

Empowering Communities so That Every Voice Is Heard



Construction of the first Keystone Pipeline near Yankton, SD

Part of the Plains Justice mission is to work in partnership with northern plains communities so they are fully heard when their air, water, and land are at stake. Two recent examples are our

efforts on the proposed Keystone XL pipeline and proposed South Heart, ND coal projects.

We worked with Dakota Rural Action to get more time for landowners to become intervening parties in the Keystone XL regulatory proceeding at the South Dakota Public Utility Commission. As intervening parties, landowners gain the right to present expert witnesses, file testimony, and question the project developers' experts, so the Public Utilities Commissioners are better informed about the public's interests.

A difficult calving season and extreme weather combined to keep many landowners near the currently proposed route from attending public meetings about the project, much less filing the necessary paperwork to be intervening parties.

Without the time extension, landowners would have had to follow a much more involved late application process, with no guarantee their late applications would be accepted.

Plains Justice similarly helped community members in South Heart, North Dakota. A coal preparation plant, two million-ton-per-day coal mine, and coal to hydrogen to electricity power plant are being planned near their farms and ranches, where there are no coal mines or coal facilities now. Plains Justice, the community group Neighbors United, Dakota Resource Council, and the Sierra Club worked for a public hearing where the public could ask questions and voice their health concerns. More than 100 people attended, including a coal project developer who had resisted past community efforts to interact with him.



Concerned community members packed the room during a public hearing near South Heart, ND

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