



ABRA Update #126 – April 20, 2017

Wetlands Polluted by Rover Pipeline Accident

Over 2 million gallons of drilling fluid have been spilled onto wetlands in northern Ohio during constructing the Rover Pipeline. The 713-mile, \$4.2 billion Rover project would transport natural gas from northern West Virginia to Pennsylvania, Ohio and Michigan. The Rover Pipeline is a project of a Energy Transfer Partners, a Texas-based pipeline operator. Construction on the Rover began a month ago, after the project received its FERC certificate as one of the final actions before Commissioner Norman Bay resigned, denying FERC a quorum.

The release of the drilling fluids into affected wetlands occurred in two separate instances on April 13 (west of Canton) and 14 (east of Mansfield) as part of a horizontal directional drilling (HDD) operation. Energy Transfer formally reported the incidents to the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency in an [April 17 letter](#). HDD is a technique that will be used in constructing the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, most prominently in drilling underneath the Blue Ridge Parkway and the James River. For more, see related story below under “Big Picture.”

A message from the Sierra Club – Peoples’ Climate Movement

On the 100th Day of the Trump Administration, we will be in the streets of Washington D.C. to show the world and our leaders that we will resist attacks on our people, our communities and our planet.

We will come together from across the United States and strengthen our movement. We will demonstrate our power and resistance at the gates of the White House. We will bring our concerns about the climate crisis and the problems that affect our communities to our leaders in Congress to demand action.

We invite you to join the Peoples Climate Movement on Saturday, April 29th as we march to:

- Fund investments in our communities, people and environment to transition to a new clean and renewable energy economy that works for all.
- Ensure public funds and investments create good paying jobs that provide a family-sustaining wage and benefits and preserve workers’ rights, including the right to unionize.
- Protect our right to clean air, water, land, healthy communities and a world at peace.
- Advance solutions to the climate crisis [that are] rooted in racial, social and economic justice and committed to protecting front-line communities and workers.

Please support ABRA’s important work by clicking [here](#).



We have buses running to DC from Charlottesville, Staunton and Harrisonburg. Tickets run from \$15 to \$30. The websites for buying tickets are:

[Harrisonburg People's Climate March](#)

[Charlottesville People's Climate March Bus](#)

[Staunton People's Climate March Bus](#)

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Agency argues pipeline statement short on substance

- The Recorder – 4/20/17

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Agency_argues_pipeline_statement_short_on_substance-Recorder_20170420.pdf

Pipeline advocates and public natural resource agencies are split over whether the proposed pipeline would chop up natural habitat. The USFWS contends the effects would be harmful.

US Forest Service seeks revised permit application

- The Recorder – 4/20/17

http://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/US_Forest_service_seeks_revised_permit_application-Recorder_20170420.pdf

Opinion/Letter: ACP a life-and-death risk at Wintergreen

- The Daily progress – 4/17/17

http://www.dailyprogress.com/opinion/opinion-letter-acp-a-life-and-death-risk-at-wintergreen/article_e933fc58-2363-11e7-baa3-6f7969a62765.html

Congress denied construction of an emergency egress from Wintergreen via the Blue Ridge Parkway, stating that the area was too “unique and its ecosystem too fragile” to permit a small road that would potentially increase residents’ and public safety. Apparently, a 125-ft swath of cleared and blasted land that crosses the same area (Dominion’s “Plan C”...but likely its desired alternative) and provides no public benefit is no problem at all!

Federation Asks for New Pipeline Assessment

- Coastal Review Online – 4/18/17

<http://www.coastalreview.org/2017/04/federation-asks-new-acpl-assessment/>

North Carolina Coastal Federation said it believes a new Draft Environmental Impact Statement should be conducted on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

Virginia gas pipeline project clears hurdle

- Bay Journal – 4/17/17

http://www.bayjournal.com/article/virginia_gas_pipeline_project_clears_hurdle

Extent of state review of impact on stream crossings remains uncertain for Atlantic Coast route.

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Virginia Supreme Court hears pipeline cases

- The Roanoke Times – 4/19/17

http://www.roanoke.com/business/news/virginia-supreme-court-hears-pipeline-cases/article_48e3a3a9-5d94-502e-8c91-e269a9e9fe8a.html

The Virginia Supreme Court heard two cases Wednesday challenging a controversial state law that allows surveyors to enter private property without the owner's consent to study their land for a possible natural gas pipeline route.

