

# Nebraska welcomes new pipeline route

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An oil extraction facility near the town of Fort McMurray in Alberta Province, Canada. Nebraska's governor on Tuesday welcomed a controversial US-Canada pipeline now that it will be rerouted away from the state's sensitive wetlands, but environmentalists vowed to keep up the fight.

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Governor Dave Heineman said he hoped the Keystone XL pipeline project could move forward as quickly as possible and disagrees with "environmental leftists groups that oppose the pipeline no matter what."

"I supported the pipeline -- I opposed the route," Heineman told reporters. "Now the route's going to change, we can go forward with the pipeline."

Pipeline operator TransCanada Corp on Monday agreed to reroute the

pipeline after Nebraska lawmakers introduced legislation aimed at protecting the state's Sand Hills area, which features important wetlands and a sensitive ecosystem.

The move came shortly after President Barack Obama's administration delayed the project, saying it needed more time to assess the pipeline's environmental implications and warning that a final decision may not come until 2013.

The State Department said last week its move was based on specific concerns about the Sand Hills area, which is along the proposed pipeline route from Canada's Alberta province to refineries in Texas.

The decision to change the route will not change the department's "thorough, rigorous and transparent review process," spokesman Mark Toner said Monday.

Activists fear an accident along the 1,700-mile (2,700-kilometer) pipeline would be disastrous for aquifers in central US Great Plains states.

Others oppose the \$13 billion project because exploiting the [tar sands](#) requires energy that generates a large volume of [greenhouse gases](#).

The National Resource Defense Council applauded Nebraska's victory in protecting the Sand Hills, and vowed to continue to oppose the project in order to protect the climate.

"Now we need TransCanada to listen to the American people tell them 'no' to the pipeline as a whole," Susan Casey-Lefkowitz, international program director, wrote in a blog post.

"What Nebraska will see is that there is no safe route for a leaky tar

sands pipeline through any of their farms and communities. And what the nation knows is that we can't fight climate change and build yet another tar sands oil [pipeline](#)."

The environmental group Bold Nebraska also vowed to carry on the fight.

"We do not trust TransCanada. They have bullied and misled landowners and citizens," founder Jane Kleeb said in a statement. "Because of that we will be watching them like a hawk to ensure our land and water are protected."

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