



ANTI-SNOWBOWL DIRECT ACTIONS INTENSIFY ALONGSIDE CONSTRUCTION

BY KYLE BOGGS photos by Klee Benally

Since May 25, the owners of **Arizona Snowbowl**, with the blessing of the **US Forest Service** and the **Flagstaff City Council** have laid nearly six miles of a 14.8-mile wastewater pipeline and have clear-cut over 40 acres of rare alpine forest. As construction continues, a lawsuit centering on the human health impacts of using reclaimed wastewater to make snow artificially is currently under appeal in the Ninth Circuit Court. The Save the Peaks Coalition and nine concerned citizens will be able to make one oral argument on the issue, likely by the end of September, before a decision is made.

While many resorts use a mixture of reclaimed wastewater and potable water to make snow artificially, **Snowbowl is slated to be the only resort in the world to use 100% reclaimed wastewater to make snow.** That is, if it is successful in court. If Snowbowl is not successful in court, the pipeline will have to be removed.

"Snowbowl is aware of this. They know that whatever they're doing is at their own risk," said attorney in the case, **Howard Shanker**. "They actually filed for a motion to expedite [the appeal process], but the Ninth Circuit turned it down."

Recently, on August 19, the **Hopi Tribe** filed a separate lawsuit against the City of Flagstaff. The lawsuit states that "the City's contract to sell 1.5 million gallons of reclaimed wastewater per day to Snowbowl is illegal because it violates several Arizona laws that govern the proper use of reclaimed wastewater" and will "result in unreasonable environmental degradation."

Stressing the importance of this case to

the Hopi people, **Leroy Shingoitewa**, the Chairman of the Hopi Tribe. "The health and safety of the Hopi people is indistinguishable from the health and safety of the environment — protection of the environment on the San Francisco Peaks is central to the Tribe's existence."

This summer, a sense of urgency has accompanied what opposition groups refer to as desecration of the San Francisco Peaks, which has resulted in mass organizing, demonstrations, protests, rallies, marches, and an outpour of community support for those who have been arrested. Said one activist who wished to remain anonymous: "The notion is clear: if you want to protect the mountain from further expansions, don't write letters, don't sign petitions, stop asking yourself 'why government agencies, from the city to the feds, are fighting so hard for an unpopular project' and take action!"

Shortly after the rumble of diesel machinery tore into the mountain, affinity groups began to arrive, setting up self-sustained base camps. An affinity group is a small group of activists, united under a common cause, who work together on direct actions. By mid-August, 26 known basecamps had been established within the legal camping area of Forest Service land on the San Francisco Peaks. **Since June 16, there have been 26 people arrested in various direct actions and protests, both on the Peaks and in the city of Flagstaff.**

While at least half of those groups are from Flagstaff, other supporters, both native and non-native, reside elsewhere on the Colorado Plateau and in the state. Eight people

who spent nearly 100 days and nights to protect **Glenn Cove**, a burial site held sacred to several tribes near Vallejo, California arrived in early August. The occupation of the cove, called *Sogorea Te*, resulted in a "cultural easement" which set a legal precedent guaranteeing that the **Yocha Dehe** and **Cortina** tribes will have legal oversight in all activities taking place on the site. Motivated by the success of their own victory, they came to support those taking similar action on the San Francisco Peaks.

In mid-July, the "Peaks CookShack" was established in a legal camping area near Snowbowl "to support other encampments and affinity groups by providing access to available food, gear, first aid, information, and other supplies being offered and dropped off by supporters and community members." CookShack is committed to remain on the mountain indefinitely.

"A few folks from **Tohono O'odham** came and hung out with us for the first weekend we were here," said **Nadia Del Callejo**, speaking on a beautiful Sunday morning at CookShack toward the end of July. "They did a prayer for rain and protection on the mountain. Literally right when they left, it hailed for two days straight. Construction had to stop because there was a foot of hail on the ground. In July."

Sitting on a log, looking up toward swaying aspen, Ms. Del Callejo continued, "There are moments like that up here; irregardless of the kind of hopelessness folks feel. Up here, you just can't feel it. I mean, you see the destruction every day and it does get to you, but there is also this other part of it, where you understand fully how important it is

to do the work and to find a way. We know we're going to win; we don't know how we're going to get there quite yet, but we have faith — whether it's through the lawsuit or through people taking direct action, or by prayer — they're not going to put sewer water up here." She paused and smiled. "We just know."

Ms. Del Callejo was arrested in June, along with five other people, for an action whereby demonstrators locked themselves down to excavators and to each other, deep inside wastewater pipeline trenches. The action halted construction for four hours and resulted in a reemergence of the issue in local and national media. More supporters converged on the Peaks. Weekly prayer gatherings, drum circles, and self-guided tours that bared witness to the clear-cuts continued.

