

Protecting the heritage, resources and economy of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge region

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ABRA Update #30 – May 27, 2015

Buppert of SELC Testifies on National Energy Security Corridors Bill

Greg Buppert, Senior Attorney for the Southern Environmental Law Center, a member of ABRA, testified May 20 before the U.S. House Subcommittee on Energy and Mineral Resources on the significant impacts that natural gas pipelines crossing federal lands would have on the surrounding local communities and private property. The proposed National Energy Security Corridors Act, H.R. 2295, would allow pipelines to be sited through federal lands without providing the general public an opportunity to weigh in. Buppert said: “What we need right now in Virginia is a regional plan. First we need to know whether the demand for natural gas can justify the impacts of new pipeline infrastructure in our state. Any proposed route should be planned with input from the public and provide the greatest protections possible to private property, local communities, and the environment of the entire region.” A video of his testimony is available at: <https://www.southernenvironment.org/news-and-press/news-feed/selc-testifies-before-congress-on-the-impact-of-gas-pipelines-on-local-comm>. A copy of H.R. 2295 is available on the ABRA website at <http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/07/HR-2295-National-Energy-Security-Corridors-Act.pdf>. Background information on the bill is available at http://naturalresources.house.gov/uploadedfiles/hearingmemofinal5_14.pdf.

DPMC Asks Governor For Transparent Environmental Information on ACP

Virginia Governor McAuliffe was asked “to provide unrestricted public access to critical environmental information concerning the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline” in a May 21 letter from Rick Webb, Coordinator of the Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition. Webb said that DPMC, an ABRA member, specifically requests “that the DEQ (VA Department of Environmental Quality) obtain site-specific erosion and sediment control and stormwater management plans prior to issuing any approvals or accepting any permit submissions for the ACP. And we request that the DEQ make these plans available to local governments and the public.” The complete letter is available at <https://dl.dropboxusercontent.com/u/21393847/DPMC%20WEBSITE/MISC%20DOCUMENTS/DEQ/Governor%20McAuliffe%20052115.pdf>.

Virginia ABRA members are urged to write similar letters to Governor McAuliffe. West Virginia members should also communicate with Governor Tomblin asking that a similar standard of environmental transparency be adhered to in West Virginia.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Dominion's 5,000-page FERC response

- News Leader – 5/21/15

<http://www.newsleader.com/story/news/2015/05/20/dominionfiles-responses--pipeline-questions--ferc/27225423/>

“Data dump” from Dominion may finally answer some outstanding questions...or not!

Dominion confirms alternate pipeline routes through Nelson, Augusta counties

- Newsadvance.com – 5/24/15

http://www.newsadvance.com/news/dominion-confirms-alternate-pipeline-routes-through-nelson-augusta-counties/article_7a907a60-0277-11e5-9b59-cb8c9fe0b671.html

Wintergreen Resort Joins Fight Against Proposed Pipeline Route

- NBC29.com – 5/25/15

<http://www.nbc29.com/story/29148930/wintergreen-resort-joins-fight-against-proposed-pipeline-route>

Wintergreen rallies opposition over holiday weekend

Chill out, Wintergreen!

- Bacon's Rebellion – 5/21/15

<http://www.baconsrebellion.com/2015/05/chill-out-wintergreen.html>

An opposing view of the Wintergreen mobilization

Political Contributions and the Pipeline Debate

- Newsplex.com – 5/20/15

<http://www.newsplex.com/home/headlines/Political--304466451.html>

Once again we are assured that political contributions have no influence on our politicians

Bell, Deeds talk pipeline at Nelson Legislator's Breakfast

- Nelson County Times – 5/21/15

http://www.newsadvance.com/nelson_county_times/news/bell-deeds-talk-pipeline-at-nelson-legislator-s-breakfast/article_7797bcfc-fef7-11e4-bf7b-cf8fafa34a78.html

Bell and Deeds say pipeline decision is out of their hands. Suggest citizens continue fighting to possibly move the project.

How the pipeline would affect my farm

- Newsadvance.com – 5/26/15

<http://www.newsleader.com/story/opinion/columnists/2015/05/23/pipeline-affect-farm/27838987/>

Diminished property values and use constraints are very real threats to landowners

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Roanoke County seeks extended public comment period for Mountain Valley Pipeline

- Roanoke Times – 5/21/15

http://www.roanoke.com/news/local/roanoke_county/roanoke-county-asks-feds-for-another-pipeline-meeting/article_6cfc7d16-10d4-58af-a17b-01ef56cf7874.html

Reps Griffith and Goodlatte make request of FERC; similar to Warner and Kaine. Will they strike out too?

Geologist says pipeline threatens Monroe springs

- Bluefield Daily Telegraph – 5/22/15

http://www.bdtonline.com/news/geologist-says-pipeline-threatens-monroe-springs/article_e123ff36-0088-11e5-8a34-0fb7f1a4a32.html

“Eight billion gallons of water a year can be put at risk by this (pipeline project),”

Letter: Pipeline could hurt critical habitat of whippoorwills

- Charleston Gazette – 5/24/15
<http://www.wvgazette.com/article/20150524/ARTICLE/150529695/1103>

Big Picture:

Which utility CEOs made the most money in 2014?

- Electric Light and Power – 5/8/15
http://www.elp.com/articles/2015/05/which-utility-ceos-made-the-most-money-in-2014.html&cmpid=Enl_ELP_May-13-2015?cmpid=ExecutiveDigestMay132015
Wow. Just, Wow!

Texas company behind California oil spill a repeat offender

- The Institute for Southern Studies – 5/22/15
<http://www.southernstudies.org/2015/05/texas-company-behind-california-oil-spill-a-repeat.html>
“...Plains' rate of incidents per mile of pipe is more than three times the national average...”

Lawmakers look to take Congress out of pipeline approval process

- The Hill – 5/20/15
<http://thehill.com/policy/energy-environment/242673-lawmakers-look-to-take-congress-out-of-pipeline-approval-process>
Pre-approving at least 10 major pipeline corridors (through NPS lands) is now a high priority

Heitkamp pushes for expedited pipeline permitting

- The Bakken Magazine – 5/19/15
<http://www.thebakken.com/articles/1137/heitkamp-pushes-for-expedited-pipeline-permitting>
Reduce approval timelines and limit public input – what could go wrong?

Ted Glick: It's Time to Stop FERC's Rubber Stamping of Fracking Infrastructure Projects

- EcoWatch – 5/18/15
<https://ecowatch.com/2015/05/18/ferc-fracking-infrastructure/>
Rubber Stamp and Revolving Door – coincidence? I think not!

US out-produces rest of world in oil and gas from shale

- The Bakken Magazine - 5/20/15
<http://www.thebakken.com/articles/1140/u-s-out-produces-rest-of-world-in-oil-and-gas-from-shale>
As usual, the US will develop the tech, rush to exploit and sell its resources and be forced to buy them back later at a high premium, since OTHER nations treat energy as a strategic geopolitical resource!