



PRESS CONTACT: Nicole E. Ducheneaux
nducheneaux@bigfirelaw.com
(406) 493-4693

July 6, 2020

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lakota Victory! Tribes Stop the Flow of Oil in Dakota Access Pipeline

OMAHA, July 6, 2020 – U.S. District Court Judge James Boasberg has ordered that the Dakota Access Pipeline (“DAPL”) must be shut down and emptied of oil by August 5, 2020, a monumental victory for the Tribes who have been fighting the pipeline since 2016. The Court’s decision accompanies the March 27, 2020 order striking down the permits underlying the DAPL and ordering a full Environmental Impact Statement (“EIS”), including a close analysis of the effects of the DAPL on Tribal treaty and trust resources. After the March decision, the Court ordered briefing on whether the oil could continue to flow during the EIS process. Today’s decision is the result of that briefing.

Big Fire Law & Policy Group, led by Partner Nicole Ducheneaux, has represented the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe since August 2016, when the Tribe joined the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe as co-lead Plaintiffs in this landmark litigation. Ms. Ducheneaux is an enrolled member of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe.

Big Fire Law, along with the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe, is proud to have secured this historic victory. The decision is the culmination of a years-long fight waged by grassroots Native activists on the ground and by Native attorneys in the court to protect the environmental and spiritual purity of the lifegiving waters of the Missouri River – *Mni Sose* in Lakota.

The Court’s order stops the flow of oil until the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completes the EIS, which the Corps claims it can complete in just 13 months. However, Big Fire Law and the Cheyenne River Tribe are confident that the EIS will demonstrate that the pipeline is simply too much of a threat to Tribal treaty and trust resources and must be shut down forever.

“The Court’s decision weighed economic harm to the oil industry against our Treaty right to the clean water that sustains our people and our land and rightly found that the scale tipped dramatically in our favor,” Ms. Ducheneaux commented. **“This fight mostly vanished from the public eye after the No DAPL camp was taken down, but the legal fight continued. The Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe never gave up, never stopped fighting, and never stopped believing that we could win. We will never stop fighting for our water and our rights.”**

###

About Big Fire Law & Policy Group

Big Fire Law & Policy Group is a 100 percent Native-owned, majority Native woman owned law firm dedicated to providing tribal advocacy with integrity. Big Fire provides innovative solutions and culturally competent legal representation and policy advocacy for tribal governments, businesses, non-profits and communities.