August 4th through the 9th was organized as a **"Week of Action,"** which included multiple marches throughout Flagstaff including protests and rallies in front of City Hall, the **Coconino County Forest Service Office**, and **High Desert Investment** (the construction company contracted by Snowbowl). On August 7, the police aggressively disrupted the Protect the Peaks march, which drew more than 100 people, arresting six people, including several known organizers.

The next morning, nine people formed a blockade across Snowbowl Road. Some demonstrators locked themselves to steel drums full of concrete, while others were bound to each other. More than 50 armed agents showed up and used industrial saws, toxic chemical degreasers, and a jackhammer to break apart the blockade. The human

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CAPRICORN: What is that spiritual itch you're feeling? Vagisil won't clear this one up – no, you're going to need to dig deeper into your bag of tricks. You have a sense that maybe it relates to your Iowa upbringing, specifically to that one incident in the barn with the shepherd boy. You thought you'd put that behind you, but your entire paradigm comes crashing down on the 17th, right about lunchtime. That itch you were feeling? Dry skin. Use lotion, jackass. This is a desert state.

AQUARIUS: Your life is subject to complete and utter catastrophic failure at any second of any minute of any hour of any day this month, which bonds you to a Capricorn, particularly if it happens on the 17th.

PISCES: Now is the time for all good Pisces to come to the aid of their country – take a shower. You really stink!

Aries: Lots of cats, lots of kitty litter, lots of hairballs – all at once, and all from the sky. Be prepared.

TAURUS: This month goes swimmingly for you – you don't manage to lose your toes in a wheat thresher, like you expected. Nope, just your fingers and your right ear.

GEMINI: There is nothing funny about what you just said. Nothing. Who the hell do you think you are, anyway? I wouldn't tolerate this kind of sass from Queen Latifah, and I sure as hell won't take it from a pea-brain like you! Get back in your room and think about what you said! Think about all the people that were hurt! And don't come out until you're a better person!

CANCER: Several CIA agents are mobilizing, armed and ready to destroy you. Great! Just great! You accidentally release a plague onto a small midwestern town – only Jeebus knows how – and you're marked for death! Life isn't fair, particularly to you, and that will never, ever, ever change.


LEO: EUGH you bother me so much, I can't even commune with the stars long enough to get your astrological reading before I start vomiting at the thought of you! I may have to cut your sign from my column if it doesn't quit!

VIRGO: You're dead now, so shut up!

LIBRA: You have so far managed to avoid suspicion in the murder of Amy Winehouse, but it all comes to light once the September issue of The Noise is published. You are in for one excruciating month, hiding from cops, crazed fans, and the press. If you pay us a couple thousand bucks, we won't tell them where you're hiding.

SCORPIO: The carnivorous pigs that ran off with your dangly last month return and surgically remove your spleen and a substantial portion of your right lung. They also spit on your shoes and call you a yellin'-bellied side-winder.

SAGITTARIUS: As if dying in 1929 wasn't bad enough, now you get sued by Susan Sarandon for leaving banana cream pie fragments all over her upstairs apartment. Beware it doesn't devolve into a pissing content or you'll get sued by the Beastie Boys as well.

OPHIUCHUS: You'll be mauled by tigers twice this month, once in the shower and once while watching CNN. 

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blockade delayed construction that day for 8 hours. It also quelled any preconceived ideas that opposition to development would go away.

Snowbowl General Manager **JR Murray** appeared a few hours into the action. To say that he was mad would be to paint an incomplete picture. As the sound of industrial saws pierced the quiet at 9 thousand feet, he stood with his arms crossed on the side of the road, watching police drag demonstrator after demonstrator away from the scene; the look on his face could only be described in one way: he was dumbfounded.

It could be compared with the same facial expression pro-development folk had during the last 40 years of Flagstaff city council meetings concerning development on the Peaks — when native elders spoke in their own language about the mountain, about desecration, with streams of tears running down their cheeks. That dumbfounded look, that look that begs the question: *if skiers and snowboarders had to make due without expansions, without the pipelines and the clear-cuts, would the prospect of that reality bring tears to their eyes?*

"The only choice for us is to take action against those who threaten Indigenous cultures, the environment, and our future. It's frustrating that we had to do this in order to make this point clear," stated **Jenna Tomasello**, who took part in the action.

Stephen Zavodynik, also arrested during the blockade elaborated: "We decided to take matters into our own hands and you can too. Whatever you feel is sacred, defend it with all your heart and take a risk, because our future generations will not forgive inaction."

"For us, our actions are self-defense," said Ms. Del Callejo after she was arrested for the third time this summer. "And everyone has that right. I am not afraid of what will happen to me if I protest, what I am more afraid of is what will happen if I do not stand up."

Weekly Prayer circles and other events are scheduled to take place every weekend until construction stops. For more information and updates visit www.truesnow.org and www.Indigenous-action.org

| Kyle Boggs is currently on the move, and it does involve a bicycle.
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