



ABRA Update #137 – July 6, 2017

ACP Water Quality Hearing Dates for Virginia and West Virginia Finalized

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) have formally announced the dates for hearings and comment periods for considering applications for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) to be certified in each state under the requirements of Section 401 of the Clean Water Act.

The June 30 announcement from DEQ calls for an overall comment period from July 3 to August 22 for draft water quality certifications for both the ACP and the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) plus public hearings – 3 for the ACP and 2 for the MVP to be conducted in August (dates and locations below). Given the significance of the DEQ's consideration of the water quality applications for the two pipelines, a longer comment period is warranted. An effort is underway to achieve an extension of the comment period.

The draft certification documents for each pipeline (links below) upon which comments should be made are written with the presumption that the pipeline qualifies for receiving certification. Thus, the burden for persons submitting written comments or providing oral testimony at the hearings is to provide arguments as to why the ACP or MVP should not receive certification from the DEQ.

All persons concerned about the water quality impacts of the ACP and MVP are strongly urged to file written comments on the draft certification documents and, if possible, to participate in the public hearings.

Written comments for the [ACP draft certification document](#) should be sent by email to: comment-acp@deq.virginia.gov; or by mail to: DEQ, P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, VA 23218. For those wishing to comment on the [MVP draft certification document](#), written comments should be sent by email to: comment-mvp@deq.virginia.gov; and by mail to: DEQ, P.O. Box 1105, Richmond, VA 23218.

The public hearings schedule for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is:

- *Monday, August 7, 2017, from 6 to 10 p.m. -- James Madison University, Festival Conference and Student Center, Grand Ballroom, 1301 Carrier Drive, Harrisonburg, VA 22807. Parking is in Lots C11, C12, and D3.*
- *Thursday, August 10, 2017, from 6 to 10 p.m. -- Longwood University, Jarman Auditorium, 201 High St., Farmville, VA 23901. Parking is in Wheeler Lot, Crafts Lot, High Street Lot, Randolph Lot or other university-owned lots.*
- *Monday, August 14, 2017, from 6 to 10 p.m. -- Dinwiddie High School Auditorium, 11501 Boisseau Road, Dinwiddie, VA 23841. Parking is only in designated areas on school property.*

The public hearing schedule for the Mountain Valley Pipeline is:

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

- Tuesday, August 8, 2017, from 6 to 10 p.m. -- Radford University, Preston/Bondurant Auditorium, 801 East Main St., Radford, VA 24142. Parking is only in Lot A, or Lots E and U.
- Wednesday, August 9, 2017, from 6 to 10 p.m. -- Chatham High School Auditorium, 100 Cavalier Circle, Chatham, VA 24531. Parking is only in designated areas on school property.

The West Virginia DEP published on July 1 in local newspapers [its notice of a comment period](#) for Section 401 certification for the ACP (the agency has already approved 401 certification for the MVP). The comment period concludes August 4. Written comments should be emailed to: dep.comments@wv.gov or mailed to: WVDEP Division of Water and Waste Management, Att: Laura Cooper, 601 57th Street SE, Charleston, WV 25304-2345. Public hearings will be held on:

- Monday, July 31, 6 p.m. – Buckhannon-Upshur High School Auditorium, Buckhannon, WV
- Tuesday, August 1, 6 p.m.– Pocahontas County High School Auditorium, Dunmore, WV

The North Carolina Department of Water Resources, as previously announced in *Update*, will conduct two public hearings on that state's Section 401 certification for the ACP, as follows:

- Tuesday, July 18, 6-9 p.m. – Fayetteville Technical Community College, Cumberland Hall, Fayetteville, NC. (sign-in for speakers at 5 pm),
- Thursday, July 20, 6-9 p.m. – Nash Community College, Brown Hall, Rocky Mount, NC. (sign-in for speakers at 5 pm).

Critical Missing Information on ACP Plans Sought from Virginia DEQ

The lack of specific information about how the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) would be built without creating threats to water quality has hampered analysis of the project. The release last week of a draft water quality certification for the ACP (see link in article above) underscores the problem and prompted the Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition (DPMC) to submit a Freedom of Information Request to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The [July 6 DPMC letter](#) seeks the following information for three specific locations along the pipeline route in Highland, Bath, Augusta and Nelson Counties that traverse steep mountain terrain and are thus susceptible to serious erosion problems:

1. Site-specific information describing erosion and sediment control plans, stormwater management plans, stream crossing plans, and slope stabilization plans for construction associated with the pipeline corridor, access roads, and other workspace;
2. Plan narratives, schematics, and site-specific plan view and cross-section diagrams of the pipeline corridor, access roads, and other workspace construction, showing the extent of excavation, the disposition of spoil, and the locations and specifications for erosion and runoff control and slope stabilization structures; and
3. All pre-construction and post-construction runoff calculations prepared to evaluate potential changes in runoff characteristics following construction associated with the pipeline corridor, access roads, and other workspace.

