

BACKGROUND

SACRED SITES ON THE RED ROAD TO DC

SNAKE RIVER (IDAHO)

Four dams in the lower Snake River have threatened salmon populations for decades, violating the treaty rights of the Nez Perce Tribe—and treaty tribes along the Columbia River—who hold fishing rights in exchange for ceded lands. Tribes and Native groups have long called for the removal of the lower Snake River dams and a comprehensive plan to restore salmon populations. By some estimates, Snake River salmon face extinction in 20 years if no action is taken. Learn more at <https://earthjustice.org/features/remove-four-lower-snake-river-dams>.

BEARS EARS (UTAH)

Tribal members are calling for the restoration and expansion of protections for the original Bears Ears National Monument that were illegally removed during the Trump administration. The Trump administration reduced the Bears Ears National Monument in acreage by 85%. The tribes are suing to reinstate this lost acreage and ultimately wish to expand the area and instate tribes as co-managers of the land. Learn more at <https://bearscoalition.org>.

CHACO CANYON (NEW MEXICO)

The Bureau of Land Management has proposed to permit 4,000 new wells and over 500 new drilling permits under the newly drafted Resource Management Plan in the ancestral homelands of the Navajo and Pueblo nations who have called for the protection of the Greater Chaco Canyon. The region is home to many of the sovereign nations' cultural resources and sacred lands. More than 91% of the public lands surrounding the Chaco Canyon Cultural historic park are already occupied by energy companies under the federal fossil fuel leasing program. Learn more at <https://www.puebloactionalliance.org/protectgreaterchaco>.

BLACK HILLS (SOUTH DAKOTA)

The Black Hills have been sacred to the Lakota and other Native people for thousands of years. Logging roads are now being built in this landscape, destroying sacred places that cannot be restored. The Black Hills have experienced mining, logging, and recreational uses, often in violation of Lakota beliefs. Today, Indigenous groups are calling for the closure of Mount Rushmore and the return of all public lands in the Black Hills into Indigenous control. Learn more at <https://landback.org>.

MISSOURI RIVER (SOUTH DAKOTA)

The Missouri River is a transboundary watershed that is home to sacred cultural sites, medicines, diverse threatened plants and animals, as well as rich cultures spanning two countries, 10 U.S. states and 28 tribal territories. It is a vital water source for millions of people, all of whom are impacted by the pollution of the river. Currently, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers claims sole responsibility for decisions made about the Missouri, a threat in itself say many tribal leaders who

want to restore their rights to be caretakers of the region. Even with the recent cancellation of the Keystone XL pipeline, the Yankton Sioux are still confronting threats to the Missouri River Cultural Bioregion. Traditional leaders want to restore the Ihanktonwan inherent Indigenous rights to be caretakers of the land and water of the region—a model for advancing tribal sovereignty in environmental and cultural protection.

STANDING ROCK (NORTH DAKOTA)

A court ruled that Energy Transfer Partners must conduct a full environmental impact statement, yet more than half a million gallons of oil continues to flow daily through the Dakota Access Pipeline in violation of the court order. This is a violation of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe's treaty rights and a grave threat to the tribe's reserved fishing, hunting, and water rights. Learn more at <https://earthjustice.org/features/faq-standing-rock-litigation>.

LINE 3 (MINNESOTA)

Construction of the Line 3 tar sands crude oil pipeline faces active and growing resistance led by Indigenous groups who see the project as a violation of treaty rights. Oil spills endanger wild rice lakes in treaty territories where the Anishinaabe have the right to hunt, fish, and gather. Learn more at <https://www.stopline3.org>.

LINE 5 (MICHIGAN)

The Bay Mills Indian Community opposes Enbridge's Line 5 pipeline because it violates the Treaty of 1836 and is a threat to their sacred waters. The pipeline, initially given an easement in 1953, has been the center of controversy in the Upper Peninsula for several years. Enbridge has planned to build a tunnel around the pipeline, saying it will protect the Straits of Mackinac from the danger of spills, but that construction would allow the destruction of sensitive wetlands and the placement of structures on the bottomlands within the Straits. These plans and permits have moved forward without tribal consultation. As part of the Treaty of 1836, BMIC reserved for all time the right to fish, hunt, and gather in the ceded land and waters of the state of Michigan—including the ceded waters of Lake Superior, Huron, and Michigan, which includes the Straits of Mackinac. Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer revoked the easement allowing the company to operate on May 12, yet Enbridge continues to operate illegally. Learn more at <https://earthjustice.org/cases/2021/line-5-pipeline>.