



ABRA Update #44 – September 1, 2015

ABRA After One Year

The Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance marks one year of existence next week. It was on September 8, 2014 that a press release went out announcing the coalition's existence. A good deal has occurred in the ensuing year, both on the issue of the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) and within the organizations. ABRA was created as a communications coalition to facilitate the sharing of relevant information about the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline among groups who concerned about the impact of the project on Virginia and West Virginia communities in the pipeline's path. It has grown to be more than that, and based on recommendations from an ABRA Planning Committee (discussed below), further changes can be expected in the future.

Among the highlights and accomplishments over the past twelve months of ABRA as an umbrella coalition are:

- We have grown from 22 initial members to 43 organizations.
- Regular update reports that flag import news items and other information about the ACP began to be issued in October 2014 and now are sent out weekly and redistributed to hundreds of additional people.
- ABRA members, assisted by ABRA communications and strategy meetings, made a significant impact in participating in and commenting on the ACP during the scoping period that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission conducted early this year, as well as on the comment periods conducted by the two National Forests that would be affected by the pipeline.
- Numerous meetings of ABRA member organizations with key state and federal public officials have taken place, followed by shared information and communications that have improved the overall effectiveness of the citizen response to the ACP.
- A March 7 ABRA wide meeting brought member organizations together to explore how to work together more effectively in confronting the ACP. Another organization-wide meeting is planned for October 24.
- A policy articulating collective concerns about the ACP's proposed routes was adopted in June and distributed widely to the press. 40 ABRA members have signed the policy.
- A report critiquing two economic studies released by Dominion Resources on which claims supporting the economic benefit the ACP would bring was commissioned by the Southern Environmental Law Center, an ABRA member, and released jointly in July to press throughout Virginia and West Virginia. It received widespread media coverage.
- Two additional economic reports have been commissioned by ABRA member organizations to explore: 1) the specific impact the ACP would have on 4 Virginia counties (Buckingham, Nelson, Augusta and Highland), and 2) the question of need for the ACP to serve expanded natural gas markets vs. the adequacy of existing infrastructure to meet that need. Both reports are expected to be completed by next month.

A Planning Committee was created this summer to consider ideas for change in ABRA that were made at the March 7 membership meeting. Its report was approved by

the ABRA Steering Committee on August 27 and has been distributed to the voting representatives of member organizations. The report recommended that ABRA:

- Continue to serve as the primary coalition of organizations concerned about and opposed to the ACP.
- Broaden its monitoring and communication activities, including addressing the serious impacts of compressor stations on affected communities.
- Assume a role in helping coordinate strategies among member groups
- Expand the 10 member Steering Committee that governs the coalition.

As ABRA enters its 2nd year of existence, the challenges of responding to the ACP promise to become even more formidable, with a formal application expected to be filed soon with FERC. You can expect that ABRA will be called upon to do even more. On behalf of the Steering Committee, I express gratitude to all ABRA member organizations for your many contributions and support for our collective efforts. Looking ahead, fasten your seatbelts!

- *Lewis Freeman, ABRA Chair*

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

It's time to step back and let pipeline crews survey

- The News Virginian – 8/26/15

http://www.dailyprogress.com/newsvirginian/opinion/editorials/it-s-time-to-step-back-and-let-pipeline-crews/article_4b96093e-4bae-11e5-bf79-470c0e8bc0b3.html

A call for calm and acceptance of the law...for now...but nobody has to like it

Dominion purchases land for natural gas compressor station site in Buckingham

- Richmond Times Dispatch – 8/26/15

http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/article_77d550a7-ac68-528c-ac2a-65483e67fee.html

Dominion drops \$2.5 million on land for compressor station

Mark Warner should raise flags against pipeline

- News Leader – 8/25/15

<http://www.newsleader.com/story/opinion/readers/2015/08/25/mark-warner-raise-flags-pipeline/32339725/>

Horizons Village Protests Atlantic Coast Pipeline

- NBC29.com – 8/31/15

<http://www.nbc29.com/story/29926372/horizons-village-protests-atlantic-coast-pipeline>

More high-value habitat in Dominion's crosshairs...

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Residents from Monroe and Giles counties oppose Mountain Valley Pipeline

- WVVA.com – 8/25/15

<http://www.wvva.com/story/29880089/2015/08/25/residents-from-monroe-county-and-giles-county-speak-out-against-mountain-valley-pipeline>

Differences in state laws for pipelines not helping all of those in the pipeline's path

In Chatham, Mountain Valley Pipeline leaders talk about next steps

- WDBJ7.com – 9/2/15

<http://www.wdbj7.com/news/local/southern-virginia/in-chatham-mountain-valley-pipeline-leaders-talk-about-next-steps/35061518>

Big Picture:

Dominion using rate riders to pay for new plants

- The Daily Progress – 8/30/15

http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/local/dominion-using-rate-riders-to-pay-for-new-plants/article_91dfd42c-4f75-11e5-928a-5f7ad49b5ba7.html

“...customers would have to pay for the new plants one way or another...”

Dueling Studies Dispute Need for More Pipelines in New England

- RTO Insider – 8/31/15

<http://www.rtoinsider.com/new-england-natural-gas-pipelines-17390/>

Findings support needs of the funders...I think this has happened once or twice before!

Shutesbury hydrogeologist wants federal regulators to require more detailed pipeline maps

- Daily Hampshire Gazette – 8/26/15

<http://www.gazettenet.com/home/18348347-95/shutesbury-hydrogeologist-wants-federal-regulators-to-require-more-detailed-pipeline-maps>

Ground and surface water concerns warrant significantly more information from project proponent

Global Demand Picture For Natural Gas Looks Increasingly Sour

- OilPrice.com – 8/31/15

<http://oilprice.com/Energy/Natural-Gas/Global-Demand-Picture-For-Natural-Gas-Looks-Increasingly-Sour.html>

Global market slide brings question of export viability...and financial validity of rush to build more pipelines

Coal's Worst Days Behind It as Archaic Grid Crimps Gas Growth

- Bloomberg – 9/1/15

<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-09-01/coal-s-worst-days-have-passed-as-archaic-grid-crimps-gas-growth>

Question: if you can't build more gas power plants until you upgrade the grid, why build pipelines to feed them **first**?