For more than 150 years, the US government has waged a sustained environmental war against the Sioux. Unable to defeat mounted warriors on the battlefield, the US army massacred buffalo herds in the 1860s-70s in order to starve the Sioux into submission. In violation of treaties, army officers led gold prospecting missions into the Black Hills in 1874. During the ensuing gold rush, miners murdered Sioux without penalty and contaminated streams with mercury. After seizing the Black Hills in 1877, the federal government dismembered the Great Sioux reservation into four smaller reservations in 1879, coerced native families into accepting 160 acre parcels, and then allotted “extra” agricultural lands to white settlers. During the mid twentieth century, the Army Corps of Engineers constructed a series of dams on the Missouri river, flooding 200,000 acres of Standing Rock Reservation and destroying 90% of the remaining trees. Today, Energy Transfer Partners and the Dakota Access Pipeline threaten the drinkable water at Standing Rock with petrochemical contamination, and have bulldozed sacred cultural sites in the building process. For the Sioux, the Dakota Pipeline represents yet another threat in a long history of genocidal policies.

Great Sioux/Oceti Sakowin territory, and reduction over time

- Land seized by U.S. govt. by the year 1868
- Land seized by 1877
- Land seized by 1889
- Land seized by 1910
- Current Sioux reservation territory
- Other neighboring Native American reservations

In the U.S., the average amount of oil spilled from pipelines annually tops 47k barrels. From July 2015-July 2016 North Dakota had 1,238 reported incidents of oil or oilfield wastewater spills. If the Dakota Access Pipeline leaked oil into the Missouri River, it could reach the Standing Rock Reservation’s principal drinking water intake pipe within hours.

1989: Wounded Knee; Army massacred unarmed Sioux participating in the Ghost Dance spiritual and ecological revitalization movement at Pine Ridge.


Oct. 23, 2016: Oceti Sakowin enacted eminent domain claiming 1851 treaty rights; formed 1851 Treaty Camp to block construction.

Oct. 27, 2016: Protectors forcefully removed after hours-long standoff.

PROTECTOR CAMPS:
1. 1851 Treaty Camp
2. Red Warrior
3. Oceti Sakowin (8k-10k people; 570+ International indigenous groups)
4. Rosebud
5. Sacred Stone

Great Sioux/Oceti Sakowin territory.

Drill pad — where Energy Transfer Partners plans to drill under Missouri River.

turtle Island: sacred hill on which two Sioux women are buried. On Nov. 2, Morton County police used tear gas on Water Protectors to deny access to space, and now keep constant watch.

The Dakota Access Pipeline in Context

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- If the Dakota Access Pipeline leaked oil into the Missouri River, it could reach the Standing Rock Reservation’s principal drinking water intake pipe within hours.

Version 2, 11/27/16. CC BY-SA. Created by M. Roy Cartography in collaboration with the UC Davis Native American Studies Dept. Coordinated by Liza Grandia, Cinthya Ammerman, and Jessa Rae Growing Thunder. Intro by Mike Mortimer. Additional research: Anthony Burris, Kimiora Ward. Sources: U.S. Census (state and res. boundaries); State Historical Society of North Dakota (Treaty Boundaries); National Geographic (land reduction boundaries); Energy Transfer (pipeline route); Seattle Times (alt. route); Members of Oceti Sakowin (camps, recent attacks, and drill pad locations); Pipeline and Haz. Materials Safety Admin. (Spill data). Projection: NAD 83 N Dakota S: This map is printable on 8.5”x11” paper.