



IOWA CHAPTER

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**Sierra Club Bakken Brief Continues Call for Permit Denial**

The Iowa Chapter of the Sierra Club submitted its opening brief to the Iowa Utilities Board (IUB) in opposition to Dakota Access' proposed pipeline.

Sierra Club told the IUB that:

- Dakota Access is not a utility company
- Dakota Access should not be allowed to exercise eminent domain
- Dakota Access has not shown the project meets the definition of public convenience and necessity
- Dakota Access did not adequately conduct archaeological and cultural reviews and surveys of the areas being crossed
- Dakota Access has not satisfactorily completed an environmental review of the pipeline route, looking for plants and animals that are threatened and endangered species and species of greatest conservation need
- the pipeline creates infrastructure that will exacerbate climate change

Consequently Sierra Club is calling on the IUB to deny the permit.

The proposed pipeline is slated to slice diagonally across Iowa, through prime agriculture lands, trenching through Iowa's rivers and streams and clearing a permanent path through woodlands.

"Besides the increased threat of spills, the continuation of fossil fuel usage, and the contribution to our climate crisis the Bakken pipeline will cause irreparable damage to Iowa's natural resources as well as our natural heritage and should not be approved," said Susan West, a long-time canoeist/kayaker from Fairbank. "This pipeline will cause irreparable damage by fragmenting woodlands and prairies. Trenching through rivers and streams will cause erosion and water quality issues, as well as destroying habitat for mussels, frogs and toads, and turtles. Many of those species need certain types of soil and water to hibernate in, to raise their young, and to live their lives in. Many burrow into the river bottom for those some of those purposes."

Evidence at the hearing showed that the permitting processes at other agencies is grossly inadequate. Sierra Club is asking the IUB to fill in the regulatory gaps.

"The evidence presented to the Iowa Utilities Board clearly showed that any alleged benefits of the pipeline are significantly out-weighted by the costs and risks to the public," said Wally Taylor, Legal Chair for the Iowa Chapter.

The brief is a summation of the four-week hearing held in November and December of 2015. The Sierra Club offered testimony from nine witnesses. The IUB received hundreds of letters in opposition to the pipeline.

Jonas Magram, Chapter Executive Committee member from Fairfield stated, “It is inconceivable that the IUB could objectively consider the evidence presented during its hearing and reasonably conclude the Bakken pipeline is in the best interest of Iowa. Whether assessed from an economic, environmental, human-safety or even energy security perspective, the project is fraught with enormous risks and, by comparison, virtually no rewards.”

Sierra Club is concerned that the pipeline will not meet the criteria of serving the public convenience and the public necessity.

“Here’s my question for the Iowa Utilities Board: Does this pipeline serve the public convenience and the public necessity?” asked Patrick Bosold, Iowa Chapter vice chair. “That is the IUB’s primary guideline for determining approval or denial of a permit. This pipeline will require authorization for crossing 65 of Iowa’s rivers, streams, and wetlands. One rupture in any of these waterways will be a catastrophe and a years-long nightmare to clean up, if it can be cleaned up at all. That kind of risk does not fit the definition of public convenience or public necessity.”

Iowa’s natural resources are the envy of other states. Sierra Club members care about protecting those resources from external threats. A new pipeline threatens Iowa’s water, wildlife and dirty fossil fuels contribute to climate change.

As Renata Sack from Waterloo stated, “The idea of the proposed Bakken Pipeline crossing Iowa is a travesty. I am deeply saddened and concerned that my state is considering such a huge negative impact for all Iowans, the state’s nature and wild life. The destruction would be lasting for decades. Burning more oil will only increase the effects of climate change. It is absurd.”

Find the Iowa Chapter’s brief at [www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/sce/iowa-chapter/energy-globalwarming/Bakken-pipeline/pipeline%20brief.pdf](http://www.sierraclub.org/sites/www.sierraclub.org/files/sce/iowa-chapter/energy-globalwarming/Bakken-pipeline/pipeline%20brief.pdf)

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