

Keystone XL Pipeline

- **PROJECT TYPE:**
Oil pipeline
- **LOCATION:**
Morgan, Montana, through South Dakota to Steele City, Nebraska
- **INVESTMENT COST:**
\$5.3 billion
- **ORIGINAL CONSTRUCTION DATE:**
2012 → delayed over 6 years
- **ORIGINAL OPERATING DATE:**
2014

OVERVIEW

- In July 2008, TransCanada Corporation and ConocoPhillips, joint owners of the Keystone Pipeline, proposed a major extension to the network. Named “Keystone XL” (KXL), the pipeline is planned to transport over 800,000 barrels per day of oil from Alberta, Canada, and the U.S. Bakken Region to Gulf Coast refiners.



Image from [Reuters](#)

- Throughout KXL’s long history, KIITG activists have vigorously opposed the project at every level. Prominent national and regional activist groups including the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC), the Sierra Club, the National Wildlife Federation (NWF), Idle No More and Bold Nebraska mobilized and co-opted local ranchers, landowners and indigenous groups to oppose KXL, prioritizing the pipeline battle “as a way of fighting the reckless and rapid expansion of the tar sands in Canada.”¹

“Moving crude by rail to the Gulf costs twice as much as by pipe...Without Keystone XL, the tar sands industry has cancelled projects rather than shift to rail, subsequently leaving more of the earth’s dirtiest fuel in the ground where it belongs.” – NRDC²

- For more than a decade, KIITG groups have employed a wide range of tactics including protests, rallies, petitions, legal action and regulatory intervention resulting in the extensive and costly delays to the project.
- In January 2013, the Sierra Club Board of Directors approved the use of civil disobedience for the first time in the organization’s 120-year history to protest against Keystone XL.³ One month later, 46 protesters were arrested after handcuffing themselves to the White House fence. Activist Julian Bond told the Washington Post, “When you find that ordinary methods of persuasion are not working, you turn to other methods.”⁴
- Despite numerous federal environmental analyses indicating that KXL will have no adverse impact and has minimal risk to the environment, President Obama rejected the project in 2012. After TransCanada submitted a new application for a new route, President Obama rejected the project again in 2015.
- In March 2017, President Trump and the State Department approved the Keystone XL pipeline.⁵

STATUS:

In November 2018, a federal district court judge ordered work to stop on KXL and required the State Department to update and complete further analysis and justifications for its March 2017 approval of KXL. Opponents continue their legal and public relations assault on the project and the associated permitting process, with new legal challenges at the state and federal level continuing to delay the project.

LOST OPPORTUNITY ECONOMIC IMPACT



\$12.4 ↓
BILLION
in GDP impact*



74,523 ↓
total full-time
equivalent job years*



\$3 ↓
BILLION
in lost tax revenue*

* Number refers to total economic impact from construction/operations/upstream, through August 2018

Sources:
Global Energy Institute analysis
[Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement for Keystone XL \(2014\)](#)

1. [The inside story of the campaign that killed Keystone XL](#), Vox, 11/7/15
2. [What Is the Keystone Pipeline? How a single pipeline project became the epicenter of an enormous environmental battle](#), NRDC article, 4/7/17
3. [How the Sierra Club and its Allies Beat the Keystone XL Pipeline](#), Sierra Club press release, 11/6/15
4. [Activists arrested at White House protesting Keystone pipeline](#), Washington Post, 2/13/13
5. [Trump administration approves Keystone XL pipeline](#), CNN, 3/24/17