



## **ABRA Update #4 – November 11, 2014**

### **Augusta County Delegation Meets With FERC Chairman**

A delegation of five Augusta County, VA residents met with FERC Chairman Cheryl A. LaFleur on November 6 to discuss their concerns over the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline. The 45 minute meeting with the Chairman and several of her staff concentrated on Augusta County's karst topography and the effect the proposed route would potentially have on the county's water supplies. The delegation was led by Augusta Supervisor Tracy Pyles and Nancy Sorrells, Co-Chair of the Augusta County Alliance, an ABRA member. Chairman LaFleur indicated that she infrequently sits in on meetings of this type, and was only able to do so in this instance because the pre-filing of Dominion on October 31 had not been formally accepted by the agency. Otherwise such a meeting with stakeholders and a FERC commissioner would have been inappropriate.

The Augusta delegation also met with the staff of Senators Mark Warner and Tim Kaine. A copy of the slides used in the meetings with FERC, Warner and Kaine and a *Staunton News-Leader* story on the meetings accompany this Update.

### **What Happens During the Pre-filing Process?**

Now that Dominion has "pre-filed" with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission its plans to construct the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, several people have raised the question of just what the "pre-filing" period is. Below is a brief description from the FERC website of what takes place during this phase of the regulatory process.

If the Director approves the pre-filing request, a notice will be issued informing the public of the initiation of the pre-filing process. As part of the pre-filing process, an applicant is required to implement a Project Participation Plan that identifies specific tools and actions to facilitate stakeholder communication and dissemination of public information to those who are interested in the project. During the pre-filing process, Commission staff will review the applicant's proposal and assist the applicant in the preparation of a complete application. Staff activities may include: conducting environmental site reviews, facilitating the identification and resolution of issues, and initiating the environmental review of the proposed project. By engaging stakeholders early in the process and resolving relevant issues, the proposed project will become better defined and the benefits and impacts of the proposed project will be better understood. The work performed in the pre-filing process will form the basis for the application that is subsequently filed with the Commission. (<https://www.ferc.gov/industries/gas/indus-act/angtp/pre-filing.asp>)

## **Dominion's Public Involvement Plan**

Among the numerous documents included in the Atlantic Coast Pipeline pre-filing on October 31 was the "Atlantic Coast Pipeline Public Involvement Plan." A copy of the document accompanies this Update. However, particular attention is deserving of the following excerpt:

### Approach

The most important element of DTI's (Dominion Transmission Inc.) approach to public involvement is to build *trust* with stakeholders through meaningful dialogue – from the first days of planning to the final days of construction. Fundamental to this approach are principles that will be followed by the Project team and supported by company leadership:

- *Initiative* – We will engage stakeholders early on and look for opportunities to engage and involve stakeholders throughout all phases of the ACP.
- *Respect* – We will treat stakeholders, regardless of their views about the ACP, with seriousness and respect in all dealings.
- *Openness* – We will be direct, straightforward and transparent in our dealings with stakeholders and we will provide them with access to timely, accurate, and complete information about the Project.
- *Accessibility* – We will provide stakeholders with multiple and ongoing opportunities for dialogue.
- *Credibility* – We will say what we mean and mean what we say.
- *Accountability* – We will be accountable for commitments we make to stakeholders and will consider, address and, when feasible, incorporate their views, concerns, and expectations into Project plans.

The experience that most have had with Dominion's "approach" has varied considerably from that described above.

## **Senator-elect Capito Endorses ACP**

West Virginia Senator-elect Shelley Moore Capito wrote a letter of endorsement of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline on October 31. Her letter, a copy of which accompanies this Update, cites the economic benefits that would result for West Virginia from the project, based upon the economic study released by Dominion.

## **James River Association Joins ABRA**

The James River Association (JRA) has joined the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, bringing our coalition's membership to 31 organizations. The mission of JRA is to be guardian of the James River. We provide a voice for the river and take action to promote conservation and responsible stewardship of its natural resources. Much of the proposed route of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline would significantly impact the headwaters and tributaries of the James River. More about JRA at <http://www.jamesriverassociation.org/>.