



ABRA Update #107 – December 2, 2016

EnergySure Coalition Lauds Governor McAuliffe

EnergySure, a coalition of business and labor interests in North Carolina Virginia, West Virginia, wrote Virginia Governor McAuliffe on November 17 to express its appreciation to Governor McAuliffe for support of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Thirty-One Virginia members signed [the letter](#), which said:

The benefits of the project are vast and well-documented. Not only will the Atlantic Coast Pipeline stimulate billions of dollars in economic development, create thousands of good-paying jobs, and promote cleaner air in Virginia, it will also save families and businesses hundreds of millions of dollars in energy costs each year. Securing our region's energy supply will ensure that Virginia continues to attract the new industries and 21st century jobs that are essential to sustaining long-term economic growth.

The coalition was organized in June 2015 at Dominion's instigation to demonstrate business support for the ACP. To date, the [EnergySure website](#) lists 220 members in the three states through which the ACP would traverse.

Wintergreen Asks FERC for Site-Specific Analysis of High-Hazards

Friends of Wintergreen (FOW) has requested the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to require the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, LLC to perform the same analysis of the undue risk of resource damage along the pipeline route in Nelson County, VA (where Wintergreen is located) as the U.S. Forest Service has requested of the company for its proposed route through the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests. The [November 22 letter](#) states:

FOW submits that the risks associated with this portion of the Proposed Route equal or exceed the risks associated with the Forest Service's Selected Sites because:

- The steepness of the slope on Piney Mountain – 66%, 69%, 78% and 85% in several locations – exceeds the “very steep to extremely steep (30 degrees [58%] short slope” in GWNF Site 5 and, overall, equals or exceeds the steepness of the slopes that are encountered in all or portions of 9 of the 10 Forest Service Selected Sites.

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For questions about Update items, contact:

Articles – Lew Freeman, lewfreeman@gmail.com

In the News – Dan Shaffer, dshaffer@abralliance.org

- The Piney Mountain area and adjoining areas in Nelson County have a history of extreme weather events. For example, in 1969 Hurricane Camille dropped up to 31 inches of rain in Nelson County, mostly in a 3-5 hour period. This resulted in catastrophic flooding and mountain slope failures. In all, 153 people were killed, 8,931 people were injured, 5,662 homes were destroyed and another 13,915 homes experienced major damage.
- The risk associated with the path of the Pipeline on Piney Mountain are magnified by the fact that Piney Mountain is in a much more populated area than Forest Service lands. If a landslide occurred on the side of Piney Mountain, the boulders and other debris would be swept into the South Fork of the Rockfish River (a designated “Virginia Scenic River”) and across Beech Grove Road (State Route 664), a designated “Virginia Scenic Byway” that carries as many as 10,000 residents and guests to the entrance to Wintergreen Resort and is a major connector between Augusta County and Nelson County.

Fish and Wildlife to Consider Incidental Taking of Endangered Species

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has announced it will prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for a proposed issuance of an incidental take permit (ITP) under section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in response to an application from a coalition of nine energy companies that wish to conduct upstream and/or midstream oil and gas activities within West Virginia, Ohio and Pennsylvania. The [November 25 Federal Register Notice](#) indicates that 5 different species of bats would be potentially subject to incidental taking if the permit requested is granted. While the EIS that will be prepared does not directly involve pipeline projects that ABRA is following, the development bears scrutiny concerning its possible precedential implications.

While Waiting for the Release of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline DEIS . . .



“No way am I going down there—what if there’s a comments section?”
(From *The New Yorker*, November 28 issue)

Brookings Institution Critiques Energy Outlook Under Trump

Washington's Brookings Institution has joined the legions of think-tanks in projecting what might be expected in energy policy from the new Trump Administration. In a [November 17 posting](#) on the Brookings website, Professor David Victor of the University of California, San Diego, who is co-chair of the Brookings Institution's Initiative on Energy and Climate, says:

With so little to guide predictions, the reality of a Trump presidency has become a national Rorschach test. Conservatives and the anti-establishment imagine an ascendant Trump will set a path for a more competitive national economy, smaller government, and a stronger defense. The left predicts a horror show of policy reversals and seediness. This Rorschach test is now playing out as the country grapples with what all this means for climate and energy.

Continuing, Professor Victor observes:

A Trump presidency presumably will ease the process for leasing on federal lands, although any such changes will surely be tied up in the courts as will efforts to speed approval of pipeline projects—where many states will defy the federal government as pipelines become a key symbol in the “keep in the ground” movement. Regulation by EPA of shale gas operations to reduce emissions of methane (a powerful greenhouse gas) and improve management of water that is used and produced in these wells will presumably be slowed or stopped. But it was already becoming clear that such rules would not have a ruinous effect on drilling—they would be, instead, a compliance cost that with effort would become easier to manage.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Let's get this right

- The Recorder – 12/1/16

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Lets_get_this_right-Recorder_20161201.pdf

Continuing to press ahead to issue a DEIS based upon an arbitrary schedule is irresponsible and short-sighted

Buckingham planners act on proposed pipeline compressor station

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 11/21/16

http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/article_2ef5a573-36af-5a35-9d75-5c03aae23db9.html

