



ABRA Update #113 – January 20, 2017

Your Help Is Needed: Support the Forest Service

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) released last Fall a new schedule for its consideration of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). FERC asked the National Forest Service (USFS) to comment on the schedule. Final approval of the project by FERC requires the issuance of a special use permit by the NFS regarding the pipeline's proposed path through the Monongahela National Forest and the George Washington National Forest (GWNF).

On December 13, the Forest Service wrote FERC strongly objecting to the proposed timetable. The USFS letter stated that "the Forest Service does not concur with the permitting timetable and requests that the permitting timetable be revised to state that the final completion date of the Forest Service's consideration of the special use permit application is "To Be Determined." The letter points out that FERC's timetable fails to consider procedures required by federal law, therefore making the proposed deadlines for NFS action incorrect and at odds with applicable law. Also at issue are amendments to the existing Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan) that is being sought for the ACP. The Forest Plan for the GWNF was adopted in 2014 after a multi-year effort involving input from thousands of citizens.

Please write within the next week to key USFS officials and urge them to:

- 1) Conduct a complete and thorough review of the pending application for a special use permit for the ACP, as required by law;
- 2) Do not amend the existing Forest Plan for the George Washington National Forest.

For more information refer to the [special ABRA alert](#), which includes additional background and the addresses for whom to write, and the [December 13 USFS letter to FERC](#).

Thank you for your help!

It's Not Too Late to Voice Your Concerns to VOF

The Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) is scheduled to consider on February 9 the application by Dominion Transmission, Inc. to receive approval for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to cross 11 conservation easements in Highland, Bath, Augusta and Nelson Counties held by the VOF. State law provides for exceptions to conservation easements, but only if certain criteria are met. ABRA does not believe the Dominion proposal satisfies the requirements of the law. Additional information is available [here](#) and see *Recorder* article below.

ABRA Needs Your Support

*The challenges facing the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance in 2017 are daunting.
With your financial support we can continue to fight effectively
against unneeded pipelines through our region*

Please support ABRA's important work by clicking [here](#).

Please write the VOF before February 9 and urge the organization to:

- support the clean water, wildlife habitat, working farmland, rural character, and scenic views protected by the conservation easements,
- preserve the essential trust that exists between landowners and VOF, critical to the future of land conservation in Virginia, and
- deny Dominion's unprecedented and irresponsible request to permanently impair conservation values on 10 conserved properties.

Send your letters or emails to:

Brett Christina Glymph, Executive Director,
39 Garrett St., Suite 200
Warrenton, VA 20186
(540) 347-7727
bglymph@vofonline.org

N.C. Walk to Protect Our Peoples and the Places We Live: March 4-19, 2017

The North Carolina Alliance to Protect Our Peoples and the Places We Live (APPPL) is organizing a Walk along the 205-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline route in NC, beginning on Saturday March 4 at the Virginia-North Carolina border in Northhampton County, and ending two weeks later in Pembroke and then in Hamlet.

The Walk will pass through several cities as well as through farmland and small communities. We are organizing as many educational activities as possible in schools, churches, community centers, city planning and public official's offices.

There are various ways people can participate in and contribute to the Walk. For more information, for weekly updates, to register, and to donate to the Walk, please see our full [announcement](#).

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Advocates say feds downplaying climate impacts of pipelines

- Southeast Energy News – 1/19/17
<http://southeastenergynews.com/2017/01/19/advocates-say-feds-downplaying-climate-impacts-of-pipelines/>
FERC and Dominion say ACP won't incentivize additional gas production or use...many disagree

Dominion reapplies for easement conversions

- The Recorder – 1/19/17
http://www.abralliance.org/wp_content/uploads/2017/01/Dominion_reapplies_for_easement_conversions-Recorder_20170109.pdf

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Pipeline company's surveying suit will advance, Nelson judge rules

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 1/19/17
http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/article_7b1be4a7-8fb1-554a-b7f6-068e5e3ecfe9.html
Judge disagrees with landowners' motion to dismiss surveying lawsuit...case will continue as scheduled

Shifflett: Environmental review is flawed

- Roanoke Times – 1/15/17
http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/letters/shifflett-environmental-review-is-flawed/article_foac80c2-753b-5c08-972b-b761e1fda491.html
Review reveals the serious concerns of thousands of residents and multiple state and federal agencies about incomplete, insufficient and missing information in MVP DEIS

Virginia General Assembly Session Opens. What Can We Expect on Energy Issues?

