

Senator Promoting Dakota Access Pipeline Invests In Bakken Oil Wells Named After Indian Tribe

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U.S. Senator John Hoeven (R-ND) recently [came out in support](#) of the [Dakota Access pipeline](#), the hotly contested Energy Transfer Partners-owned pipeline envisioned to move oil obtained via [hydraulic fracturing \(“fracking”\)](#) from North Dakota’s [Bakken Shale](#) basin. As the pipeline transports oil across North and South Dakota, Iowa, and Illinois, it will cross farms, natural areas, and perhaps most notably, ancestral lands of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, which is [one of several tribes](#) disagreeing with Sen. Hoeven’s assessment that this pipeline is “infrastructure we need.”

What Sen. Hoeven — an [outspoken supporter](#) of TransCanada’s [Keystone XL](#) tar sands pipeline — did not mention, however, is his personal investment in 68 different oil-producing wells in North Dakota under the auspices of the company [Mainstream Investors, LLC](#) according to his most recent congressional [personal financial disclosure form](#).

Seventeen of those wells are owned by [Continental Resources](#), the company whose CEO [Harold Hamm](#) also [serves as a campaign energy adviser](#) to Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump. Those wells have a value of between \$11,000–\$171,000, and 14 of them, named Wahpeton, are located within 18 miles of the [Dakota Access Watford City terminal site](#).

In a twist of irony, Wahpeton is part of the namesake of the [Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe](#), whose reservation sits in southeast North Dakota and northeast South Dakota. The tribe passed a [resolution](#) in 2014 in opposition to the building of the Dakota Access pipeline.



Image Credit: [Sisseton Wahpeton Oyate Tribe](#)

Many Native American tribes have [come out against](#) the pipeline. The Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, whose current reservation is also within a half mile of the proposed pipeline’s path, has [filed a lawsuit and requested a court-ordered injunction](#) in the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia.

However, Sen. Hoeven insists he has been supportive and “respectful” of tribal concerns about consultation during the pipeline permitting process, [despite criticisms from three federal agencies about the process](#) and [continued complaints and protests](#) from tribal members.

Hoeven is a [member](#) of the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs, where he has the responsibility to ensure tribal concerns are heard and adequately addressed. However, not

all of his constituents feel he is living up to this role.

“It is deplorable that Senator Hoeven, and others like him, sit on the U.S. Senate Committee on Indian Affairs,” said Krystal Two Bulls, a participant in the [Red Warrior Camp](#), which has joined up with the [Sacred Stone Camp](#) and is an ongoing encampment situated along the pipeline’s route at the Standing Rock Reservation. “It’s a Committee that should be comprised of people who will look out for the best interest of Indian country, but has turned into a gateway for predators to take advantage of Native American people and their lands.”

Continental has given Sen. Hoeven [\\$10,200](#) in campaign contributions during this campaign cycle, and Hamm and his former wife Sue have given him [\\$8,000](#) in campaign contributions since 2010, according to Oil Change International’s Dirty Energy Money database.

The senator also has hundreds of thousands of dollars’ worth of investments in 33 North Dakota-based oil wells owned by Whiting Petroleum Corporation and hundreds of thousands of dollars more in investments in seven wells owned by ExxonMobil subsidiary XTO Energy. [Both companies](#) have donated generously to his 2016 senate campaign.

“Senator Hoeven makes his decisions based on the merits,” Hoeven spokesman Don Canton said via email when asked if the investments and campaign money influenced his support for the pipeline. “As far as his other investments, they’re all fully disclosed.”

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