



# ***MORTON COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT***

*Kyle L. Kirchmeier, Sheriff*



## **News Release**

For Immediate Release

October 23, 2016

Contact: Morton County PIO (701) 426-1587 or (701) 595-3596

Pictures from the weekend event include some recently added are available at:

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzEKNLJqG3cwNnJBRzNQQ2hOQWc>

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0BzEKNLJqG3cwSnFGdKEORU9EYzQ>

## **Unlawful Protest Activities Call for Additional Law Enforcement Resources**

Mandan, N.D. – Due to escalated unlawful tactics by individuals protesting the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) Morton County has requested additional law enforcement assistance from other states. The state of North Dakota made an Emergency Management Assistance Compact (EMAC) request to states for assistance on October 7<sup>th</sup>. Several states have responded and have arrived or will be arriving to support Morton County. State's that are currently assisting Morton County are: Wisconsin, South Dakota, Minnesota, Wyoming, Indiana and Nebraska.

"We are very appreciative of the assistance we have received from the North Dakota Highway Patrol, numerous counties and cities. However, we have reached a point that we need greater manpower to ensure the safety for ALL parties involved in this lengthy on-going event. Several illegal activities took place this weekend that exemplify the importance of additional resources." said Morton County Sheriff Kyle Kirchmeier. "I just want to reiterate, this escalated criminal behavior by protesters is unacceptable and should not continue for the safety of all involved."

Morton County releases issued Saturday and Sunday reflect in more detail the unlawful activities that took place over the weekend. The events involved a large amount of protesters trespassing on private property, breaching the law enforcement line and failing to follow officer's commands; using a drone to attack a helicopter; firing arrows in the direction of law

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enforcement; establishing an illegal roadblock on a state highway; and creating a new encampment on private property, north of the current camp area. It is also important to note that one officer was spit on by a protester and two officers received minor injuries during the Saturday confrontation.

The various illegal actions were a direct result in the arrest of 127 individuals over the weekend. This brings the total number of arrests since August 10<sup>th</sup> to 269.

In response to a statement issued by Standing Rock Tribal Chairman David Archambault III, Morton County Chairman Cody Schulz said, "The claim that law enforcement is escalating this situation is simply untrue. The law enforcement personnel from across the state, and now across the country have shown incredible professionalism and unbelievable restraint in the face of more and more aggressive tactics and illegal activity from the protestors. As we have stated from the very beginning, we fully respect the 1<sup>st</sup> Amendment rights of all protestors. The protester's rights are just as important as those of the citizens of Morton County. But they are not more important."

The public should exercise caution when traveling in Morton County. The activities over the weekend were intentionally planned in an effort to incite fear and where anything but peaceful. Highway 1806 south of Mandan is closed at Fort Rice and at the Highway 24 at Cannonball. A detour is in place.

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