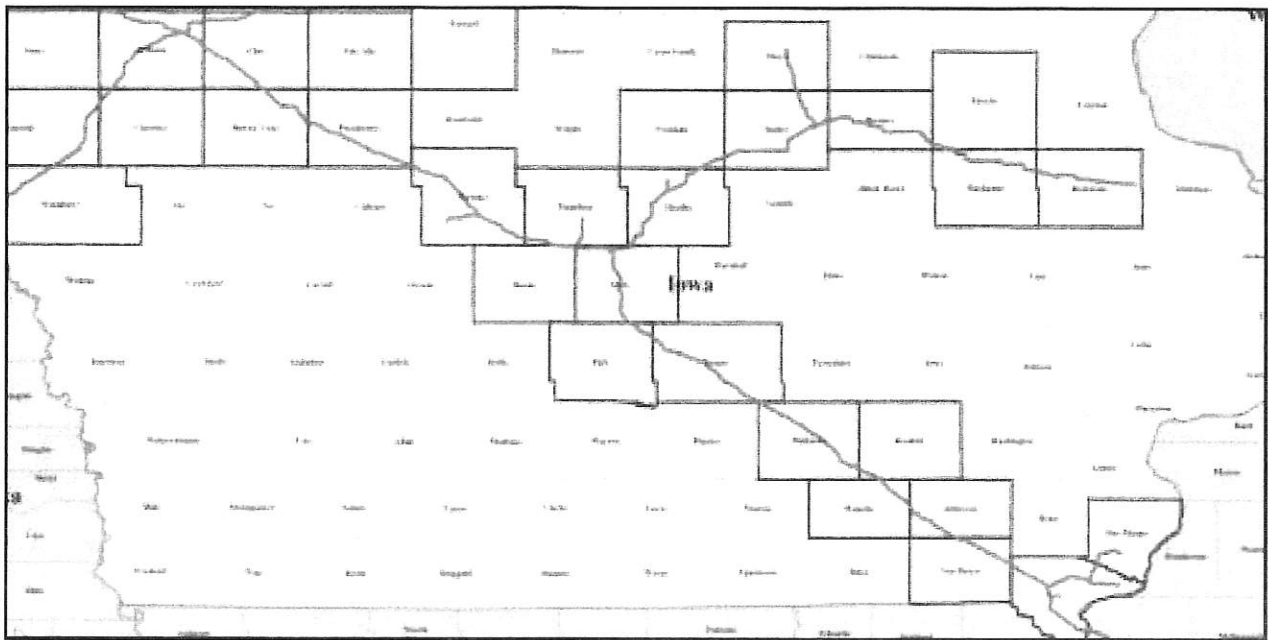


CO2 Pipelines

More Corporate Profits from Another Fake Climate Solution

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I've often said that climate change is not a hoax, but thinking that our state and federal governments will do what it takes to combat climate change - that's a hoax. I don't mean to sow pessimism that "We the People" can't demand change, but I think recent events show that making the changes necessary is beyond the intentions of these governments. Right now, their intention is and has always been to clear the way for and subsidize the way for wealthy corporations to make more money, no matter what the cost. The champions of free market "solutions" for agriculture are bellying up to the bar to get tax credits to stop climate change - or so they say. They are now climate converts proposing multibillion dollar pipelines for CCS (carbon capture and sequestration) to prevent CO2 escaping from ethanol and fertilizer plants and entering the atmosphere.

One such pipeline is the 1,300 mile Navigator pipeline which will scar Iowa farmland, and store CO2 indefinitely deep below the state of Illinois. Another project is by Wolf Carbon Solutions, partnering with ADM, to run a carbon dioxide pipeline from Cedar Rapids, Iowa to Clinton, Iowa, and then onto Decatur, Illinois.

Notorious describes the other pipeline. The Midwest Carbon Express, which will cut across Iowa Farmland to the tune of over 700 miles. The whole 2000 mile pipeline will be connecting ethanol plants in Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska to deposit their CO2 a mile underground in North Dakota. I call it notorious because of its cozy relationship with people in power. Former Iowa governor and Ambassador to China, Terry Branstad, serves the company as a senior policy advisor. The parent company, Summit Energy Solutions, has a general counsel none other than corporate lawyer, Jess Vilsack, son of USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack. The CEO of parent company Summit Energy Solutions is Bruce Rastetter known for his large campaign contributions and being appointed to the Iowa Universities Board of Regents of Branstad.

