



ABRA Update #89 – July 21, 2016

EIA Predicts Natural Gas Use to Reach Record Level in 2016

The U.S. Energy Information Administration's (EIA) [July 14 issue of "Energy Today"](#) forecasts that use of natural gas-fired electricity generation will reach a record share by the end of 2016, but will then begin to decline. Continuing, the EIA states:

Natural gas had long been the second-most prevalent fuel for electricity generation behind coal. Natural gas-fired generation first surpassed coal generation on a monthly basis in April 2015. Natural gas-fired generation has surpassed coal-fired generation in most months since then and is expected to continue to exceed coal generation through the remainder of the year, ultimately providing 34% of the United States' electricity generated this year. Coal's share of the 2016 U.S. electricity generating mix is expected to be 30%, nuclear, 19%, and renewables, 15%.

Notably, the natural gas share of power generation is expected to decline for several years after 2016 as it competes with renewables and as natural gas prices rise. In EIA's [Annual Energy Outlook 2016 Reference case](#), the natural gas generation share falls until about 2020, then climbs steadily over the next two decades. Natural gas is projected to regain the largest share in the electricity mix by 2022 and maintain that position through 2040.

New Supplemental Information Filing on ACP

More supplemental information documents on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) were filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on July 18 by Dominion Transmission, Inc. The filing includes 12 appendices updating the status of several reports and surveys required to be provided on the ACP. Highlights:

- Status of environmental field surveys and reports (Appendix E) - surveys on mussels, plants and bats to be provided by September or October;
- Cultural Resource Surveys (E) – some archeological surveys and reports due in July, but most in October or November;
- Karst assessment and survey for WV and VA (E) – completed, anticipated to be filed in July;
- Soil surveys for the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests (E) – completed, anticipated to be filed in July;
- Virginia protected small mammal study plan (F);
- Existing visual conditions, potential impacts, and recommended mitigation due to tree clearing adjacent to scenic byways and roads (H);

For questions about Update items, contact:

Articles – *Lew Freeman*, lewfreeman@gmail.com

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

- Updated tables, maps and figures from resource reports – 200+ pages listing location of water bodies crossed, water source intake facilities, springs, private water wells, etc. (I);
- Unique, sensitive, and protected vegetation communities on State/Commonwealth natural heritage communities affected by the ACP (I);
- Updated topographic and aerial route maps, which include access roads (J & K);
- Correspondence between DTI and various government agencies in June and July (L).

The entire supplemental information filing is available [here](#).

Virginia and West Virginia Lag in Solar Capacity Development

A new study released July 21 shows that Virginia and West Virginia are toward the back of the pack among states in developing solar electric capacity. In contrast, neighboring North Carolina is among the leaders and Maryland is not far behind. *Lighting the Way 4* was produced by the Environment Virginia Research and Policy Center.

State	Cumulative Solar Capacity Rank	Cumulative Solar Capacity (watts/person)	Solar Capacity Added in 2015 Rank	Solar Capacity Added in 2015 (watts/person)
Maryland	14	61	11	24
North Carolina	5	207.8	2	112.9
Virginia	39	2.5	33	1.2
West Virginia	43	1.8	44	1.8

The study reports that American solar energy capacity doubled from 2013 to 2015 and has increased 13-fold since 2010. The study also said solar energy is expected to be the leading source of new utility-scale electric generating capacity in the U.S. in 2016. It further stated that “strong public policies at every level of government can help unlock the potential for solar energy” and recommended that state governments “encourage the adoption of solar energy through policies including net metering, statewide interconnection standards, and ambitious renewable electricity standards with solar-carve-outs.” The study is available [here](#).

The study follows a report released in late June ranking Dominion Resources, Virginia’s largest electric utility, as last among major utilities in the U.S in developing clean and efficient energy (see [ABRA Update 86](#)).

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Dominion outlines emergency, safety plans

- The Recorder – 7/21/16

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Dominion-outlines_emergency_safety_plans-Recorder_7-21-16.pdf

Dominion seeks permit for compressor station

- The Farmville Herald – 7/18/16

<http://www.farmvilleherald.com/2016/07/dominion-seeks-permit-for-compressor-station/>

In Hampton Roads, Life Is Not a Gas

- Bacon’s Rebellion – 7/20/16

<http://www.baconsrebellion.com/2016/07/in-hampton-roads-life-is-not-a-gas.html>

Discusses need for expanded gas supply in Hampton Roads

Our view: Marching on Richmond

- Roanoke Times – 7/19/16

http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/editorials/our-view-marching-on-richmond/article_7cedaf4f-98a1-596a-8ab8-2c4b3a554fc5.html

Sir, addressing your question about the lack of clean energy jobs, I refer you to the [Richmond Times](#)

[Dispatch, 7/21/16](#)...The US solar industry "... has been growing as much as 20 times faster than the rest of the economy...". So there's a start on Question 1. Next!

