July 14, 2016

Col. Craig Baumgartner, District Commander

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Clock Tower Building
P.O. Box 2004
Rock Island, Illinois 61204-2004

Dear Col. Baumgartner:

Without doubt, you have received many messages regarding the Bakken pipeline. I hope you will not discard this one without considering new information of which you may not be aware,

A recently released study reported in Geophysical Research Letters and partially funded by NOAA’s Climate Program Office found that the Bakken Formation is responsible for roughly 2 percent of the globe's ethane--about 250,000 tons per year.  As you know, ethane harms human health and heats the atmosphere.

As you and you colleagues make your decision on the Bakken pipeline, I hope you will take this recent study into consideration. As the world’s nations struggle to slow disastrous climate change, it would be unconscionable to ignore the impact of the Bakken oil field.

***Abstract:***

Ethane is the second most abundant atmospheric hydrocarbon, exerts a strong influence on tropospheric ozone, and reduces the atmosphere's oxidative capacity. Global observations showed declining ethane abundances from 1984 to 2010, while a regional measurement indicated increasing levels since 2009, with the reason for this subject to speculation. The Bakken shale is an oil and gas-producing formation centered in North Dakota that experienced a rapid increase in production beginning in 2010. We use airborne data collected over the North Dakota portion of the Bakken shale in 2014 to calculate ethane emissions of 0.23 ± 0.07 (2σ) Tg/yr, equivalent to 1-3% of total global sources. Emissions of this magnitude impact air quality via concurrent increases .in tropospheric ozone. This recently developed large ethane source from one location illustrates the key role of shale oil and gas production in rising global ethane levels.

Access the full paper: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/2016GL068703/full>

In the context of other endangerments this pipeline brings, such as the threat of leaks, permitting the Bakken will be a catastrophe that the State of Iowa cannot afford.

Please don’t disregard the very real threat of leaks -- within the past 12 months some 143,000 gallons of crude oil spilled on a beach near Santa Barbara, California. Nearly 90,000 gallons leaked into the Gulf of Mexico in May. More than 20,000 gallons in the San Joaquin Valley a few weeks later, added to the 21,000 gallons spilled from the *same pipeline* last year. And a few weeks ago, nearly 30,000 gallons of crude oil gushed from a ruptured pipeline near a beach in Ventura, California. Inform yourself of the consequences of the Kalamazoo River leak, the Mayflower, Arkansas, spill, the Yellowstone River pipeline break, and numerous others.

Please do not place Iowa into danger. My fellow members in 100Grannies.org for a Livable Future join me in this request that you protect Iowa’s water and air for our children and grandchildren – *and yours.*

Cordially,

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CC: Lt. Col. Phillip Fleming
  Deputy District Commander

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