Editor's Note:

For more on the public conflict of interest, see Tom Phillpot's Mother Jones article: <https://www.motherjones.com/food/2022/01/usda-secretary-vilsack-jess-vilsack-ethanol-pipeline-summit-carbon-solutions/>) For more on the documented dangers of CO2 pipeline for rural communities, see Dan Zegart's Huffington Post article: https://www.huffpost.com/entry/gassing-satartia-mississippi-co2-pipeline_n_60ddea9fe4b0ddef8b0ddc8f

Many farmers in Iowa object to the Iowa Utilities Board possibly ruling that these pipeline companies can use eminent domain despite the farmers' not wanting the pipeline to cross their farm. There are bills in the legislature to prevent this. The boards of supervisors of twenty Iowa counties have sent letters to Iowa Utilities Board that it should not issue eminent domain provisions. Besides the tragedy of burying these potentially dangerous pipelines under farmland against the farmers' wishes, there are many other concerns that argue against public policy that justifies their construction.

One of the stated goals is to make that ethanol created from around 40% of the nation's corn crop more carbon neutral to supply states that mandate low carbon fuels. (Today more than 13 billion gallons of U.S. fuel ethanol replaces only 10% of gasoline usage, while US exports approximately 1.3 billion gallons to 50 countries. (See U.S. Energy Information Administration) The free marketeers thus depend on clean energy mandates in states like California.

Another outrage is the Internal Revenue Code 45Q spelling out the tax credits. These credits are explained in a posting by the prestigious BakerHostetler Law Firm: "For carbon capture equipment originally placed in service on or after Feb.9th 2018, the Section 45Q credit increases yearly from (i) \$34.81 per metric ton in 2021 up to \$50 per metric ton in 2026 (adjusted for inflation afterward) for disposal in secure geological storage, and (ii) \$22.68 per metric ton in 2021 up to \$35 per metric ton in 2026 (adjusted for inflation afterward) for EOR, enhanced gas recovery or other qualified utilization. [5]" In other words, the tax code subsidizes carbon sequestration and "enhanced oil and gas recovery" at the same time! Does that sound like Congress is taking limiting fossil fuel use seriously?

Notice also that after 2026 the credit will be adjusted for inflation. That's the parity principle, yet almost no member of Congress will even say a farm parity program is worth understanding.

Numerous bills in Congress intend to increase the tax credits for years to come. As reported in the February 5th Albuquerque Journal, a Princeton University study published in December 2020, projects the need for a nationwide system of 65,000 miles by 2050, 13 times the number of miles in existence today. Even this massive system will only transport 15% of today's greenhouse gas emissions.

Here are some of my thoughts:

First of all, boiling the climate crisis down to just CO2 emissions is reductionist thinking - claiming a very complex question can be addressed by simple answers. The long standing assault on the environment involves many facets and indicts the common notion that multinational corporations can do whatever they want without any democratic process to hold them accountable. The farmers at various educational meetings have many, many questions about this pipeline crossing their farms, but who is available to give them honest answers?

Here are some important questions relevant to all our citizens:

How much energy does it take to build such a pipeline? How much energy will it take to compress the gas? How much water will it take to cool the compressed gas into a liquid? How much energy will it take to ship ethanol all the way to California? Why does CO2 really have to be pumped all the way to southern Illinois and North Dakota? (Some have conjectured the CO2 won't be sequestered at all, but will be used to force more dirty crude oil out of depleted oil deposits.) If limiting CO2 emissions is the BIG GOAL how can it make sense that we allowed the Dakota Access pipeline to cross Iowa farmland to ship crude oil from North Dakota to Illinois and beyond?

Agribusiness has family farmers cornered. Because of their single-minded drive for unlimited profit, we, family farmers, have become simply the raw material procurement arm of corporate-manufactured food, livestock feeding operations and ethanol plants.

This didn't need to happen. We could have democratic farm policy solutions that make these corporations pay a fair price - a parity price for our bounty. CAFOs and Ethanol Plants would be totally uneconomical with parity prices. Instead of producing more and more for less and less, this would make farmers prosperous and return farmer-owned livestock to family farms. Hay and pasture can sequester carbon with deep roots the natural way. A parity system will restore family farms, rural communities and democracy!