



SAID & HEARD

BISMARCK, ND – A snapshot of comments made by state and local officials regarding the situation and concerns with the Dakota Access Pipeline protest camp.



Governor Doug Burgum (State of the State Address, January 3, 2017)

"In recent months, our state has also become immersed in a crisis drawing national attention and attracting numerous out-of-state agitators. The Dakota Access Pipeline protests began with a legitimate debate around issues raised by the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, including protecting our valuable water resources and a desire for genuine government-to-government consultation. Those original concerns have been hijacked by those with alternative agendas."

"Peaceful protest is a protected right of all Americans. However, protesters must respect private property rights, court orders and law enforcement personnel. Acts of vandalism, harassment and trespass are not part of North Dakota's character and will not be tolerated."

"The violent actions of some individuals are certainly straining relationships among the people of North Dakota. And ironically now, some of their actions endanger the waters of the Missouri."

The main protest camp is located directly in the floodplain of the Cannonball and Missouri River confluence. Given the snowfall we're having this winter and historic flood data on the Cannonball River, that camp will likely flood in early March."

"Anything less than a complete restoration of the area prior to the early March flood will endanger the lives of the protesters and of our first responders. It will also create an environmental threat to waters of the Missouri. Chairman Dave Archambault from the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe has repeatedly asked for the remaining protesters to leave. We unequivocally support him in this request."

Cody Schulz, Chairman, Morton County Commission

"Most outside of Morton County may think that because the cameras are gone and the celebrities have stopped showing up that everything has returned to normal here, but make no mistake, there remains a contingent of professional and violent protesters still looking to escalate the ongoing situation in our county and make the lives of our citizens that much more difficult and dangerous. Morton County will continue to work with all levels of law enforcement to root out the criminal element, and hold law breakers accountable. The citizens of our county and state deserve to live in peace without the threat of violence and criminal activity, and working together that will most certainly be accomplished."



Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier

"There are constitutional rights to assemble to protest in the United States. The Morton County Sheriff's Office is here to enable and support those rights. Peaceful protests are not the issue. There are numerous outside groups, some invited and some not. They are participating and are suspected to be causing issues. While they may have come in support of the Standing Rock Sioux Tribe, they are also pushing their own agendas. Tribal leaders have indicated to law enforcement they want a peaceful protest. However, not all protesters have been peaceful. Aggression and actions to incite fear or intimidation are not peaceful activities. The department works to protect life and property. We respond to calls for service, investigate complaints and patrol the county. The result is improved safety and quality of life for the public."