

# The Recorder

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2017-03-30 / Letters

## Dominion's treatment of landowners 'abusive'

*Editor's note: The following letter about the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline was submitted to Kimberly Bose, secretary of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission March 26, and shared with The Recorder. Dear Ms. Bose,*

Around April 2016, Dominion published numerous maps on their website of plans for Atlantic Coast Pipeline access roads. We discovered that Dominion planned to build an ACP access road on top the historic entrance (circa 1740) to our farm and on top of our one-lane gravel-dirt driveway and across two bridges.

We have 1.64 miles of road frontage on SR629 and more on Bright Hollow Road.

However, Dominion saw fit to destroy our numerous significant improvements, property, safety, farming operations and life in our historic home (1797).

The ACP access road would cut 750 acres of our 1,000- acre farm in half — right through the center separating our home from our barns among other things. The ACP access road would endanger us, our dogs, our farm help, visitors, service people, and our old home with a 24x7 highway over which we have no control and no warning of usage.

We would have to abandon the property and could not live here or manage farming operations until our destroyed improvements were rebuilt if that were even possible. Recovery from the ACP access road would require significant time and money for no purpose except to bully and intimidate us.

The ACP access road would complete destroy the value of the property. It would destroy the quality of our life forever. The access road would be a constant and horrific issue for the remainder of our lives. And there are many, many alternatives.

What kind of people we see at Dominion inflict this horror and stress on American citizens who are trying to live a peaceful life, and who have invested significant money in preserving a beautiful, historic property?

We have two conservation easements with the Virginia Outdoors Foundation. Dominion has crafted a “land swap” so that they can illegally cross our conservation property.

Due to our health issues and the stress we experienced from Dominion, we decided to hire an attorney to talk with Dominion about moving the path of the ACP across our 750 acres and moving the ACP access road. He met several times with Dominion representatives and they refused to make any changes.

Our attorney clearly explained all of the issues for us, especially with the access road. Dominion refused to do anything. Dominion simply burned up thousands of dollars we spent on an attorney over 11 months. They have unlimited funds and the landowners have limited resources to resist Dominion’s destruction and arrogance.

I almost died from an allergic reaction to an antibiotic in June 2016 while recovering from multiple fractures in my pelvis. I had to spend almost six weeks in the University of Virginia ICU in Charlottesville. I was on a ventilator with a feeding tube. I had multiple surgeries on my throat. I now have serious nerve damage, which requires multiple surgeries and intense physical therapy. Most of my hair fell out in September 2016 which my doctor believed was due to the stress inflicted on us by Dominion. It took me several months to be able to walk.

My husband was also ill and weak during this time. My right hand is essentially paralyzed so producing documents to file with FERC is extremely difficult.

The stress inflicted on us by FERC and Dominion has been significant and continuous. We expected this to be the most peaceful time in our life. We planned to live in peace on the farm until we died. We planned to sell parcels to help finance the remainder of our lives and keep maintaining our property. We wanted to preserve our historic property for future generations to enjoy. All of that is now impossible due to the ACP and Dominion and FERC.

We have listed parcels for sale for over 18 months. People will not even come to look at our property due to the ACP. Yet Dominion and FERC claim that property values are not negatively impacted by the ACP. That is absurd and dishonest to say the least. The insignificant compensation we might receive from Dominion is ridiculous compared to the loss we suffer in property value, destruction of our environment and quality of life.

When Dominion published the maps for the access roads, they boasted about how they were “using existing roads for access roads” as if that were a good thing. Our driveway is not an existing road but a private driveway essential to our lives. This is one of many examples of the sloppy work by Dominion as well as their arrogance, which I find unparalleled.

On March 20, in a meeting in our home with Dominion representatives, Gregory Park of Dominion admitted to us that the access roads were planned by people sitting in offices and looking at maps. There was no attempt on the part of Dominion to understand what they were doing and the impact. That is because FERC and government at many levels has made Dominion all-powerful. And Dominion is quite high on their power.

Within about three months of publishing the maps for ACP roads, Dominion suddenly removed them from the website. Numerous people and organizations have tried to get information from Dominion about the access roads as well as other ACP-related structures. Dominion refuses to discuss anything and provides no specifics. Dominion is notorious for failing to provide any specifics.

Apparently even the USFS cannot get Dominion to fulfill their request for information and specifics.

We are now being represented by litigation attorneys. While we do not wish to litigate, we have found it impossible to work with Dominion. Yet Dominion boasts about how they work with landowners and compromise. They have made concessions to some landowners. Dominion moved the route of the ACP on the property of the farm next to us. But they refuse to move the route on our property.

We want FERC and other government agencies to know how we have been abused and ignored by Dominion. Dominion planned to survey our property from March 21-28. We refused to allow them unless they would meet with us to discuss our issues. We realized they could obtain a court order but that we were most willing to do this.

Four Dominion representatives including Gregory Park came to our home on March 20. We agreed, we allowed Dominion to proceed with the survey on March 21. I will make another filing about the meeting with Dominion on March 20. It did not go well.

FERC needs to force Dominion to change the way they treat property owners and how they ignore any issues. Dominion only cares about moving forward as they see fit. This kind of abuse of American citizens by a private corporation with the approval of our government is astonishing. I believe this is the kind of behavior that President Trump is committed to change. I applaud his efforts and hope that FERC is high on the list along with the IRS, FBI and more.

I will provide visual aids in a separate FERC filing to convey the horror of the ACP access road as well as the ACP on us.

Roberta K. Koontz  
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