

From: Andrew Russo [REDACTED]

Date: Thu, Jun 27, 2024 at 12:39 PM

Subject: Unconstitutional Eminent Domain Attempt- Please stand with South Dakotans

To: Campaign Kristie

Kristi:

I am a citizen of Codington County. I have 40 acres total, 30 of which flood frequently. My home and barns (over 100 years old) are on some of the dry ground, and the remainder is my 6 acre native tree nursery. I am growing trees native to the great plains, on the great plains. You will have a very hard time finding another field grown nursery in South Dakota. I do, however, encourage you to look into how much work field production of nursery trees is. I moved back after nearly 15 years in Montana. I want to produce resilient, prairie-hardy trees for landowners. This is a problem the state faces, as nearly every tree is shipped in from Minnesota, Michigan and Wisconsin to be immediately sold, planted and left to anguish in the persistent prairie wind. I have a nursery license and have been in good standing since October 2021.

The summit pipeline is planning to go through not only my nursery, and fence but also several acres of prime agricultural land I own. This would remove a potential \$20,000 gross in inventory annually .

I have no employees. My wife works remotely and helps me part time. If I lose this acreage my nursery is not profitable, I purchased this land because it is what I NEED to do business. I paid for a well (application is in for a water right,) this will be my third year reporting irrigation usage to the South Dakota Water Program. I paid for an 8' tall woven wire deer fence to be installed. It is built from oil drill pipe pounded 4' into the ground. I did not receive any subsidies or incentives (even during record inflation, after paying asinine prices for real estate to be in the state where I grew up in there were no programs for tree nurseries.) I bought all my equipment, owe money on my tractor and have paid tens of thousands of dollars for tree seedlings, seeds, containers and hundreds of yards of mulch for organic weed control and water conservation.

This pipeline will put me out of business. It may take some time, but if this pipeline goes through we will once again leave South Dakota, taking my wifes remote income and starting a nursery in a different state. There is no point in buying land in South Dakota if the government can simply take my land and give it to a private enterprise when they have the opportunity for some money. I have never been so angry, afraid and uncertain. I invested everything I had in South Dakota, only to be wondering if I will have anything to show for it other than a hatred for the government, the ethanol industry and myself for falling for the "free-est state" in American bull #\$*!.

Lets at least stop pretending this is about the environment. The pipeline is slated to take out a good percentage of a nursery I planned to grow trees in for the next 35 years (I am only 35.) To avoid a dairies leased field next door, they intend to rip out a mature shelterbelt. I would like to see any shred of evidence that this pipeline will offset me offering 5000+ trees every year to be planted out all across the state.

Thank you for your time:

Andrew Russo

Owner, Russo Tree Farm LLC.

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