
Massachusetts residents block construction of Kinder Morgan Northeast Energy Direct pipeline 2014-2016

- [local community or neighborhood-level campaign](#) [1]

Timing

27 February

2014

to:

3 May

2016

Location and Goals

Country:

United States

Location City/State/Province:

Massachusetts

Location Description:

Although this case focuses on the actions of Massachusetts residents, it's important to note that protests against the interstate pipeline occurred in other regions that it was proposed to pass through, such as New Hampshire and New York.

[View Location on Map](#)

Goals:

To stop the Kinder Morgan Northeast Energy Direct pipeline and continue to stop the expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the Northeast states. To promote energy efficiency and sustainable, renewable sources of energy and local, permanent jobs in a clean energy economy.

Methods

Methods in 1st segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 009. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support

- 048. Protest meetings
- 051. Walk-outs
- 062. Student strike
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides

Methods in 2nd segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 163. Stand-in

Methods in 3rd segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 024. Symbolic lights
- 034. Vigils
- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings
- 050. Teach-ins
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance
- 142. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
- 162. Sit-in
- 163. Stand-in

Methods in 4th segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 002. Letters of opposition or support

- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 010. Newspapers and journals
- 011. Records, radio, and television
- 015. Group lobbying
- 016. Picketing
- 018. Displays of flags and symbolic colors
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 024. Symbolic lights
- 026. Paint as protest
- 034. Vigils
- 035. Humorous skits and pranks
- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 041. Pilgrimages
- 042. Motorcades
- 047. Assemblies of protest or support
- 048. Protest meetings
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Methods in 5th segment:

- 001. Public speeches
- 003. Declarations by organizations and institutions
- 006. Group or mass petitions
- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
- 015. Group lobbying
- 016. Picketing
- 020. Prayer and worship
- 024. Symbolic lights
- 026. Paint as protest
- 032. Taunting officials
- 034. Vigils
- 035. Humorous skits and pranks
- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 052. Silence>Silent solidarity march from Plainfield, MA to Cummington, MA.
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Methods in 6th segment:

- 007. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
- 008. Banners, posters, and displayed communications

- 016. Picketing
- 024. Symbolic lights
- 028. Symbolic sounds
- 034. Vigils
- 036. Performances of plays and music
- 037. Singing
- 038. Marches
- 121. Refusal of public support
- 122. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

Notes on Methods:

Most actions took place in Massachusetts, but some occurred in New York and New Hampshire.

Segment Length:

5 months

Classifications

Classification:

Change

Defense

Cluster:

Environment

Group characterization:

- Environmentalists
- Massachusetts residents
- board members from towns across Massachusetts

Leaders, partners, allies, elites

Leaders:

No Fracked Gas in Mass

Partners:

Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT), 350MA, Toxics Action Center, Clean Water Action, Climate Action Now, Massachusetts Pipeline Awareness Network (MassPLAN), Berkshire Environmental Action Team, Stop Northeast Energy Direct (StopNED), Conservation Law Foundation, Mass Audubon, the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions, Wendell Board of Health

External allies:

Green Alliance to Stop the Pipelines (GASP), Nashoba Conservation Trust, Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, Millers River Watershed Council, North Quabbin Pipeline Action, Northfield Against the Pipeline, Stop the Pipeline Boylston, Wilmington Pipeline Awareness, Dracut Pipeline Awareness, Berlin Pipeline Study Committee, Hilltown Community Rights of Ashfield, Stop the Pipeline Coordinating Committee of Groton, 350NH, New Hampshire Pipeline Awareness Network (NHPlan), No Pipeline In Southern New Hampshire, Stop NH Pipeline

Involvement of social elites:

Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey, Former Massachusetts Attorney General Martha Coakley, Massachusetts Senate President Stanley Rosenberg (D-Amherst), Senator Benjamin Downing (D-Pittsfield), Senator Elizabeth Warren, Senator Ed Makey, Rep. James McGovern (D-Worcester), Rep. Stephen Kulik (D-

Worthington), Rep. Paul Mark (D-Peru), Rep. Gailanne Cariddi (D-North Adams), Rep. Susannah Whipps-lee (R-Athol), Rep. Ellen Story (D-Amherst), Rep. Smitty Pignatelli (D-Berkshire), Rep. Denise Andrews (D-Franklin), Rep. Anne Gobi (D-Spencer), Rep. Sheila Harrington (R-Groton)

Joining/exiting order of social groups

Groups in 1st Segment:

- Berkshire Environmental Action Team
- No Fracked Gas in Mass

Groups in 2nd Segment:

Groups in 3rd Segment:

Groups in 4th Segment:

Groups in 5th Segment:

Groups in 6th Segment:

Segment Length:

5 months

Opponent, Opponent Responses, and Violence

Opponents:

Kinder Morgan, Tennessee Gas Pipeline Co., Northeast Energy Direct (NED) LLC, New England natural gas companies, union laborers

Nonviolent responses of opponent:

No nonviolent responses of opponent.

