



ABRA Update #62 – January 13, 2016

U.S. Fish And Wildlife Raises Concerns Over ACP Route

The West Virginia Field Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (WVFO) filed on January 7 (posted January 8) with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) an extensive litany of concerns about the current proposed route of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). The WVFO letter details potential impacts on a variety of species and chided Dominion Transmission for the inadequacies or absence of required survey data. Cited species included the Indiana bat, Cheat Mountain salamander, specified mussels, golden and bald eagles, migratory birds and native trout.

Among the concluding points in the letter are:

- “The WVFO highly recommends exploring alternative alignment routes, or combinations of proposed alternatives, to avoid Cheat Mountain. We recommend an alternative alignment further south as a more southern route may avoid many of the issues outlined in this letter.”
- “While Atlantic has also proposed alternative routes, surveys for listed species have yet to be conducted along these routes; surveys for listed species have only been conducted on the preferred alternative. The WVFO cannot compare potential affects to determine whether other alternatives will be less impactful to Service trust resources until surveys for listed species have been conducted along other alternative proposed ROWs. Alternative routes should be rigorously explored and objectively evaluated to determine the impacts they will have to unique and irreplaceable environmental resources. A need for alternative route analysis has been encouraged by this office, the USFS, WVDNR, other government agencies, non-government organizations, and most recently by FERC in correspondence dated December 4, 2015.”
- “Completed survey reports and other information requested in this correspondence should be provided to the WVFO with ample time to review and comment prior to the development of a Biological Assessment by Atlantic or Environmental Impact Statement by FERC as these documents depend upon accurate data gathered using accepted guidelines and protocols. The WVFO cannot accurately assess the potential impacts to threatened or endangered species and their habitats or make complete recommendations on avoidance and minimization measures until we have had time to review completed survey reports.”

The letter is available at:

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/WV_FW_letter_1-7-2016.pdf.

World LNG Markets In Flux As U.S. Exports Poised To Expand

“The United States is ready to export LNG, but does the world want it?” is a question posed by a January 8 article posted on the *Foreign Affairs* website, the distinguished publication of the Council of Foreign Relations (http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/Gas_Under_Pressure-Foreign_Affairs_1-8-16.pdf). The question raised is relevant for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline because of concerns that the project will facilitate the exportation of Marcellus shale gas through Dominion’s Cove Point LNG facility.

Authored by Leslie Palti-Guzman, Director of Global Gas at the Rapidan Group, the article notes that the US, is about to burst into a glutted market while “Asian demand is weak and European demand has not recovered from its pre-recession levels.” Continuing:

“The idea was that the pricing differential between U.S. and Asian gas prices was big enough to cover the cost of buying the gas, transforming it to its liquid form, shipping it, regasifying it, and still leaving enough money in hand to turn a profit.

“The dramatic narrowing of the spot price spread between the United States and Asia has created economic uncertainties for U.S. gas exporters, as their erstwhile market now looks domestically for cheaper product.”

Forest Service Comments Further on MNF Soil Survey Issue

Monongahela National Forest (MNF) Supervisor, Clyde Thompson, filed comments on January 7 with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in response to a Soil Slippage Analysis previously filed by MNF on November 27, 2015 for the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). The comments provide clarifications on data and methods used to execute the analysis on soil slippage, as well as additional comments and questions regarding ACP’s response and soil slippage analysis. The MNF filing is available at: http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/FS_Soil_Comments_1-12-2016.pdf.

Lew Freeman To Continue As ABRA Chair, Named Executive Director

Lewis Freeman, a co-founder of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, has agreed to continue as Chair and has been hired by the ABRA Steering Committee to serve as part-time Executive Director for the coalition. In this expanded role he will coordinate the work of ABRA committees and oversee development and implementation of ABRA’s strategies and policies. Dan Shaffer will continue as ABRA Communications Coordinator.

