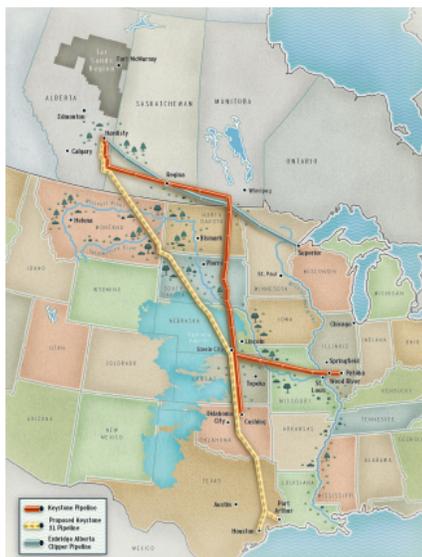


## President Obama Denies Keystone XL Pipeline Permit in Rare Environmental Victory

By *Anna Sanders*  
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Map: Peter Hoey

President Obama announced yesterday [1] his decision to deny a permit for the Keystone XL pipeline, which would have carried 700,000 barrels of crude oil a day from northern Alberta in Canada to refineries in the states, extending to the Gulf Coast in Texas.

“This announcement is not a judgment on the merits of the pipeline, but the arbitrary nature of a deadline that prevented the State Department from gathering the information necessary to approve the project and protect the American people,” said President Obama in the statement.

The announcement is a victory for environmental groups and activists, who have rallied against the 1,661-mile-long pipeline since the State Department began considering Keystone XL for approval more than three years ago. “This was a gutsy call by the President,” said Audubon President David Yarnold in a

statement [2]. “But it was also a victory for common sense. You don’t pipe potentially lethal goo through one of America’s largest wetland ecosystems.”

Opposition to the pipeline not only stemmed from concern for ecosystems in its path, but for America’s reliance on energy from Canada’s tar sands, which require more energy—and consequently producing more pollution—to turn into useable crude oil.

“Approving XL is like sanctioning a drug cartel to fuel future oil addiction,” said Yarnold in “An Open Letter to Secretary Clinton: KO Keystone XL” [3] last October. “Making today’s oil just a gateway drug to the nasty bitumen from tar sands,” But the pipeline’s supporters believe the potential for construction jobs outweigh the costs.

“I’m deeply, deeply disappointed that our President decided to put his politics above the nation’s job creation and energy independence,” said Rep. Lee Terry of Nebraska in a statement [4]. Foreseeing such criticism, the President also vowed in his announcement to

continue to invest in domestic energy alternatives, stating that, "We will do so in a way that benefits American workers and businesses without risking the health and safety of the American people and the environment."

For more on the decision, see:

"Rejecting Pipeline Proposal, Obama Blames Congress" [5]  
(*The New York Times*)

"President Obama's Keystone XL Decision Swells Green Group Love To 'High Water Mark'" [6]  
(*The Huffington Post*)

"Keystone decision ripples in Kaine-Allen race" [7] (*The Washington Post*)

"Bill McKibben, the man who crushed the Keystone XL pipeline" [8] (*Globe Magazine*)

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"Today's Updates: Keystone Pipeline, Pecan Thievery" [10]

"State Department Delays Keystone XL Pipeline Decision" [11]

[Energy](#) [Nature](#) [Policy](#) [Wildlife](#)

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**Links:**

[1] <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2012/01/18/statement-president-keystone-xl-pipeline>

[2] <http://www.audubon.org/newsroom/press-releases/2012/audubon-president-says-obama-keystone-decision-victory-common-sense>

[3] [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-yarnold/keystone-xl-pipeline-approval\\_b\\_1005000.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-yarnold/keystone-xl-pipeline-approval_b_1005000.html)

[4] [http://leeterry.house.gov/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=2016:terry-statement-on-keystone-xl-permit-denial&catid=3:press-releases](http://leeterry.house.gov/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=2016:terry-statement-on-keystone-xl-permit-denial&catid=3:press-releases)

[5] [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/19/us/state-dept-to-put-oil-pipeline-on-hold.html?\\_r=1&ref=keystonepipeline](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/19/us/state-dept-to-put-oil-pipeline-on-hold.html?_r=1&ref=keystonepipeline)

[6] [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/18/obama-keystone-xl-environmental-groups\\_n\\_1214816.html?ir=Green](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/18/obama-keystone-xl-environmental-groups_n_1214816.html?ir=Green)

[7] [http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/virginia-politics/post/keystone-decision-ripples-in-kaine-allen-race/2012/01/18/gIQAqsY78P\\_blog.html?wprss=rss\\_linkset&tid=sm\\_twitter\\_washingtonpost](http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/virginia-politics/post/keystone-decision-ripples-in-kaine-allen-race/2012/01/18/gIQAqsY78P_blog.html?wprss=rss_linkset&tid=sm_twitter_washingtonpost)

[8] <http://www.bostonglobe.com/magazine/2012/01/22/bill-mckibben-man-who-crushed-keystone-pipeline/HkXTD01Z6bXLvibbf8piGK/story.html>

[9] <http://archive.audubonmagazine.org/incite/incite1107.html>

[10] <http://magblog.audubon.org/today%E2%80%99s-updates-keystone-pipeline-pecan-thievery>

[11] <http://magblog.audubon.org/state-department-delays-keystone-xl-pipeline-decision>