

The loony anti-Keystone campaign

It is *the* symbol of Big Green's diehard opposition to hydrocarbons and modern living standards

Paul Driessen

What *is* this incessant nonsense over Keystone XL?

It's a *pipeline*, for crying out loud. The United States already has 185,000 miles of liquid petroleum pipelines, 320,000 miles of natural gas transmission pipelines, and more than 2,000,000 miles of gas distribution pipelines. Using the latest steel, valves and other technologies to build another 1,179 miles of pipe – to move 830,000 barrels of oil per day safely from Alberta, Canada oil sands country and North Dakota's Bakken shale territory to Texas refineries – should not be an earth-shattering matter.

KXL would **create jobs** – in an economy that grew at a pathetic Depression-era clip of 0.1% during the first quarter, and where the [true jobless rate](#) (unemployed, under-employed and those no longer looking) is almost 13 percent, and much worse for minorities.

In fact, Keystone would create some 20,000 construction jobs; another 10,000 in factories that make the steel, pipelines, valves, cement and heavy equipment needed to build the pipeline; thousands more in hotel, restaurant and other support industries; and still more in oil fields whose output would be transported to refineries and petrochemical plants where even more workers would be employed.

States along the pipeline route would receive \$5 billion in new property **tax revenues**, and still more in workers' income tax payments. Depleted federal coffers would also realize hefty gains.

The pipeline would **ease railroad congestion** all over the central USA. The pipeline's absence is forcing oil producers to move crude by railroad tanker car. That certainly improves the bottom line for RR companies and folks like [Warren Buffet](#) who have big-time investments in tankers.

But it causes train logjams and delays that are creating backlogs in getting fertilizer and other supplies to farmers, who have already been hard-hit by a long winter and now may not be able to plant on schedule. Come fall, their efforts to ship corn, wheat and other crops to market will also be stymied.

By reducing the need for RR tankers, KXL would also reduce oil spills and **improve safety**. A 2013 derailment in Quebec killed 47 people; 2014 rail accidents in Colorado and Virginia resulted in significant oil spills but fortunately no deaths. The Bakken Field's light crude contains more dissolved gases and thus is more flammable than heavier crudes (like Canadian oil sands output), but both tanker cars and the Keystone pipeline would carry a variety of crude products.

Improved track maintenance, train scheduling and other safety practices would reduce rail accidents and spills. However, as US State Department studies point out, the Keystone pipeline is inherently safer than RR alternatives – and would likely result in fewer than 520 barrels of crude being spilled annually, compared to 32,000 barrels in the three rail spills just noted.

KXL will make North America more **energy independent**, further improve US **balance of trade**, reduce global supply and demand imbalances, augment America's **national security**, and aid our European allies in their quest to counter Vladimir Putin's energy blackmail.

The hydrocarbon wealth the pipeline would transport will help ensure **improved human health**, welfare, living standards and other [many other benefits](#), in a more stable world that has more sources of jobs, wealth and income equality. Approval would [improve relations](#) with our ally and trading partner Canada. Not tapping and safely transporting all these oil, natural gas and propane resources makes no sense.

But despite all these solid reasons for building the pipeline President Obama refuses to approve it, even to protect vulnerable Democrat politicians, for fear of offending ultra Keystone hater Tom Steyer or losing his hardcore eco-base. Senator Harry Reid can hardly bring himself to allow even votes on nonbinding resolutions in support of KXL. And rabid environmentalists say they're prepared to *go to jail* over it.

What in blazes is going on here?

Keystone is *symbolic*! In fact, it has become *the* symbol of Big Green environmentalism's immutable opposition to ... and hatred of ... anything hydrocarbon. KXL is fracking, oil sands, onshore and offshore drilling and, above all, "catastrophic manmade climate disruption" (the latest *nom de guerre*, since the global warming and climate change monikers and models have abjectly failed to reflect climate reality).

KXL represents their determination to de-develop the United States, control our lives and livelihoods, reduce our energy use and living standards, redistribute wealth – and permit Third World development only in accordance with their supposed "sustainable development" and "renewable" energy "principles."

Anti-Keystone XL arguments are as phony as a \$3 bill. Blocking its construction will have about as much effect on Earth's climate as a hand grenade would in stopping a hurricane, even if carbon dioxide does influence weather and climate change far more than thousands of scientists say it does.

(More than [1,000 climate scientists](#), [31,000 American scientists](#) and [48% of US meteorologists](#) say there is no evidence that humans are causing dangerous warming or climate change. And it is increasingly obvious that much of the remaining "consensus" is obtained by harassing, [intimidating and blacklisting](#) any scientists who might be tempted to stray from the alarmist party line.)

China, India, Indonesia, Brazil and dozens of other countries are burning coal, driving cars, modernizing their hydrocarbon-based economies and emitting CO₂ at a fevered pace. Further delaying or ultimately blocking Keystone will have no effect, especially if the oil simply goes to Asia, instead of the USA.

However, Big Green has staked its power and reputation on Keystone – and it will not back down.

This \$13.4-billion-per-year US eco industry is determined to block the Keystone pipeline. As *Washington Examiner* columnist [Ron Arnold revealed](#), the \$789-million Rockefeller Brothers Fund launched its "tar sands" and pipeline campaigns in 2008. It funded a dozen attack groups, told them what the Fund wanted done, and presented the strategy and tactics for mobilizing the troops, inventing and spotlighting the pipeline's alleged dangers, recruiting always-helpful media allies, and slowing and stopping KXL.

The campaigns are backed up by other wealthy liberal foundations that collectively have more than \$100 billion in assets! As Arnold pointed out, they gave more than \$80 billion to some 16,000 American environmental activist groups between 2000 and 2012 – and those groups were also supported by over \$100 million in grants from *US government agencies*!

Hedge fund billionaire Tom Steyer has promised to give \$100 million to anti-Keystone Democrats. [Law firms](#) are making serious money filing lawsuits against KXL. And of course [Hollywood elites](#) can always be counted on to lend their support and innate grasp of energy and economic issues to pipeline opponents.

This is a force to be reckoned with, a force that has helped inflict nearly \$1.9 trillion in regulatory compliance costs on United States businesses and families. That's one-eighth of the entire US economy. It's no wonder job, economic and investment growth rates are so miserably low.

President Obama and other Democrats, environmentalists and liberals love to expound on how compassionate and socially responsible they are. How devoted to justice, workers, middle class families, jobs, and human health, safety and welfare. How honest, transparent, respectful of others' opinions and needs, and accountable for their mistakes and failures.

Am I the only one who sees pitifully little evidence for any of these self-proclaimed saintly attributes?

Keystone epitomizes how callous, arrogant, hypocritical and destructive the Big Green authoritarians have become. It's high time the rights and needs of poor and middle class families got some recognition.

Paul Driessen is senior policy analyst for the Committee For A Constructive Tomorrow (www.CFACT.org) and author of *Eco-Imperialism: Green power - Black death*.