

U.S. President-elect Donald Trump on Thursday said for the first time that he supports the completion of a pipeline project near a North Dakota Indian reservation, which has been the subject of months of protests by tribes and environmentalists.

A communications briefing from Trump's transition team said despite media reports that Trump owns a stake in Energy Transfer Partners (ETP.N), the company building the pipeline, Trump's support of the pipeline "has nothing to do with his personal investments and everything to do with promoting policies that benefit all Americans."

Activists have spent months protesting plans to route the \$3.8 billion Dakota Access Pipeline beneath a lake near the Standing Rock Sioux reservation, saying the project poses a threat to water resources and sacred Native American sites.

The 1,172-mile (1,885 km) pipeline project, owned by Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners LP, is mostly complete, except for a segment planned to run under Lake Oahe, a reservoir formed by a dam on the Missouri River.

Now that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers process for permitting the pipeline is nearly complete, experts think it's too late for Obama to intervene.

By law, the decision falls to the Army Corps — not the executive branch — and short of firing the head of that agency, any action by Obama would require considerable overreach, and could be easily overturned by the next president.

Not only that, it could send the message that it's ok for Donald Trump or other presidents to force the hand of independent agencies.

Canada's Trans Mountain Pipeline expansion would nearly triple the amount of Alberta oil transported to the Vancouver-area port just across the water from this tiny First Nation reserve, where the Tsleil-Waututh people are battling a pipeline with far bigger capacity than the bitterly fought-over Keystone and Dakota Access pipelines in the U.S.

The \$6.3 billion expansion would position Canada to be the biggest oil producer in the Americas, and could be approved as soon as Monday by the Trudeau administration.

美國新任總統當選人唐納川普於週四首度針對北達科他印第安保護區的油管計畫發表言論，他表示將支持此運油管興建完成。

川普團隊發佈的新聞簡報指出，儘管媒體報導川普擁有能源轉移合作夥伴公司（Energy Transfer Partners, ETP.N）的股份，該公司正是建設北達科他油管的企業，難免令人質疑當中的利益關係，然而他們強調川普對該輸油管道的支持跟“他的個人投資和促進有利所有美國人的政策”之間毫無關連。

反對者已持續數月抗議此造價38億元美金的達科他輸油管，因油管路線經過立石印地安人保育區（Standing Rock Sioux reservation）的一湖泊下方。他們稱此計畫將危害原始美國保育區的水資源。

此項建造全長1172英里（1885公里）的油管計畫，由美國陸軍工兵隊（Army Corps of Engineers）批准許可建造，德州能源轉移合作夥伴公司負責營建。目前除了歐阿希湖（Lake Oahe，密蘇里河壩形成的人工湖）附近的工程外，其餘油管已幾乎建設完成。根據美國律法，只有美國陸軍工兵隊有權審批此案，專家指出此刻歐巴馬的介入已太晚，無法阻止此工程。即便歐巴馬欲採取行動，勢必遇到許多困難，並且很可能會被下一任總統推翻。

另外一方面，加拿大的越山油管（Trans Mountain Pipeline）擴建項目也同樣遭到許多反對者的示威與抗議。由美國最大的能源基礎設施公司的金德摩根能源（Kinder Morgan）提議的新油管，將以現有油管穿越的道路進行擴建，可使運輸阿爾伯塔瀝青砂油至溫哥華地區港口的原油運輸量擴增三倍，從每天30萬桶原油量增加到89萬桶。該公司並指出，管道比鐵路運輸石油更安全，更便宜。此花費63億美元的擴建計畫將使加拿大成為美洲最大的石油生產國，並可望在周一由加拿大總理特魯多批准。

該興建計畫長期以來各方反彈聲不斷，由於油管行經加拿大原住民保護區的Tsleil-Waututh部落，原住民強烈抗議此案。此外並遭到溫哥華、維多利亞和本那比市長的反對，已經面臨多重訴訟。許多環境組織，包括加拿大綠色和平、卑詩山野俱樂部（Sierra Club BC）和雨林保護基金會（Raincoast Conservation foundation），也都表達了反對立場。

金德摩根能源公司希望明年開始在越山建設，計劃於2019年完工。

參考資料

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