



Dakota Access fight moves to Louisiana's Bayou Bridge pipeline

BY KAREN GRAHAM JAN 22, 2017 IN ENVIRONMENT

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Baton Rouge - The Dakota Access Pipeline fight is not over, but it has expanded to include another pipeline being constructed by Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners. This time, the oil company is seeking approval for the Bayou Bridge Pipeline extension in Louisiana.

Now that Energy Transfer Partners (ETP) has had any further construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline in North Dakota put on hold after the US Army Corps of Engineers announced plans to do an environmental impact study on January 18, 2017, the oil company has turned its efforts southward, to Louisiana.

At a **hearing in Baton Rouge** last week, the crowd of people against the proposed pipeline was almost 50 times larger than previous hearings, according to Scott Eustis, a coastal wetland specialist with the Gulf Restoration Network, who also attended the meeting.

ETP is attempting to build a pipeline extension in Louisiana that would eventually carry crude oil from the DAPL to refineries on the Gulf Coast. Vicki Granado, a spokesperson for ETP told **the Guardian** last week the Bayou Bridge Pipeline

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extension was approved in June 2015.

Corps of Engineers @TeamNewOrleans · Jan 13
 Standing room only during Bayou Bridge Pipeline public hearing. If you have any questions/comments send them to bayoubridge@usace.army.mil.



US Army Corps of Engineers

If the pipeline is approved, it will carry 480,000 barrels of crude oil a day and will run through 11 parishes and cross the Atchafalaya Basin, the world's largest swamp, and 700 bodies of water, including wells that provide drinking water for over 300,000 families.

And, according to Cory Farber, the project manager of the Bayou Bridge pipeline, the project will create 2,500 temporary jobs.

When asked how many jobs would be left after the pipeline was finished, Farber said the project would produce 12 permanent jobs. That statement drew hoots of laughter from the crowd of over 400 people.

While there were plenty of oil industry reps, state representatives, and a retired Louisiana State University professor, all in favor of the pipeline, there were plenty more people there who were against the pipeline, including members of indigenous communities, climate activists, fishermen, and rice farmers.

Basically, Energy Transfer Partners contend that there are already a number of pipelines running through the Atchafalaya Basin, and pipelines are the safest way to transport oil. So it seems that they think one more pipeline won't hurt. But the basin is already damaged and degraded, and most of the rest of us in this country just don't know the extent of that damage.

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Because of the dredging of canals for pipelines, the US Geological Survey reports that the swamplands are degrading at a rate of 29 square miles per year.

The vast area of wetlands is owned by The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (11,780 acres), the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (15,220 acres), and the remaining 17,000 acres is owned by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

They have already warned that if the Army Corps of Engineers approves the project, they will fight back aggressively and the Atchafalaya Basin will be the next Standing Rock, reports the Grist.

Note: The website that references the US Geological Survey's information on the rate of degradation in the Atchafalaya swamplands has been removed.

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