Commission endorse zoning permit...hint that aim is to institute conditions

Editorial: ACP is a no-brainer

- The Farmville Herald – 11/29/16

<http://www.farmvilleherald.com/2016/11/acp-is-a-no-brainer/>

More pipeline questions posed

- The Recorder – 12/1/16

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/More_pipeline_questions_posed-Recorder_20161201.pdf

RECORDER_20161201.PDF

FERC questions Dominion on potential need for additional compressor stations...many wonder if they have been deliberately left out of the design

Tom Farrell and Bob Blue: Dirty Politics and Dirty Dominion Power

- Blue Virginia – 11/29/16

<http://bluevirginia.us/2016/11/tom-farrell-bob-blue-dirty-power-dirty-politics-dominion-virginia-power>

If “sunlight is the best disinfectant”, it's no wonder Dominion is so strongly opposed to solar energy!

Forest service adds new pipeline rules

- The Recorder – 11/24/15

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Forest_service_adds_new_pipeline_rules-Recorder_20161124.pdf

Forest Service not letting up on Dominion's sketchy construction plan

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Virginians Launch 'Pipeline Pledge of Resistance' to Stop MVP and ACP Projects

- CCAN – 11/16/16

<http://chesapeakeclimate.org/press-releases/virginians-launch-pipeline-pledge-of-resistance-to-stop-mvp-and-acp-projects/>

Wild Virginia Calls on Forest Service, BLM to reject draft environmental assessment for Mountain Valley Pipeline

- Augusta Free Press – 11/18/16

<http://augustafreepress.com/wild-virginia-calls-forest-service-blm-reject-draft-environmental-assessment-mountain-valley-pipeline/>

W.Va. pipeline development balances economy with personal property

- WV Metro News – 11/28/16

<http://wvmetronews.com/2016/11/28/w-va-pipeline-development-balances-economy-with-personal-property/>

Well, it doesn't really...that's the problem

In Life After Coal, Appalachia Attempts to Reinvent Itself

- Governing – 12/16

<http://www.governing.com/topics/finance/gov-coal-trump-appalachia-economy.html>

Not about pipelines per se but strong on the effects and limits of the extractive economies of Appalachia

Big Picture:

US businesses push against Trump's attempts to dismiss climate change

- The Guardian – 12/1/16

<https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/dec/01/climate-change-donald-trump-us-companies>

We're not here to debate whether there is climate change. We're here to try to save the world, because the government's not going to,"

Related:

- <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/trump-s-first-100-days-environmental-policy-and-public-lands/#>

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2016/12/01/trump-could-face-the-biggest-trial-of-the-century-over-climate-change/?utm_term=.50243c68d882

Canada Issues Split Decision on Oil Pipelines

- The Wall Street Journal – 11/29/16

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/canada-issues-split-decision-on-oil-pipelines-1480460317>

Canada chooses expansion of existing route over new oil pipeline to the Pacific

Related:

- <http://motherboard.vice.com/read/three-other-oil-and-gas-pipelines-and-what-they-put-at-risk-canada-texas>

- <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2016-12-01/energy-east-the-odd-pipeline-out-as-canada-approves-two-others>

2000 vets join North Dakota pipeline protest

- MSNBC – 12/1/16

<http://www.msnbc.com/tamron-hall/watch/2000-vets-join-north-dakota-pipeline-protest-821994051535>

DAPL is merely a continuation of a battle going back more than a century

A Dakota pipeline's last stand

- The Washington Post – 11/25/16

https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/a-dakota-pipelines-last-stand/2016/11/25/35a5dd32-b02c-11e6-be1c-8cec35b1ad25_story.html?utm_term=.df08b13c5491

DAPL is merely a continuation of a battle going back more than a century

Related:

- <http://www.opb.org/news/article/npr-the-standing-rock-resistance-is-unprecedented-its-also-centuries-old/>

Cash for pipelines

- Vice News – 11/30/16

<https://news.vice.com/story/how-energy-companies-woo-first-nations-on-controversial-projects>

How energy companies woo First Nations on controversial energy projects - outrageous behavior...yet totally unsurprising

Despite a friendly White House, natural gas in for 'rocky times'

- E&E Publishing – 11/23/16

<http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060046192>

“There’s a lot out there that Trump can’t change.”

SEN. ELIZABETH WARREN: Natural gas projects prioritize profit over safety

- The Enterprise – 12/1/16

<http://www.enterpriseneews.com/opinion/20161201/sen-elizabeth-warren-natural-gas-projects-prioritize-profit-over-safety>

FERC rejects N.Y. tree-cutting request re: Constitution line

- Kallanish Energy – 11/30/16

<https://www.kallanishenergy.com/2016/11/30/ferc-rejects-n-y-request-constitution-pipeline-tree-cutting/>

Constitution Pipeline STILL not dead!

ExxonMobil Vs. The World

- NPR – 11/30/16

<http://www.npr.org/sections/13.7/2016/11/30/503825417/exxonmobil-vs-the-world>

We Already Have A Solution To Climate Change, And It Doesn't Rely On The Government

- Forbes – Tech – 12/1/16

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/quora/2016/12/01/we-already-have-a-solution-to-climate-change-and-it-doesnt-rely-on-the-government/#2a6a085324de>

Great news, since our government will likely do little of use over the next few years