

# ND Agency Signals Comfort On Some Pipeline Issues

BY JAMES MACPHERSON  
Associated Press

BISMARCK, N.D. — A Texas company appears to have adequately addressed some of the biggest environmental issues facing its \$3.8 billion pipeline from western North Dakota to Illinois, North Dakota regulators said Monday.

North Dakota's Public Service Commission held an informal work session on Dallas-based Energy Transfer Partners' Dakota Access project, the biggest-capacity pipeline proposed to date to move North Dakota crude across South Dakota and Iowa on its way to Illinois, where crude would be shipped to Midwest and Gulf Coast refineries.

Though the three-member regulatory panel took no action Monday, it signaled approval of the company's plans to address worries about river crossings and returning the land to normal after the pipeline has been placed. It was the first time the panel had met since holding public hearings on the project in Mandan, Killdeer and Williston.

"I'm comfortable with what they are proposing," Commission Chairwoman Julie Fedorchak said. Fellow Republican commissioners Brian Kalk and Randy Christmann also expressed confidence in the company's plans for land reclamation and river crossings.

Almost 360 miles of the 1,130-mile pipeline would pass through North Dakota at a cost of about \$1.4 billion. The steel pipeline will vary in diameter from 12 inches to 30 inches and would be buried at least 4 feet below ground.

The company said the pipeline would carry 450,000 barrels of crude per day and could be expanded to 570,000 barrels daily depending on demand.

The pipeline's path in North Dakota would cross beneath the Little Missouri River once and the Missouri River twice, near Williston and Mandan. The company said the pipeline would include safeguards such as leak detection equipment. Workers monitoring the pipeline remotely in Texas could close block valves on the pipeline within three minutes if a breach is detected, the company said.

Energy Transfer Partners announced

the Dakota Access pipeline last year days after Gov. Jack Dalrymple urged industry and government officials to build more pipelines to keep pace with North Dakota's oil production, saying that would reduce truck and oil train traffic, curb natural gas flaring and create more markets for the state's oil and gas.

Fedorchak said the panel should have a final decision on the company's permit application in the next few months.

The company had hoped to start construction this year and have it operating late next year.

Regulators in South Dakota, Iowa and Illinois still have to approve permit applications in those states.

The company reported Monday that it has acquired 64 percent of the easements needed in North Dakota, up 8 percent from May. The company has said it would use the eminent domain process to acquire other easements if agreements with landowners can't be reached voluntarily.

# Drought Dings Quality Of Winter Wheat

BY ALISON NOON  
Associated Press

HELENA, Mont. — Intense drought conditions have shrunk the kernels and disrupted the proteins of winter wheat crops in Montana, Washington, Oregon and Idaho, the region that produces a fifth of the U.S. harvest.

The National Agricultural Statistics Service classified a large percentage of the region's winter wheat as below-average quality on Monday.

Farmers in the Northwest are nervous that the uncharacteristically low quality of their product could slash the crop's already declining prices.

"The problem is flour is made with the center part of the kernel and if there's not much there they can't make flour out of it," Rick Diehl, a farmer in East Helena, Montana, said. He and other growers in western Montana have observed shriveled kernels and empty beards where kernels never developed in their fields of hard red winter wheat.

Blake Rowe, CEO of the Oregon Wheat Commission and Oregon Wheat Growers League, said the heat wave in

May and June caused Oregon's prominent soft white winter wheat to develop more protein than is desirable for baking products.

"We've had dry years in the past, but if anything is different this year, it's been warmer and warmer for longer," Rowe said. "Growers feel like this is a little out of the norm for a hot, dry year."

Scattered rains helped keep winter wheat from the same fate in six Midwestern states that cultivate half of the nation's winter wheat.

Texas, Oklahoma, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska and South Dakota typically raise winter wheat of slightly lesser quality than the Northwestern states, according to data from the United States Department of Agriculture's statistics arm. But the Midwest is producing more "good" bushels this year than its five-year average, while the Northwest's "good" ratings have dropped nearly 20 percent.

The USDA said in a July 10 national crop report that spring and early summer weather conditions were favorable for winter wheat everywhere but Montana, Idaho, Oregon and Washington.

The latter three states saw their highest June temperatures on record.

"I think earlier on some of the growers were more optimistic, but as the summer's progressed it's gotten drier and drier as the harvest comes up," NASS Northwest Regional Director Chris Mertz said. "They're still waiting to hear what happens when they run the combines out there to see how it's going to be."

Due to the heat and early wheat maturation, farmers in the Northwest began harvesting about three weeks early this year. The true value of the crop will be determined in the coming weeks as growers finish the harvest and receive estimates from grain elevators.

Montana farmer Gary Dabler said he wouldn't be surprised if the region's wheat is less dense, nutritionally off balance or otherwise adversely affected by the drought, but he's waiting for a professional assessment to make a final determination.

"We'll know here in another week what the damage was."

# Bill In The US House Would Make Bison The National Mammal

BY SARA BERTSCH  
Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS — A country's national animal is often an iconic image of the country, its people and their way of life.

In the United States, it's the bald eagle, which is described as majestic and legendary.

Some countries have designated multiple animals as the symbol of their country, like Mexico, which honors an arthropod, mammal, marine mammal and even a national dog.

Some are more whimsical: The national animal of Scotland is the unicorn.

And now the United States may have more than one national animal too.

At the end of June, a bill was re-introduced in the U.S. House to designate the bison as the national mammal of the United States. It's called the National Bison Legacy Act.