Lew, a Highland County resident and President of ABRA member Highlanders for Responsible Development, has an extensive background in non-profit management and advocacy. He spent over 30 years as an executive and lobbyist for various industry trade associations, was an assistant to the Governor of Ohio and was Director of Outreach for The Eisenhower Institute. During his trade association career, Lew was instrumental in the creation of the numerical identification system on plastic packaging to assist with recycling, led the development of labels on 5-gallon containers to warn of the dangers of child drowning accidents and chaired an industry coalition that was critical in supporting the ratification of the Montreal Protocol. He continues to maintain a consulting practice that specializes in assisting non-profit organizations in management, advocacy, communications and economic analysis.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Karst A ‘Disaster’ For Pipeline Company, Expert Tells Board

- The recorder – 1/7/16

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/01/karst_a_disaster_for_pipeline_company-recorder_1-7-16.pdf

Guest Column: Dominion Can't Support Clean Energy And ALEC

- Pilot Online – 1/3/16

http://pilotonline.com/opinion/columnist/guest/guest-column-dominion-can-t-support-clean-energy-and-alec/article_77de5afo-8e45-5c81-a662-89fo7a8ba10a.html

Older, but I just saw it...and it's relevant!

Dominion Virginia Unveils \$9.5bn Infrastructure Investment Plan

- Energy Business Review – 1/13/16

<http://solar.energy-business-review.com/news/dominion-virginia-unveils-95bn-infrastructure-investment-plan-130116-4775747>

Power Groups Slam Dominion Rfp That Led To Its Own Greenville Project

- Electric Light & Power – 1/6/16

http://www.elp.com/articles/2016/01/power-groups-slam-dominion-rfp-that-led-to-its-own-greenville-project.html?cmpid=Enl_ELP_Jan-08-2016&cmpid=ELPWeeklyJanuary82016&eid=288963332&bid=1272178

Group alleges that Dominion 'stacked the deck' in its favor with RFP process

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Pipeline Project Watchdogs Anticipate Arrival Of Compressor Station

- Roanoke Times – 1/6/16

http://www.roanoke.com/business/news/pipeline-project-watchdogs-anticipate-arrival-of-compressor-station/article_db599258-4353-5842-818e-f6ce23048431.html

MVP searching for site of potential future compressor station...after declaring they would not build one in VA (for now)

Big Picture:

EPA Science Advisers Buck Agency On Fracking Safety

- The Hill – 1/7/16

<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/265125-epa-science-advisers-buck-agency-on-fracking-safety>

EPA staff scientists say report conclusions not supported by data it references

Export Anxiety: Where Will Pipeline's Natural Gas End Up?

- The Recorder: GoingGreen – 1/12/16

<http://goinggreen.recorder.com/2016/01/12/export-anxiety-where-will-pipelines-natural-gas-wind-up/>

More questions on the true purpose and need for all of these proposed pipelines

Related:

http://www.philly.com/philly/business/20160110_For_Europe_Marcellus_ethane_is_in_the_pipeline.html#EXXV7LmrWKPRoJiH.99

Constitution Pipeline Builders Want To Start Tree Clearing Before New York State Environmental Approvals

- Albany Business Review – 1/11/2016

<http://www.bizjournals.com/albany/news/2016/01/11/constitution-ipeline-builders-want-to-start-tree.html>

Constitution worries schedule might be delayed if work waits for required approvals

Natural Gas Pipeline Opponents Ask Attorney General To Halt Tree Cutting

- Times Union – 1/12/16

<http://www.timesunion.com/business/article/Natural-gas-pipeline-opponents-ask-Attorney-6754277.php>

Say Constitution misrepresenting verbal agreements as permits

Speaking Of Storing Electricity...

- Bacon's Rebellion – 1/11/16

<http://www.baconsrebellion.com/2016/01/speaking-of-storing-electricity.html>

Del. Patrick Hope aims to create Virginia Energy Storage Consortium to stimulate and support R&D

"Flaring" Wastes 3.5 Percent Of The World's Natural Gas

- Scientific American – 1/12/16

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/flaring-wastes-3-5-percent-of-the-world-s-natural-gas/>

...and is a huge source of CO2 emissions

Related:

<http://www.nbcnews.com/tech/innovation/could-better-tech-prevent-next-big-methane-leak-n487566>