

Statement on Standing Rock

Tiffany

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I was asked for my thoughts about the Army Corp informing Chairman Archambault about the easement being denied to drill under the Missouri River in N.D. Before I give those thoughts let me tell you about me and the small part (some say major) I have played.

My name is Tiffany. My Lakota name is Woksape Win (Wise Woman). I'm a Hunkpapa Lakota on my mother's side of my family who are enrolled in the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. I was born south of Cannonball at the IHS in Fort Yates, ND. I was born physically disabled. My mother was pregnant with me in the 1970's.

At that time she resided in the small community of Rock Creek, SD (also known as Bullhead, SD) which is located on the southwest edge of Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. Unbeknownst to my mother the water she drank on a daily basis was filled with poison. The Riley Pass uranium mining was started in 1954 as authorized by the General Mining Law and Public Law 357. Riley pass is located upstream from Rock Creek, SD, Little Eagle, SD - both are communities on Standing Rock Sioux Tribe. It also lies upstream from the Cheyenne River Reservation as well as the Oglala Reservation.

The uranium poison would affect her unborn baby in a way she would never have imagined. I was born in late December of 1975. I was born with missing fingers. The reconstructive surgeries began while I was still a young child at the McKennan's Children Hospital in Sioux Falls, SD. The first few surgeries required me to be in the hospital for close to a year. My family couldn't afford the reconstructive surgeries so they were paid for by the generosity of Shriners.

To this day at the age of 41, at the end of this month, I still require surgeries. The skin at the end of my "nubs" gets thin because they don't have the padding normal fingers do. So the Dr's cut cross sections at the end of each nub, open the flaps and use a small saw to cut bone away. Then they re-sew the flaps together. I often get both hands done at the same time to save on recuperation time.

I have had a difficult time growing up, kids aren't so nice when you're different. But even so I learned to bead and do other things that are difficult for me to do. They often take me longer than the average person, but I still do them.

As I stated previously, I feel I played only a small part. My boyfriend Jon and I welcomed people into our home. I taught them my culture and I taught them what contaminated water can do. I have gone home to Standing Rock several times since the Protectors began camping. Once I even smudged the Indigenous Environmental Networks eagle (their drone) before Dean (Drone2BWild) flew it, which was shortly after his own brand new eagle (drone) was shot down by Morton County officers. That was the day before Thanksgiving I believe.

I believe firmly in our Lakota teachings. I was made aware of a Ceremony the tribe had before the youth runners ran with a petition to Washington, DC. The Ancestor Spirits said to stand strong, stay in prayer and no violence and we would win.

I am one who admittedly cannot stand at the front lines. I openly will admit I do have anger against companies like DAPL because they don't realize the consequences of what those chemicals tainting our drinking water can do. They don't care. I am one of many born with a disability in our area. One of many who has suffered multiple miscarriages. One of many with a strange disease called Lupus. Many have died from cancers as well.

Yet our numbers are miniscule in comparison to their profit. Our lives are meaningless to them. Therefore our voices do not count.

I refused to be at the front lines against my own heart's wishes because of my anger. I believe that it was best for me to stay home and pray. I watched with mixes of pain, sorrow, anger and hope as people were being pepper sprayed, maced, attacked by dogs. I watched as they were pummeled with rubber bullets and doused with water in the cold. And every moment I wished I could tell each Protector do not give up! Your future children, grandchildren and on down the line's future health is stake.

Please don't give up. For the sake of our unborn...do not give up.

I got online late today. First I viewed Kandi Mossett doing a Live FB feed saying that the cops left Turtle Hill and later the cops were supposed to be moving back from the bridge. Kandi cried in her video because she was so happy about the response of the Veterans. I told Kandi in that video "cesniyo (don't cry) it's a good day."

Shortly after that it popped up on my newsfeed that Jaqueline Keeler posted that while it was unofficial, she heard the easement was denied. As I was looking online for more information my friend Madeline Lee called from Florida telling me that MSNBC announced Live that the easement was denied. I turned on MSNBC and recorded part of the news stating yes the easement was denied.

My first reaction was a gasp of shock and then the tears flowed. I soon started laughing because I remembered I had told Kandi *cesniyo* earlier. I am happy the easement was denied. But like all Lakota we grew up with being told by our grandparents what happened in December of 1890, the Massacre of Wounded Knee.

In 1890 my ancestor Hehaka Gleska (the Mnicoujou Chief Spotted Elk, NOT the Oglala Scout Spotted Elk) fled with his band to camp with Red Cloud in what is now known as Wounded Knee, SD. This was shortly after Sitting Bull was killed in what is now known as Rock Creek, SD.

The government told our people to surrender their weapons. Then in a scuffle to unarm a deaf man, the deaf man's gun went off. And then the hell-storm came. Without remorse, what remained of the 7th Cavalry slaughtered almost all the men, women and children. They shot them as they ran in their backs. Some soldiers even lied to children who ran and hid that it was safe to come out. Then they shot them too. They waited 3 days before burying their frozen bodies in a mass grave.

I view the Vets who arrived at home on Standing Rock as our living armor, our living weapons. Not weapons of destruction but weapons of peace and safety. History has been repeating itself in the events unfolding at Standing Rock. That is most especially seen with the lies told by the government. I personally am begging the Vets to stay, I ask that out of fear of history once again repeating itself because ETP responded that today's decision means nothing to them.

Links to Uranium contamination:

http://www.defendblackhills.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=14:report-on-uranium-project&catid=16:uranium&Itemid=27

<http://www.neurotalk.org/archive/index.php/t-20026.html>

<http://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/custergallatin/landmanagement/resourcemanagement/?cid=stelprdb5369160>

<http://www.culturechange.org/cms/content/view/336/65/>

<http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20161204005090/en/Energy-Transfer-Partners-Sunoco-Logistics-Partners-Respond>