



ABRA Update #73 – March 31, 2016

ABRA Responds to Hampton Roads Caucus

The Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance (ABRA) has responded to the March 11, 2016 letter of support for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline sent by members of the Hampton Roads Caucus to U.S. Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine. Thirty-three members of a Virginia state legislative caucus, representing districts in the southeastern region of the state, said that: “The need for this project is urgent; to put it bluntly, our region’s natural gas transportation system has reached a tipping point.”

In a March 29 letter to Senators Warner and Kaine, Thomas Hadwin of Friends of Shenandoah, a former utility executive and writing on behalf of ABRA, pointed out that “natural gas can be supplied to the Hampton Roads region more quickly, at lower costs, and without disrupting public and private land in Virginia, by using existing pipelines.” Continuing, he said:

The Columbia Gas pipeline network, which crisscrosses Virginia, connects to the Virginia Natural Gas pipeline that currently serves the Hampton Roads area. The WB XPress project will expand the capacity of the Columbia Gas system in West Virginia and Virginia by 1.3 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas, nearly equal to the amount proposed by the ACP.

The 77-mile, 20-inch pipeline constructed on new right-of-way from the Hampton Roads region into North Carolina that is proposed by the ACP would not be required. The residents in the Hampton Roads area would have access to greater supplies of natural gas, more cheaply, with far less disruption of Virginia land and communities, sooner than they would if they depended on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. If the members of the General Assembly who wrote to you were aware of this option, they might realize that it is a superior answer to their concerns.

A copy of Tom’s [letter](#) is on the ABRA website.

New FERC Staff Markets Study: Natural Gas Supply Exceeds Demand

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) presented to the agency’s Commissioners on March 17 the annual [State of the Markets Report](#) for 2015. The report noted that natural gas “production and storage reached record levels, while demand rose modestly, tempered by the El Niño warm weather during the 2015-2016 winter.” Among highlights in the staff presentation:

- “Non-winter process fell to their lowest levels in 20 years.”
- “Insufficient pipeline takeaway capacity in WV, OH and PA led to a local gas surplus in the area, resulting in lower prices for producers.”
- “Staff analysis indicates that new capacity additions should significantly relieve transportation constrains . . . by 2019 if projects that are planned and under construction are approved and completed by the scheduled in-service dates.”

- “The outlook for 2016 continues to point to low prices because of continued strong production and high storage.”
- “The North American natural gas market will likely remain oversupplied and prices low in the near term, pushing high cost producers out of the market.”
- “Long term demand growth for U.S. natural gas will likely come from increased gas-fired electric generation, particularly in the Southeast, growing industrial demand, LNG exports, and pipeline exports to Mexico.”
- “It is difficult to predict the volume of LNG exports in coming years because falling global prices have made potential U.S. exports less profitable.”

Last year’s FERC staff presentation on *State of the Markets for 2015* is available [here](#).

New ABRA Members

We are pleased to welcome two new members of ABRA:

- Voices of Bath – Mary Hodges, voting representative
- Friends of Central Shenandoah – Thomas Hadwin, voting representative

Energize, Equip and Empower!

ABRA’s next membership-wide meeting will be Saturday, April 23, 10 am to 3 pm at the Weyer’s Cave Community Center, Weyer’s Cave, VA, located 15 minutes north of Staunton, just off of I-81. An agenda and registration information will be sent within the next week in a special mailing. Featured on the program will be presentations on new pipeline economic studies, in depth examination of grass roots experiences and how we can improve our capabilities and enhancing our messages to public officials and the general public.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Survey report's maps and photographs 'disturbing' protestors say

- News Leader – 3/26/16

<http://www.newsleader.com/story/news/local/2016/03/26/survey-reports-maps-and-photographs-disturbing-protestors-say/82298362/>

There is more to a pipeline construction project than just the pipeline

Aerial surveys for Dominion pipeline 'disruptive'

- News Leader – 3/29/16

<http://www.newsleader.com/story/news/local/2016/03/29/aerial-surveys-dominion-pipeline-disruptive/82373384/>

Atlantic coast pipeline not a done deal

- The Lenoir Voice – 3/24/16

<http://lenoirvoice.com/2016/03/24/atlantic-coast-pipeline-not-a-done-deal-despite-duke-energys-presumptions/>