The DPMC letter, which is accompanied by maps of the targeted areas, seeks information for the pipeline corridor, project-related access roads, and all other projected-related workspace.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

State agency to accept pipeline comments

- The Recorder – 7/6/17
https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/State_agency_to_accept_pipeline_comments-Recorder_20170706.pdf

The DEQ announcement drew heavy criticism from citizens calling for publication of site-specific erosion and sediment control and stormwater management plans on which the public needs to comment.

Critics Challenge Dominion's Pipeline Tactics

- WVTF Radio IQ – 7/5/17
<http://wvtf.org/post/critics-challenge-dominions-pipeline-tactics#stream/0>

Conflicts of interest pile up on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline project

- The Washington Post – 7/3/17
https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/conflicts-of-interest-pile-up-on-the-atlantic-coast-pipeline-project/2017/07/03/308e7b34-5ff8-11e7-80a2-8c226031ac3f_story.html?utm_term=.9ec6193d08a0

Anti-Pipeline Hikers Celebrate End of Route with Church Service

- NBC 29 News – 7/2/17
<http://www.nbc29.com/story/35798909/anti-pipeline-hikers-celebrate-end-of-route-with-church-service>
They completed a 16-day, 150 mile hike in what was billed as 'Walking the Line: Into the Heart of Virginia.'

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Va. to expand review of proposed gas pipelines

- The Daily Progress – 7/1/17
http://www.dailyprogress.com/news/state/va-to-expand-review-of-proposed-gas-pipelines/article_d2b9fbf9-310a-53e9-b61b-5ab924da6ed9.html

The state Department of Environmental Quality is preparing additional conditions for certifying the protection of water quality under the Clean Water Act and submitting them for public comment.

Letters to the editor: Mountain Valley Pipeline's permitting needs to comply with local ordinances

- Star-Tribune – 7/5/17
http://www.chathamstartribune.com/opinion/article_f0d1a7b6-6185-11e7-9869-6b022b68ccco.html
The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC), in conversation, confirmed that MVP's permitting requires compliance with local ordinances.

Nash: Lobbyists, Donors and Returns on Investments

- The News & Advance – 7/2/17
http://www.newsadvance.com/opinion/community_viewpoint/nash-lobbyists-donors-and-returns-on-investments/article_67fc74a2-5dd4-11e7-a4ef-33aa78567a3f.html

Can your legislator explain why it's OK to accept "donations" from the two power companies and still cast votes on legislation that affects not only their profits, but also our electric bills and, crucially, our environment?

Big Picture:

Trump May Find Some Allies on Climate Change at G-20 Meeting

- The New York Times – 7/5/17

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/05/climate/g20-climate-change-paris-accord-trump-merkel-germany.html>

Western European efforts to isolate President Trump for rejecting the Paris climate change agreement appear to be faltering as leaders gather for a summit meeting in Hamburg, Germany, at the end of the week.

Trump To Urge European Allies To Dump Russia, Buy U.S. Gas

- The Financial – 7/4/17

<http://www.finchannel.com/world/america/66175-trump-to-urge-european-allies-to-dump-russia-buy-u-s-gas>

The United States recently began shipping liquefied gas to Poland for the first time, and Trump will tell allies in Poland that he wants to make it as easy as possible for U.S. companies to ship more gas to Central and Eastern Europe, the White House officials said.

Court Blocks E.P.A. Effort to Suspend Obama-Era Methane Rule

- The New York Times – 7/3/17

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/07/03/climate/court-blocks-epa-effort-to-suspend-obama-era-methane-rule.html>

The 2-to-1 decision from the United States Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit is a legal setback for Scott Pruitt, the E.P.A. administrator, who is trying to roll back dozens of Obama-era environmental regulations.

Feature: Pipelines & Battle Lines

- Pacific Sun – 6/28/17

<http://pacificsun.com/feature-pipelines-battle-lines/>

Veresen pushing hard to resurrect the Jordan Cove LNG facility and its associated pipeline...one of only 2 that FERC has denied a permit in over 30 years.

Sunoco's PR firm aims to 'neutralize opposition' to Mariner East pipeline project

- StateImpact PA - 7/6/17

<https://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2017/07/06/sunocos-pr-firm-aims-to-neutralize-opposition-to-mariner-east-pipeline-project/>

The Bravo Group has a number of energy companies as clients, including the pipeline builders Williams and Energy Transfer Partners, as well as gas drillers Cabot Oil and Gas, and Southwestern Energy.

Germany Is Addicted to Russian Gas

- Bloomberg – 7/3/17

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-07-03/german-addiction-to-russia-gas-raises-alarm-in-merkel-s-backyard>

Germany gets about 40 percent of what it consumes from Russia, the world's largest exporter.

France to End Sale of Diesel and Gasoline Vehicles by 2040

- The New York Times – 7/6/17

<https://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2017/07/06/business/06reuters-climatechange-france.html>

France will also end coal-generated electricity production by 2022.