



ABRA Update #19– March 11, 2015

FERC Chair Endorses Need for More Natural Gas Pipelines

Cheryl LaFleur, Chairman of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, expressed support for expanded natural gas infrastructure in a March 1 article she authored in Power Magazine. She said that the need for expanded natural gas infrastructure is because of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Clean Power Plan (CPP) that “requires states to significantly reduce carbon dioxide emissions from existing power plants.”

Chairman Fleur wrote: “Our nation is going to have to grapple with our acceptance of gas generation and gas pipelines if we hope to achieve our climate and environmental goals.”

She continued:

“FERC’s responsibility under the Natural Gas Act is to consider and act on pipeline applications, ensuring that needed pipelines can be built safely and with limited environmental impact. Our work on gas infrastructure permitting is going to be essential to the successful implementation of the CPP. I am dedicated to ensuring that the process is fair, clear, timely, and transparent.”

A copy of the complete article is the first item listed under “In the News” below.

FERC Scoping Meetings in Allegheny-Blue Ridge Area Next Week

The very important scoping meetings held by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP), which began this week in North Carolina, will continue next week in Virginia and West Virginia. Scheduled sessions that are relevant for most ABRA members are:

Wednesday, March 18, 2015 7:00 PM	Nelson County Middle School 6925 Thomas Nelson Highway Lovington, VA 22949
Thursday, March 19, 2015 7:00 PM	Stuarts Draft High School 1028 Augusta Farms Road Stuarts Draft, VA 24477
Monday, March 23, 2015 7:00 PM	Elkins High School 100 Kennedy Drive Elkins, WV 26241

The FERC notice, which includes guidelines on presenting statements is at:
http://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file_list.asp?accession_num=20150227-3043.

ABRA members are urged to turn out in force to express your opinions on the ACP at the scoping meeting most convenient to attend.

ABRA Membership Meeting Exudes Energy, Produces New Ideas

Fifty-nine people representing 30 groups attended an energetic organization-wide meeting of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance last Saturday, March 7 in Staunton, VA. The day-long session produced a number of ideas of how the pipeline issue should be confronted in the months ahead and what strategies should be pursued. ABRA's Steering Committee will be reviewing notes and recommendations from the deliberations of the work groups over the next two weeks. A report with action recommendations will be sent to member organizations sent by April 1.

Nelson County Supervisors Adopt Resolution on ACP

The Nelson County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution on March 10 reaffirming "its opposition to the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in Nelson County," and vowing to petition the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to require the ACP adopt "a preferred, responsible route and a corresponding cost analysis that minimizes the use of eminent domain and maximizes the use of existing rights of way and property easements."

A copy of the resolution, which passed on a 3-2 vote, is available on the ABRA website at: http://abralliance.org/wpcontent/uploads/Nelson_BOS_Resolution_ACP_Eminent_Domain_20150310.pdf.

In the News . . . (* - noteworthy articles)

***FERC's work on the Clean Power Plan** – Power Magazine, 3/1/15

<http://www.powermag.com/fercs-work-on-the-clean-power-plan/?printmode=1>

Rush from Dominion makes regulatory process a 'sham' – Augusta Free Press, 3/1/15

<http://augustafreepress.com/group-dominion-rush-makes-regulatory-process-a-sham/>

Constitution Pipeline: 'The Keystone Pipeline of Natural Gas' – Eco RI, 3/2/15

<http://ecowatch.com/2015/03/02/constitution-pipeline-keystone-of-natural-gas/>

Mountain Valley Pipeline: Our commitment to Virginia communities

– Roanoke Times, 3/2/15

http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/commentary/posey-mountain-valley-pipeline-our-commitment-to-virginia-communities/article_69921669-41c1-57e4-ac0d-023c9d4cdb8b.html

EQT letter characterized as 'misleading' and 'bullying' – Appalachian Chronicle, 3/2/15

<http://appalachianchronicle.com/2015/03/02/eqt-letter-characterized-as-misleading-and-bullying/>

Cumberland County officials to meet with Dominion, Piedmont to discuss alternate route for Atlantic Coast Pipeline – Fayetteville Observer, 3/3/15

http://www.fayobserver.com/news/local/cumberland-county-officials-to-meet-with-dominion-piedmont-to-discuss/article_od2e8852-dd4c-5959-a186-836eb20e0a55.html

Dominion's reach has gone too far – News Virginian, 3/3/15

http://www.dailyprogress.com/newsvirginian/opinion/guest_columnists/dominion-s-reach-has-gone-too-far/article_a8907962-c152-11e4-a6ff-6b16059cad85.html

Opposition to pipeline organizes in Craig County – Roanoke Times, 3/3/15

http://www.roanoke.com/news/local/opposition-to-pipeline-organizes-in-craig-county/article_fdda222c-50dd-5d7e-9892-103ccd827cb8.html

***Power plant owners argue energy 'crisis' is overblown** – NH Public Radio, 3/4/15

<http://nhpr.org/post/power-plant-owners-argue-energy-crisis-overblown>

***Pipeline opponents commission economic study** – Nelson County Times, 3/5/15

http://www.newsadvance.com/nelson_county_times/news/anti-pipeline-groups-commission-counter-impact-study/article_31fead2e-c2be-11e4-8231-93a0596c0349.html

For some, the Atlantic Coast Pipeline spells P-R-O-M-I-S-E

– WMRA-FM (Harrisonburg), 3/5/15
<http://wmra.org/post/some-atlantic-coast-pipeline-spells-p-r-o-m-i-s-e>