Campaigner violence:

No campaigner violence.

Repressive Violence:

No repressive violence.

Success Outcome

Success in achieving specific demands/goals:

5 points out of 6 points

Survival:

1 point out of 1 points

Growth:

3 points out of 3 points

Total points:

9 out of 10 points

Notes on outcomes:

No Fracked Gas in Mass successfully completed its original goal of defeating the Kinder Morgan Northeast Energy Direct pipeline, but continues to stop expansion of fossil fuel infrastructure in the Northeast. The group also fights for sustainable and renewable sources of energy and clean energy jobs.

In September 2014, Tennessee Gas Pipeline Company, L.L.C. (TGP), a subsidiary of Kinder Morgan Energy

Partners, L.P., proposed a 346-mile pipeline to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). The proposal included two paths: a 220-mile “supply path” and a 126-mile “market path”. The Kinder Morgan Northeast Energy Direct pipeline (NED) would supply natural gas from fracking fields in Pennsylvania to energy companies in New England. TGP was a well-known gas supplier, having operated in the New England region for over 60 years.

NED was proposed to carry 2 billion cubic feet of gas per day through a 30- or 36-inch diameter pipeline. The supply path would go from the Marcellus region in Pennsylvania to Wright, NY. From there, the fracked gas would travel to Dracut, MA through the market path. The NED fact sheet, published by Kinder Morgan, claimed the pipeline was necessary to meet increased demands for natural gas in New England. Kinder Morgan asserted that NED would lower natural gas and electricity prices while also improving economic development through job opportunities.

In January 2014, six New England governors announced a plan to propose an unprecedented energy tariff to subsidize NED. Berkshire Environmental Action Team (BEAT) was the first group to publicly speak out against NED after learning about the project early in its development. BEAT, whose goal was to protect the environment for wildlife, rejected the pipeline on the grounds that it would destroy forests and wetlands. BEAT launched No Fracked Gas in Mass in February 2014 to strengthen the campaign against NED.

Spearheaded by Rosemary Wessel and Katy Eiseman, No Fracked Mass aimed to stop construction of the market path and prevent the spread of natural gas infrastructure in New England. The organization also protested the compressor stations that would be constructed to keep the natural gas constantly pressurized.

Beginning in February 2014, No Fracked Gas in Mass hosted calls to action against NED. The first documented action occurred on 27 February 2014 and consisted of a radio segment on Valley Free Radio with Bruce Winn, of BEAT, and Rosemary Wessel about the pipeline. No Fracked Gas launched its first rally action on 15 May 2014 in Greenfield, MA. The rally and march accompanied a Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) meeting designed to help officials from towns on the proposed route learn about NED’s status.

Following BEAT and No Fracked Gas, ratepayers across Massachusetts formed opposition groups against the tariff and pipeline. On 9 May 2014, over 100 Sandisfield residents rallied against the pipeline at a town meeting with Kinder Morgan representatives. Sandisfield was familiar with Kinder Morgan after the construction of a TGP pipeline in 1981. Residents founded Sandisfield Taxpayers Oppose the Pipeline (STOP), claiming NED would decrease property values and alter the town’s natural beauty. According to the group, landowners would be forced to pay property taxes on land that could only be used by Kinder Morgan for NED.

On 24 June 2014, the Conservation Law Foundation (CLF) released a report claiming closed door meetings with energy companies led to the governors’ tariff, which was officially proposed in August 2014, two months before FERC’s approval of NED. New Englanders protested the tariff because they argued that it was unfair to charge electric ratepayers for the construction of energy infrastructure.

Throughout the proposal process, other groups began to join No Fracked Gas in protest. 350 Massachusetts (350MA) Berkshire County claimed the pipeline would be harmful to land and waterways protected by state law and would pass through private properties. The group argued that Kinder Morgan’s presentation of natural gas as a clean source of energy was false. Both No Fracked Gas and 350MA argued the demand for energy was not as high as TGP’s commissioned study claimed and that natural gas was a greater source of pollution than Massachusetts's current grid system.

