DAKOTA ACCESS PIPELINE (DAPL) ROUTE

Impact on Tribal Lands and Drinking Water in North Dakota

The Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL), a $3.8 billion project stretching over 1,134 miles, has been a controversial project since it was first proposed in 2014 by Dakota Access, a subsidiary of Texas-based Energy Transfer Partners. The original pipeline route, which ran just north of Bismarck and Mandan, the largest urban center in North Dakota, was revised by regulators due to concerns over the impact the pipeline would have on drinking water in the city. The pipeline ran directly through the Missouri River and the City of Bismarck and City of Mandan Public Water System.

The revised and final route drew intense criticism and inspired months of protesting by environmental and Indian rights groups. The revised route runs directly through the South Central Rural Water District for Emmons County, which provides drinking water for the Standing Rock Sioux Reservation to the south. In addition, Native Americans have said that the route runs through sacred burial grounds. The protests, which began in early 2016 with the #NoDAPL hashtag on twitter and led to thousands of protestors at the site of pipeline construction, drew international attention and inspired President Obama to deny an easement for construction in December 2016. However, in one of President Trump’s first actions in office, an executive order was signed authorizing the construction to continue. The pipeline was completed in April 2017 and the first oil was delivered the next month in May.

This map is meant to show how the DAPL route changed after regulators changed the route, and shed light on the impact this new route could have on native populations and drinking water in North Dakota.

Cartography by Zach Levi
Sources: North Dakota GIS Portal Hub; NHGIS DAPL Project Environmental Assessment