Mountain Valley Pipeline attorneys threaten to sue landowners

– Mountain Messenger (Lewisburg, WV), 3/6/15
<http://mountainmessenger.com/mountain-valley-pipeline-attorneys-threaten-sue-landowners/>

Clean power is right for Virginia – Washington Post, 3/6/15

http://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-clean-power-plan-makes-sense-for-virginia/2015/03/06/944c6318-a658-11e4-a7c2-03d37af98440_story.html

No comment from Wintergreen on pipeline route – Staunton News-Leader, 3/6/15

<http://www.newsleader.com/story/news/local/2015/03/06/no-comment-wintergreen-dominion-gas-pipeline/24500877/>

Billions of gallons of Augusta County water leaves annually – News Virginian, 3/8/15

http://www.dailyprogress.com/newsvirginian/billions-of-gallons-of-augusta-county-water-leaves-annually/article_5c1f16e0-c528-11e4-9efc-0fa2b1a92e3b.html

Why clean energy will be cheaper – Bacon's Rebellion, 3/8/15

<http://www.baconsrebellion.com/2015/03/why-clean-energy-will-be-cheaper.html>

Dominion's pipeline to have a negative impact – Daily Progress 3/8/15

http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-letter-dominion-s-pipeline-to-have-a-negative-impact/article_a9089648-c500-11e4-bca8-cfc845cfb4db.html

***W.Va. gas rig count falling** – Wheeling Intelligencer, 3/8/15

<http://www.theintelligencer.net/page/content.detail/id/627163/W-Va--Gas-Rig-Count-Falling.html>

***Pipeline forum focuses on limiting risk to people, nature** – Roanoke Times, 3/9/15

http://www.roanoke.com/news/local/forum-explores-options-for-reducing-effects-of-natural-gas-pipelines/article_1dc2b475-23d8-51f5-96f3-57bfe152d406.html?TNNoMobile

***Multiple Dominion pipeline routes concern opponents**

– Staunton News-Leader, 3/9/15
<http://www.newsleader.com/story/news/local/2015/03/09/dominion-pipeline-opponents-alternative-routes-concerns/24652831/>

Residents fear North Carolina pipeline will destroy property values

– Fayetteville Observer 3/9/15
http://www.fayobserver.com/news/local/residents-fear-pipelines-will-destroy-properties/article_fde2f66-cde9-5d54-a7df-994691020b57.html

Dominion seeks to give state less financial information

– Richmond Times-Dispatch, 3/10/15
http://www.richmond.com/business/ap/article_0a1fd1b1-2087-5f77-9ae5-d2e21c1e3fcc.html

Environmental groups align efforts to challenge FERC pipeline projects

– OVEC, 3/10/15
<http://ohvec.org/groups-challenge-ferc-pipeline-projects/>

***Dominion presents new maps for proposed pipeline** – WSLs-TV (Roanoke), 3/10/15

<http://www.wsls.com/story/28360109/dominion-va-power-presents-new-maps-for-proposed-pipeline>

Dominion named 'Most Admired' electric & gas utility by 'Fortune Magazine'

– PR Newswire, 3/10/15

<http://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/dominion-named-most-admired-electric--gas-utility-by-fortune-magazine-300048349.html>

Power rates frozen, but bills may rise – Virginia Gazette (Williamsburg), 3/10/15

<http://www.vagazette.com/news/va-vg-biz-column--0311-20150310.0.4904537.story>

More civil disobedience expected against local natural-gas pipeline project

– Eco RI News 3/10/15

<http://www.ecori.org/green-groups/2015/3/10/more-civil-disobedience-expected-against-pipeline-project>

Today's rush to natural gas could mean higher energy bills tomorrow

– Union of Concerned Scientists, 3/10/15

http://www.ucsusa.org/news/press_release/todays-rush-to-natural-gas-could-mean-higher-energy-bills-tomorrow-0475#.VQCvS-HrNfi

Large reserve of Utica Shale gas could lie beneath state forest land

– State Impact (PA), 3/10/15

<https://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2015/03/10/large-reserve-of-utica-shale-gas-could-lie-beneath-state-forest-land/>

***Could solar power overtake natural gas in the US? – Quartz, 3/10/15**

<http://qz.com/359044/could-solar-power-overtake-natural-gas-in-the-us/>

Roanoke County appoints committee to monitor pipeline activity

– Roanoke Times, 3/10/15

http://www.roanoke.com/news/local/roanoke_county/roanoke-county-appoints-committee-to-monitor-pipeline-activity/article_6730f869-7c80-5092-9f9d-b0ee05a2196a.html

Pipeline opponents speaking out – Wilson Times (Wilson, NC), 3/10/15

<http://www.wilsonsontimes.com/News/Feature/Story/36041195---Pipeline-opponents-speaking-out>

***Mountain Valley Pipeline Announces WGL Midstream as a Partner, Shipper, and Gas Purchaser – Business Wire, 3/11/15**

<http://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20150311005201/en/Mountain-Valley-Pipeline-Announces-WGL-Midstream-Partner#.VQCST-HrNfo>

Community forum set for Thursday on proposed pipeline

– Franklin News-Post (Rocky Mount, VA), 3/11/15

<http://www.thefranklinnewspost.com/article.cfm?ID=29382>

***Wintergreen Property Owners Join Opposition to Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline**

– WVIT-TV (Charlottesville), 3/11/15

<http://www.nbc29.com/story/28397846/wintergreen-property-owners-join-opposition-to-proposed-natural-gas-pipeline>