This bill was introduced for a second time in the House by Reps. William Lacy Clay of Missouri, Jeff Fortenberry of Nebraska, Jose Serrano of New York and South Dakota's Kristi Noem.

"Bison are an ever-present figure within American history," Noem said in a statement. "Naming this iconic animal as our national mammal is an appropriate

way to solidify their place as an enduring American symbol."

Not only are bison a figure of American history, they appear in several different forms across the country. They are present on Wyoming and Kansas' state flag. And they are on the seal of the Department of the Interior. They have appeared on U.S. currency. And they are the mascot for several sports teams — including North Dakota State University.

The Inter Tribal Buffalo Council, based out of Rapid City, is dedicated to restoring buffaloes in tribal lands since 1992. The council does this in a way that is compatible with the spiritual, cultural beliefs and practices.

Jim Stone, the director of the ITBC, told the Argus Leader that the act is a cooperative effort involving the council, the National Bison Association and the Wildlife Conservation Society to get this act passed.

"The bison deserves respect and recognition," Stone said. "There really is no other species that de-

serves the title of national mammal more."

The National Bison Legacy Act came out of a slightly smaller plan. Initially, there was only going to be a day dedicated to bison in the first week of November, which is also Native American Heritage month. It changed to a national mammal designation.

Becoming the national animal is just one goal supporters hope to obtain. Eventually, Stone said, they hope to develop curriculum around bison and incorporate the idea of the historic animal into the school system.

"A lot of tribes' creation stories involve the buffalo. It's an important cultural icon for tribal people. The opportunity to provide education for what tribes are trying to do," Stone said. "It would be supported. You see the eagle used a lot in science-based curriculum. A lot of that is because it is national symbol."

People all across South Dakota would benefit from this designation, said Bruce Anderson, owner of the Western Buffalo Co. near

Rapid City.

"For those of us that are in the buffalo industry, anything that puts the animal in the spotlight is welcome," Anderson said.

## County Inmate Dies In Custody

SIoux FALLS (AP) — Law enforcement authorities in south-east South Dakota say an inmate died in custody at a county corrections facility.

Minnehaha County jail warden Jeff Gromer on Monday said Nicholas Jon Deutscher died Saturday at the County Corrections Center.

Gromer says the 21-year-old inmate was found unconscious and not breathing Saturday night. Emergency personnel attempted to resuscitate the inmate, but the efforts were unsuccessful. Deutscher was pronounced dead at 7:49 p.m. at the corrections center.

Gromer says Deutscher's death is under investigation and no foul play is suspected. The cause of death has not been determined, but an autopsy and toxicology tests will be part of the investigation.

Deutscher was in custody for two drug possession charges. The corrections center houses the jail overflow and inmates in a work-release program.

## NE Guard Arms Personnel After Shooting

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The Nebraska National Guard is arming more of its personnel after last week's shooting in Tennessee that killed five service members.

Gov. Pete Ricketts said Monday that he has authorized the Nebraska National Guard to arm more personnel where necessary at its installations, including recruitment offices.

Authorities say 24-year-old Muhammad Youssef Abdula-zeez fatally shot five service members at a pair of military sites in Chattanooga before he was killed by police. The first shooting took place at a military recruiting office at a strip mall. Counterterrorism investigators have not released a motive.

Ricketts says his authorization provides additional protections for service members.

## Deputy Shoots Suspect In Salem

SALEM (AP) — Attorney General Marty Jackley says his office is investigating the shooting of a man in Salem by a Mc-Cook County sheriff's deputy.

Jackley says the shooting happened about 10:30 p.m. Sunday, when law officers responded to a call from the Brewery Bar and "the incident escalated."

Bar owner Sheri Greenlee tells KSFY-TV that a man had been acting unruly in the bar, and that he got into a car and ran into another building.

Jackley says Deputy Randy Schwader shot 38-year-old Cornelius Milk, of Salem. Milk was taken to a local hospital with unknown injuries.

## 2 Arrested After Fatal Stabbing

NEBRASKA CITY, Neb. (AP) — Two men are facing charges after a weekend fight left a 21-year-old man dead in a south-east Nebraska town.

Deputy Otoe County Attorney John Palmatag said Jacob Adams died after being stabbed during the Sunday evening fight in Nebraska City. All three men involved are from Nebraska City.

The victim and two other men were fighting on a backyard deck. Adams suffered deep knife wounds to his chest and throat.

## 5 Year Old Girl Drowns In Lake

DE SMET (AP) — Authorities say a 5-year-old girl has drowned in a lake in eastern South Dakota.

The Kingsbury County sheriff's office says the girl drowned Saturday night in Lake Thompson. KSFY-TV reports the sheriff's office says no one else was hurt, but did not release further details.

Elsewhere in the state, authorities reported two other people drowned Saturday in separate incidents in Rapid City and in the Missouri River in southeastern South Dakota.

## NU To Offer Virtual Scholars Program

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — The University of Nebraska is offering 150 scholarships to high schools for students who want to enroll in the Nebraska Virtual Scholars program.

University President Hank Bounds announced Monday that schools can apply for scholarships on behalf of their students for the 2015-16 school year. The scholarships will allow students to take courses from the University of Nebraska High School for free.

All Nebraska high schools are eligible to apply. Applications will be accepted through Oct. 2, and recipients will be announced by Oct. 9.

The university launched the Nebraska Virtual Scholars program in 2011 to expand access to online courses for Nebraska high school students.

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