- Blue Virginia – 1/16/17
<http://bluevirginia.us/2017/01/virginia-general-assembly-session-opens-can-expect-energy-issues>
Hopefully more good news than last year!

Constitutional challenge over utility rates in Virginia begins this week

- Southeast energy News – 1/18/17
<http://southeastenergynews.com/2017/01/18/constitutional-challenge-over-utility-rates-in-virginia-begins-this-week/>
Dominion rate freeze “highly unlikely” to protect Virginia ratepayers (Virginia State Corporation Commission)...several current and former lawmakers pushing the issue
Related:
- http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/government-politics/article_985eff2e-001c-5d28-be7c-1d59d91780e5.html

April Pierson-Keating: In WV, fossil fuels threaten our future

- Charleston Gazette-mail – 1/13/17
<http://www.wvgazette.com/gazette-op-ed-commentaries/20170113/april-pierson-keating-in-wv-fossil-fuels-threaten-our-future-gazette>
Extractive industry is not WV's future...or at least not a GOOD one!

Big Picture:

Trump EPA Pick Expresses Doubts about Climate Change, Defends Oil Industry Funding

- Scientific American – 1/18/17
<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/trump-epa-pick-expresses-doubts-about-climate-change-defends-oil-industry-funding/>
Related:
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2017/01/18/bernie-sanders-to-scott-pruitt-why-is-the-climate-changing/?utm_term=.3889eb8e9715

Trump's energy pick Perry softens stance on climate change

- Reuters – 1/19/17
<http://www.reuters.com/article/us-usa-congress-perry-idUSKBN1531OZ>
Related:
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bernie-sanders-rick-perry_us_5880fe24e4b070d8cad116ff

Report: U.S. Will Lose One-Third of its Electricity Generation Capacity Without More Infrastructure

- Business Wire – 1/16/17

<http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20170116005406/en/Report-U.S.-Lose-One-Third-Electricity-Generation-Capacity>

CEA report disregards the speed at which the transition to renewables and storage could replace current generation fleet...and essentially says that nothing would/could replace it. Bases claims on reports from EIA, which has consistently revise its projections for renewables *upwards* each year.

Rick Perry and the “Texas Approach” to Renewable Energy and Infrastructure

- Union of Concerned Scientists – blog – 1/17/17

<http://blog.ucsusa.org/mike-jacobs/rick-perry-renewable-energy-infrastructure>

“...a 10-fold increase in renewable energy would require less money for transmission than the cost of pipelines for a doubling of natural gas use.” An argument for competitive energy markets for the nation, based on Texas’ experience since 2005 (the Rick Perry years)

Related:

- http://www.ucsusa.org/sites/default/files/attach/2016/02/beyond-the-clean-power-plan-executive-summary.pdf?_ga=1.126100750.206907136.1484850852

Deconstructing China’s Energy Security Strategy

- The Diplomat – 1/14/17

<http://thediplomat.com/2017/01/deconstructing-chinas-energy-security-strategy/>

“The United States should not underestimate China’s ability to achieve energy security within the next two decades.” Strategic energy partnerships with Russia and Iran would have significant market and geopolitical ramifications.

TransCanada Receives FERC Approval to Construct Leach XPress and Rayne XPress Projects

- Yahoo Finance – 1/19/17

<http://finance.yahoo.com/news/transcanada-receives-ferc-approval-construct-173753824.html>

FERC gives “thumbs up”, dismissing EPA’s criticism of an “insufficient” environmental review

Related:

<http://www.eenews.net/stories/1060048476>

Beyond Standing Rock: As Pipelines Proliferate Across the U.S., So Do Protests

- AlterNet - 1/15/17

<http://www.alternet.org/environment/beyond-standing-rock-pipelines-proliferate-across-us-so-do-protests>

Direct actions increasing across the country as pipeline opponents’ strategies evolve

Related:

- <http://www.pbs.org/newshour/updates/new-pipeline-clashes-call-standing-rock-playbook/>

- <http://www.kallanishenergy.com/2017/01/17/opponents-massing-various-pipeline-locations/>