

## Cancelling Keystone XL Pipeline Makes Good Business Sense

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Among the numerous executive orders President Biden signed on his first day in office, January 20, 2021, were orders revoking “permits signed over the past 4 years that do not serve the U.S. national interest.” (Politico) This included revoking the Presidential permit the previous administration granted to the Keystone XL pipeline.

In the decade that the battle over the Keystone XL pipeline has been waged, Keystone XL pipeline proponents have touted the jobs it would create. But the jobs numbers are quite exaggerated. According to an article in the Austin American-Statesman, of the more than 11,000 Americans projected to be employed, most would be temporary and seasonal, equating to approximately 3,900 jobs over a two-year period. The State Department forecast that no more than 50 jobs, only 35 of them permanent, and some located in Canada, would be required to maintain the pipeline. (<https://www.statesman.com/story/news/politics/politifact/2021/01/22/keystone-pipeline-jobs-lost-joe-biden-executive-order-cancel-fact-check/6673822002/>)

The Journal Record (Oklahoma) reports that in a recent webinar, retired energy executive Mickey Thompson said that the decision to halt construction of the Keystone XL pipeline and suspend oil and gas drilling on public lands is good news for Oklahoma. His reasons include protecting American “midcontinent oil and natural gas producers from a price shock that they cannot really stand.” The glut of foreign produced oil would impact the crude oil price that Oklahoma can command from its domestic production, and its ability to employ Oklahomans at home. (<https://journalrecord.com/2021/01/22/expert-pipelines-suspension-good-for-oklahoma/>)

The infamous Koch brothers own as much as 2 million acres in Alberta, Canada, tar sand territory. “That is more potentially stranded assets than Exxon’s, Chevron’s, and Conoco’s combined”, according to the International Forum on Globalization in 2015. February 2018’s story (<https://www.ecowatch.com/koch-pipelines-dakota-keystone-2540819277.html#toggle-gdpr>) thoroughly outlines the brothers’ myriad efforts to push the pipeline project through.

As we mentioned in a prior article, according to multiple sources, including the U.S. government’s own statistics, our green economy employs “10 times as many people as the fossil fuel industry – despite the past decade’s oil and gas boom.” (<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2219927-us-green-economy-has-10-times-more-jobs-than-the-fossil-fuel-industry/#ixzz6kgzffClA>)

Tar sand extraction is an energy expensive process. Part of the oil has to be burned to extract the oil. It is one of the most energy intensive and least economical ways to produce oil. It releases even more CO2 into the atmosphere than other methods of recovering oil. It should be labeled “dirty oil” as its recovery pollutes 3 times more than extracting normal oil. (<https://www.ucsusa.org/resources/what-are-tar-sands>)

Canada is warming twice as fast as the rest of the world and “Scattered along the banks of the Athabasca River is one of the world’s largest collections of tailings waste ponds – able to fill more than 500,000 Olympic swimming pools. These are so toxic, ducks and other birds have to be prevented from going near them.” (<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/2019/04/alberta-canadas-tar-sands-is-growing-but-indigenous-people-fight-back/>)

But that is just the initial cost of tar sand extraction. The sludge transported from Canada to be refined in U.S. facilities like the one in Whiting, IN, produces as much as 6,000 tons per day of petroleum coke, a toxic byproduct also known as petcoke waste. “The petcoke is then transferred to KCBX Terminals, a company owned by the notorious climate-denying Koch brothers, which stores it a stone’s throw away from homes, schools, and parks on Chicago’s Southeast Side. KCBX Terminals eventually

ships the petcoke to countries with less-stringent environmental laws than the United States, where it's burned as a cheaper, dirtier substitute for coal." (<https://www.nrdc.org/stories/dirty-battle-chicagos-backyards>)

But that's not all! The route of the pipeline has been disputed by Native American communities for numerous infractions. "NARF Staff Attorney Matthew Campbell explained, "Before we allow a foreign company to build another pipeline to haul dirty tar sands across any American soil, we should be taking a hard look at the possible impact on American land, water, health, and safety. For tribal lands, the treaties absolutely require this sort of review. In issuing the Keystone XL permit with shoddy and superficial analysis, the federal government not only didn't do its job, it did not follow the law."

(<https://www.narf.org/cases/keystone/>) In American communities, such as in Nebraska, groups that often disagree, "environmentalists and Democratic activists have joined with typically more conservative farmers and ranchers "to work together against the pipeline.

(<https://theconversation.com/keystone-xl-debate-how-pipeline-politics-divide-nebraska-32929>)

The benefit of the Keystone XL pipeline is a fairy tale built on lies and greed. Our president's decision to rescind an unlawful permit makes good economic, environmental, and human rights sense.

Beck, Thomas W., Together We Build, "[Cancelling Keystone XL Pipeline Makes Good Business Sense](https://www.eptrail.com/2022/03/09/together-we-build-cancelling-keystone-xl-pipeline-makes-good-business-sense/)", *Estes Park Trail Gazette*, Friday, March 9, 2022, <https://www.eptrail.com/2022/03/09/together-we-build-cancelling-keystone-xl-pipeline-makes-good-business-sense/>