NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Keystone XL pipeline brings together unlikely allies

Sharon Abercrombie | Mar. 2, 2012 Eco Catholic

"Keystone Fight is Uniting Tea Partiers with Environmentalists." No, it's not a mirage. This good news headline actually appeared Monday on the Talking Points Memo website [1].

According to TPM journalist Brian Beutler, TransCanada, the company that wants to connect the tar sands in Alberta, Canada, to the Gulf of Mexico, is preparing to build in spite of the Obama administration's delay in approving the Keystone XL pipeline. TransCanada is circumventing the roadblock by moving ahead with the southern section of the pipeline that would link Nebraska to Texas. Its tactic? Going to court.

"TransCanada has threatened to use disputed eminent domain powers to condemn privately held land over the owners' objections," Beutler's article reads. "By taking this route, TransCanada avoids a review by U.S. authorities and the requirement for a presidential permit required to build the entire length."

TransCanada's decision is infuriating people across the political spectrum, including tea partiers, environmentalists and other individuals who are worried about the possible harm to water supplies, ancient Native artifacts and people's basic property rights.

Beutler interviewed several avowed conservative Republican landowners who recently rallied against the Keystone XL in Paris, Texas. They complained of receiving letters from TransCanda threatening to use eminent domain if they don't accept the company's offers to purchase their property.

Julia Trigg Crawford, a farm manager, is one of them. Beutler writes: "A judge recently voided a temporary restraining order Crawford had secured against TransCanada on the grounds that the company is threatening to build the pipeline across a portion of her 600 acre property that archeologists say is teeming with Caddo nation artifacts."

Crawford told Beutler that TransCanada's plan also would threaten a creek she uses to irrigate her land and wells her family uses for drinking water.

Taking note of the unusual political alliance among formerly avowed enemies, Crawford said, "You could check off 20 different kinds of boxes, politically, professionally, temperamentally. This is about rights as a landowner."

Another conservative, Randy Thompson, feels so strongly about the Keystone matter that he testified against TransCanada as a witness for Henry Waxman's minority on the House Energy and Commerce Committee, Beutler writes.

Thompson said he is "a little ashamed to say that maybe if [the proposed pipeline route] hadn't come across our land, I wouldn't have gotten involved." But by doing so, "I've gained a great deal of respect for people who do care about our environment. I've become much more aware of environmental issues ... and have to admire them for being concerned."

He also offered a few colorful words concerning the attitudes of pro-pipeline Republicans, whom he characterizes as uncaring about "the people out here."

For more information, go to the TPM website [1]. (TPM, an online political news organization with offices in New York and Washington, D.C., won the George Polk Award in 2008.) Kim Murphy at *The Los Angeles Times* also has a comprehensive story about the Texas rally in the paper's Feb. 17 edition [2].

Source URL (retrieved on *12/20/2013 - 16:52*): http://ncronline.org/blogs/eco-catholic/keystone-xl-pipeline-brings-together-unlikely-allies

Links:
[1] http://tpmdc.talkingpointsmemo.com/2012/02/keystone-opposition-creates-strange-bedfellows-in-rural-america.php
[2] http://www.latimes.com/news/nation/nationnow/la-na-nn-texas-pipeline-20120217,0,35763.story