Dominion Bets Big on Establishment Candidates Northam, Gillespie in Virginia Governor's Race

- DeSmog – 4/19/17

<https://www.desmogblog.com/2017/04/19/dominion-bets-big-establishment-candidates-northam-gillespie-virginia-governor-s-race>

Mountain Valley Pipeline builder also spending on Northam, Gillespie.

More than 50 Democrats running for Virginia House pledge to refuse Dominion money

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 4/18/17

http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/more-than-democrats-running-for-virginia-house-pledge-to-refuse/article_d6dd1acf-0fa6-51f2-a562-beed33409999.html

A total of 57 candidates, 53 of them Democrats, have signed a pledge circulated by Activate Virginia.

Related:

<http://bluevirginia.us/2017/04/great-work-activate-virginia-57-dem-house-delegates-candidates-refuse-dominion-appalachian-power>

Dominion's rate freeze gouges Virginians

- The Washington Post – 4/18/17

https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/all-opinions-are-local/wp/2017/04/18/dominions-rate-freeze-gouges-virginians/?utm_term=.db89f82bfo3c

In 2015, the staff of the State Corporation Commission determined that Dominion's rates were designed to produce excess revenue of \$310 million in 2015 and \$299 million in 2016. The "rate freeze" law prohibits the commission from ordering any rate decreases or refunds until at least 2023.

Related:

http://www.roanoke.com/news/dan_casey/casey-electric-customers-take-it-on-the-chin-once-again/article_b21e9587-e602-5941-aea6-954642c62673.html

Big Picture:

States and Feds May Face Policy Donnybrook

- Power Magazine – 4/15/17

<http://www.powermag.com/blog/states-and-feds-may-face-policy-donnybrook/>

The battle is shaping up over two major infrastructure issues: state policies to give existing nuclear electric generating plants consumer subsidies in federally-regulated wholesale energy markets, and state efforts to assert jurisdiction over interstate natural gas pipelines.

Bold promises, fewer results: Trump's executive orders don't always live up to his claims

- Los Angeles Times – 4/16/17

<http://www.latimes.com/politics/la-na-pol-trump-executive-orders-20170416-story.html>

A number of Trump's early executive actions were "not well thought-through," – Ya THINK?

Rover Pipeline Spills More Than 2 Million Gallons of 'Drilling Fluid' in Ohio Wetlands, One Month After Construction Began

- Cleveland Scene – 4/19/17

<http://www.clevescene.com/scene-and-heard/archives/2017/04/19/rover-pipeline-spills-more-than-2-million-gallons-of-drilling-fluid-in-ohio-wetlands-one-month-after-construction-began>

The pipeline just began construction last month – thanks to a last-minute certificate from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission – and it's been an extremely rocky road so far.

The little-known federal agency with the power to buck Trump's anti-climate agenda

- ThinkProgress – 4/14/17

<https://thinkprogress.org/federal-agency-with-power-to-buck-trump-on-climate-e531eb29da1d>

An optimistic view, to be sure, but one that should not be discounted.

Related:

<http://www.powermag.com/blog/trumps-infrastructure-failure-at-ferc/>

FERC's environmental justice, climate review scrutinized

- Energy & Environment News – 4/19/17

<https://www.eenews.net/stories/1060053253>

US pipeline developers push back on Trump's call for domestic steel

- Platts – 4/19/17

<http://www.platts.com/latest-news/natural-gas/washington/us-pipeline-developers-push-back-on-trumps-call-21493565>

Is Trump purposefully aiding the environmental protection cause? Or is it just incompetence and lack of understanding?

Related:

<http://www.powermag.com/blog/trumps-infrastructure-failure-at-ferc/>

Climate Change Reroutes a Yukon River in a Geological Instant

- The New York Times – 4/17/17

https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/17/science/climate-change-glacier-yukon-river.html?_r=0

A process that would ordinarily take thousands of years — or more — happened in just a few months in 2016.

Wood: The Lethal Renewable Energy Swindle

- Forbes – 4/20/17

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/bjornlomborg/2017/04/20/wood-the-lethal-renewable-energy-swindle/#df99393a815>

Chatham House finds that the government's view of biomass as a carbon neutral energy source is a 'flawed assumption' that is based on ignoring the emissions from the burning of wood.

Bloomberg Adds Climate Change Site To Its Financial News Empire

- Huffington Post – 4/20/17

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/bloomberg-climate-change_us_58f7e640e4b0cbo86d7dd9e5

Droves of reporters at Bloomberg's more than 150 bureaus around the world regularly file stories on climate change. Climate Changed will collect those stories in one location.