakotans on the jury should know better.

When it comes to the excessive police and private security response to the generally peaceful protests at Cannon Ball, believe your eyes. The scenes of guard dogs menacing Tribal members are reminiscent of the violence of white supremacists in the deep south during the 1950's and 60's, but it was in North Dakota, in this day and age. It was on the news and on the internet. Many of the protesters were Native American veterans of the United States armed forces. Energy Transfer used attack dogs against peaceful protesters and war heroes. But the jury sided with the out-of-state, unlicensed security with the attack dogs, instead of North Dakota veterans who supported Standing Rock.

A Texas oil company has come to North Dakota, and its lawyers and propaganda machine are weaving stories about how the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe and our supporters have lied, and how the poor pipeline company, a trillion dollars richer than in 2016 when this all started, should receive extra millions from non-profit organizations. It's a funny thing about liars – they always accuse everyone else of lying.

The Greenpeace trial was marked by secrecy. The court is not making the transcript public. The documents obtained by Greenpeace about Energy Transfer's terrible safety record are protected by a secrecy order and are not available to the public. The judge exhibited so much bias in favor of Energy Transfer that a team of international human rights lawyers felt compelled to

monitor the trial. One prominent monitor stated “In my six decades of legal practice, I have never witnessed a trial as unfair as the one against Greenpeace that just ended in the courts of North Dakota.”

Standing Rock has tried to work for greater transparency on DAPL. It is our experience with the Army Corps of Engineers and Energy Transfer that all documents relating to DAPL pipeline safety are heavily redacted, and kept secret. What are they hiding? Who is looking out for the communities that may be affected by an oil spill? And why didn't the North Dakota court allow Greenpeace to address these questions at the trial?

DAPL is a dangerous pipeline. It crosses our unceded Treaty and aboriginal land. Energy Transfer destroyed Tribal burials as identified by our cultural experts, and committed violence against our people. That is the history that North Dakota and Morton County must reckon with. After the Greenpeace verdict, that day seems farther off than ever.