Call for support of “upstream” communities by a good neighbor

Dominion prepares for pipeline construction, but review of new route still pending

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 3/22/16

http://www.richmond.com/business/local/article_d2627f67-26b5-5424-b051-be0c9aebfd11.html

Dominion touting its success...but it hasn't won anything yet

Opinion/Letter: Pipeline a threat to property values

- The Daily Progress – 3/24/16

http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-letter-pipeline-a-threat-to-property-values/article_2c6150bc-f1fa-11e5-87ae-5733eb1aa5cc.html

IINGA study missed the point...and so missed the mark

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Our view: The iron box

- Roanoke Times – 3/29/16

http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-the-iron-box/article_24884990-7a1d-5052-8e66-8780eeedaeb5.html

Eerily-similar letters to FERC raise questions about agency's susceptibility to political pressure

SCC Approves Greensville Gas Plant

- Bacon's Rebellion – 3/30/16

<http://www.baconsrebellion.com/2016/03/scc-approves-greensville-gas-plant.html>

Commission approves Dominion plan, locking in additional natural gas dependence and emissions for decades

New Report Finds that ALEC, Dominion, Other “Corporate Polluters Undermining Clean Power in Virginia”

- Blue Virginia - 3/24/16

<http://bluevirginia.us/2016/03/new-report-finds-alec-dominion-corporate-polluters-undermining-clean-power-virginia>

Fossil fuel interests, monopolistic utilities form club...VA lawmakers join...what could go wrong?

Activists Worried About Relationship Between DEQ Director, Dominion

- NBC29.com – 3/23/16

<http://www.nbc29.com/story/31549617/activists-worried-about-relationship-between-deq-director-dominion>

Big Picture:

FERC deference to pipeline operators seen contributing to overbuild

- SNL – 3/24/16

<https://www.snl.com/Interactivex/article.aspx?CdId=A-35872577-11048>

Global War for Gas Market Share Claims \$40 Billion LNG Casualty

- GCaptain – 3/24/16

<https://gcaptain.com/global-war-for-gas-market-share-claims-40-billion-lng-casualty/>

More indications the rush to export LNG is likely to cost US consumers...though perhaps not in the way most expected

Related:

<http://agmetalmminer.com/2016/03/28/us-lng-shale-gas-exports-likely-to-face-headwinds/>

ISO New England annual report: Challenges of retiring power plants, renewables, gas pipelines

- VermontBiz.com – 3/25/16

<http://www.vermontbiz.com/news/march/iso-new-england-annual-report-challenges-retiring-power-plants-renewables-gas-pipelines>

Still a lot of emphasis on building out fossil infrastructure...try this:

<http://www.elp.com/articles/2016/03/is-germany-the-role-model-for-successful-renewable-integration.html>

A roadmap for the omnibus energy bill

- Commonwealth Magazine – 3/28/16

<http://commonwealthmagazine.org/environment/a-roadmap-for-the-omnibus-energy-bill/>

Part 3 of 3 – How to plan a state energy policy...What have YOU got, Virginia!?

FERC to Tennessee Gas: no immediate tree cutting for Berkshire County pipeline

- MassLive.com – 3/28/16

http://www.masslive.com/news/index.ssf/2016/03/ferc_to_tennessee_gas_no_immed.html

TGP “Test case” still not testing well...stay tuned...

Decision on Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline in Lancaster County delayed until as late as January 2017

- LancasterOnline.com – 3/23/16

http://lancasteronline.com/news/local/decision-on-atlantic-sunrise-pipeline-in-lancaster-county-delayed-until/article_95484620-f101-11e5-9e54-9350550fdc35.html

April Deadline For Key Constitution Pipeline Regulatory Decision

- WAMC Northeast Public Radio – 3/29/16

<http://wamc.org/post/april-deadline-key-constitution-pipeline-regulatory-decision#stream/o>

Survey gives clearer view of risky leaks from gas mains

- EScienceNews – 3/29/16

<http://esciencenews.com/articles/2016/03/29/survey.gives.clearer.view.risky.leaks.gas.mains>

Urban Natural Gas leaks may be far more prevalent than thought