Municipalities held protests and town meetings to protest Kinder Morgan’s proposed pipeline route that passed

through communities in western and central Massachusetts. On 30 June 2014, Pepperell, MA and Groton, MA residents voted against NED at Special Town Meeting sessions; although these decisions were non-binding, they indicated widespread public discontent. On 1 July 2014, officials from nine of the affected communities met with state Representative Sheila C. Harrington's office to organize a coalition against the pipeline. Massachusetts residents claimed Kinder Morgan had requested federal land survey requests before contacting property owners and local officials. Some New Hampshire residents claimed NED blueprints showed the pipeline running through their homes, indicating that their houses would be demolished. Numerous municipalities within Berkshire and Franklin counties passed resolutions throughout 2014 and 2015 to ban NED.

In December 2014, Kinder Morgan announced it would re-route the pipeline through areas of northern and southern Massachusetts. A total of 14 Massachusetts towns, from Dracut to Northfield, were removed from NED's path. However, the new route would pass through four Massachusetts towns not originally affected by the pipeline. Residents from the towns that were removed from the plan pledged their support to other towns fighting against the pipeline.

On 29 July 2015, FERC held a scoping session on NED in Greenfield, MA. At this session, FERC decided which issues to include in its Environmental Impact Survey (EIS) of the project. Approximately 600 people attended the meeting, and about 100 Massachusetts residents delivered testimonies about the potential environmental destruction that would occur if the company constructed the pipeline. Local officials also provided testimony and Rep. James McGovern (D-Worcester) submitted a statement referencing the need for Massachusetts Attorney General Maura Healey's environmental study before making any decisions.

Despite protest some Massachusetts residents believed the pipeline would promote economic growth by bringing new jobs to the region. Holyoke union workers from Local 596 cited concerns around the recent closing of a coal fired power plant during the 29 July FERC session. They believed the pipeline would bring 2,500 to 3,000 new jobs to the region and the construction of a gas-fueled power plant to replace the coal plant, fulfilling Kinder Morgan's promise of increased job opportunities.

No Fracked Gas hosted a rally at Boston Commons on 30 July 2015, one day after the FERC meeting. Nearly 500 people attended the rally. During the event, protesters participated in lobbying workshops and delivered a petition to the governor. The Boston Commons rally was part of a month-long rolling rally that took place in various Massachusetts counties including: Berkshire, Worcester, and Franklin. These actions demonstrated coalition building and overwhelming public discontent for the project. State officials attended and expressed their skepticism over NED. Federal officials also responded to the protesters' concerns by releasing disapproving statements. For example, U.S. Senator Elizabeth Warren declared that new energy infrastructure must be consistent with the state's commitment to preservation, implying NED was not.

Towns affected by NED held town hall meetings throughout 2015 to educate residents about the pipeline and establish strategic actions against Kinder Morgan. For instance, Jonathan Mark facilitated a meeting in Greenfield, MA to consider a referendum initiative aimed at stopping the construction of NED and protecting residents from land seizure carried out under corporate claims of eminent domain. Gill Energy Commission and North Quabbin Pipeline Action (NQPA) hosted an informational meeting in Gill, MA on 17 September to address the proposed Northfield compressor station and provide NED updates. In addition, weekly picketing took place at the Kinder Morgan office in Pittsfield, MA and weekly compressor site vigils occurred in Northfield, MA to facilitate relationship building amongst pipeline protesters.

On 10 November 2015, the Massachusetts State House held a hearing on a bill proposed by TGP that would revoke the conservation status of Otis State Park in Sandisfield, MA and allow the company to build a pipeline through 30-acres of the park for construction of the Connecticut Expansion Project, a component of NED.

Approximately 63 environmental organizations submitted written testimony against the bill. Residents of the Berkshires chartered a bus and held a rally on the State House steps prior to the hearing to protest destruction of the park. Nearly 30 towns in Berkshire County passed legislation against NED.

Action flyer

[Image](#) [2] source.

In April 2016, Kinder Morgan announced it would discontinue construction of NED and formally withdrew its proposal from FERC on 23 May 2016. No Fracked Gas in Mass held a large rally and pizza party on the steps of the Boston Statehouse on 3 May 2016 to celebrate Kinder Morgan's April announcement. The rally also focused on influencing legislators to pass legislation investing in clean energy and reducing emissions. Protesters were encouraged to attend the Global Warming Committee Hearing. Today, No Fracked Gas in Mass continues to fight for clean, renewable energy in the New England area. Its broader mission is to end the development of fossil fuel infrastructure in New England and promote sustainability and energy efficiency.

Research Notes

Influences:

Massachusetts residents were influenced by campaigns against pipeline construction in other regions. (1)

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Additional Notes:

To learn more about this campaign visit <http://www.nofrackedgasinmass.org/>.

Name of researcher, and date dd/mm/yyyy:

Shayla Smith 15/02/2017

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