Related:

http://www.richmond.com/opinion/our-opinion/article_ce6792fb-d9f2-5744-aa0a-c32834797bca.html

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Oil and gas companies in north central West Virginia are optimistic despite industry decline

- The Exponent Telegram – 7/17/16

http://www.theet.com/news/local/oil-and-gas-companies-in-north-central-west-virginia-are/article_56e0f30c-b9ee-5bfi-b144-6facb8268f26.html

The ACP will "...stimulate drilling activity that has been suppressed due to over- supply." Bob Fulton, Dominion Transmission, Inc. Dominion confirms upstream effects of its project...FERC? DOE? ... Bueller?!

Residents challenge DEQ to 'step up' to scrutinize pipeline projects

- Roanoke Times – 7/18/16

http://www.roanoke.com/business/news/roanoke_county/residents-challenge-deq-to-step-up-to-scrutinize-pipeline-projects/article_457fcoe8-27d2-5bcc-8790-54a2829a4859.html

DEQ officials grilled during visit to Roanoke, plan to "continue communicating" with local officials

Virginia ranks 39th in nation for solar energy in new report

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 7/21/18

http://www.richmond.com/business/local/article_f616002f-2325-5e03-88cd-28ad22b02214.html

Thanks to Dominion's and Virginia's policies (now McAuliffe's), our state trails her neighbors badly in the clean energy race. Not a race you say? Well, *shouldn't it be?*

Big Picture:

Former Inspectors Describe Dangerous Flaws in Construction of Major East Coast Gas Pipeline

- DeSmog – 7/19/16

<http://www.desmogblog.com/2016/07/19/former-inspectors-describe-dangerous-flaws-construction-major-east-coast-gas-pipeline>

Damning report highlights institutionalized corner-cutting and de facto pressure on safety contractors during Spectra's build out of the Algonquin Incremental Market (AIM), an expansion of the pipeline system that exploded in Salem, PA this spring

- More good news from Spectra:

- <http://triblive.com/news/adminpage/10823356-74/pipeline-inch-order>

- <http://www.desmogblog.com/2016/07/19/while-reviewing-spectra-energy-gas-pipeline-project-ferc-contractor-did-not-disclose-its-hiring-spectra-five-other>

Pollution from power plants in two states killed thousands of people last year

- Grist.org – 7/15/2016

<http://grist.org/justice/pollution-from-power-plants-in-two-states-killed-thousands-of-people-last-year/>

It two states' power plants cost 4400 lives and nearly \$40 billion, tell me again why we cannot afford renewables?

Fracking wells may increase asthma attacks, study says

- CNN – 7/18/16

<http://www.cnn.com/2016/07/18/health/fracking-increased-asthma-attacks/index.html>

Strong correlation found between asthma attack frequency/ severity and proximity to unconventional gas wells

DC Circuit Ruling Threatens to Topple FERC Tax Allowance Policy

- The National Law Review – 7/20/16

<http://www.natlawreview.com/article/dc-circuit-ruling-threatens-to-topple-ferc-tax-allowance-policy>

DC Circuit's decision and its underlying analysis threaten to upset long-established FERC-permitted rate recovery of tax expense by pass-through entities and may create far-reaching rate implications for affected interstate pipelines

Conservation groups file to force PennEast to show need for proposed pipeline

- Mercer me – 7/20/16

<http://mercerme.com/conservation-groups-file-to-force-penneast-to-show-need-for-proposed-pipeline/>

PennEast resists calls for it to prove a public need for its cash cow

Pipeline tax protesters cap 43-mile hike at State House steps

- Boston Globe – 7/18/16

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2016/07/17/pipeline-tax-protesters-cap-mile-hike-state-house-steps/g7aYuYr446ST1aLLvpzLDK/story.html>

Making Gas Pipelines Safer for Communities and the Climate

- Environmental Defense Fund – 7/14/16

<http://blogs.edf.org/energyexchange/2016/07/14/making-gas-pipelines-safer-for-communities-and-the-climate/>

Affordable technology exists to reduce methane releases during compressor station and pipeline blowdowns