



ABRA Update #162 – January 4, 2018

ABRA in 2018: A New Year and New Challenges

A year ago, in the first week of January 2017, ABRA members were deeply involved in analyzing the then just released Draft Environmental Impact Study (DEIS) on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) and beginning to develop arguments and strategies to present to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission during the comment period and at hearings on the DEIS. At that same time last year, none of the environmental agencies in the three states through which the ACP was to cross had yet to identify a process by which they would evaluate the potential impact of the project on their respective state's water quality. And, the U.S. Forest Service was still evaluating the wisdom of permitting the ACP to cross the Monongahela and George Washington National Forests.

Twelve months later, FERC and the Forest Service have approved the ACP, West Virginia has waived its review of water quality, Virginia has given a conditional yes to issuing a water quality permit, North Carolina's environmental agency continues to study the ACP water quality application.

The project is admittedly closer to receiving all final approvals, but our fight continues vigorously to defeat this unnecessary and environmental damaging project. Legal challenges to some of the aforementioned approvals have already commenced (see [here](#) and [here](#)). More such challenges are being evaluated. In the meantime, ABRA has taken steps to strengthen the coalition's overall effort to ultimately prove the economic and environmental folly of the ACP:

- The ABRA Steering Committee, which guides coalition programs and policy implementation, has been expanded to broaden the diversity of interests and expertise represented;
- A Board of Directors has been created to strengthen the overall management of the coalition;
- A new program, to be announced soon, is under development to address the need for greater scrutiny of the ACP as the project gears up for the possible commencement of construction; and
- New opportunities will soon be created to help more people be productively involved in the continuing fight against the ACP.

ABRA's Steering Committee and Board of Directors thanks all of you for your tremendous efforts in 2017. We look forward to working with you in new ways in 2018.

Keep up with new developments by visiting and liking us on [Facebook](#).

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

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Dominion offers to buy SCANA in wake of S.C. nuclear plant failure

- The Post and Courier – 1/3/18
https://www.postandcourier.com/business/dominion-offers-to-buy-scana-in-wake-of-s-c/article_c3f17458-f030-11e7-a058-334629fee3f2.html
- Related:
- <http://www.thestate.com/news/politics-government/article192688859.html>

Augusta County residents pack meeting to oppose pipeline storage yard in Churchville

- News Leader – 1/4/18
<http://www.newsleader.com/story/news/local/2018/01/04/augusta-county-residents-pack-meeting-oppose-pipeline-storage-yard-churchville/1004446001/>
- Related:
- <http://www.whsv.com/content/news/Large-turn-out-in-opposition-to-Dominion-zoning-permit-proposal--468078473.html>
- <http://www.nbc29.com/story/37184645/augusta-county-reviews-proposal-for-dominion-energy-construction-yard>

Atlantic Coast Pipeline inched closer in 2017

- The Wilson Times – 12/31/17
<http://www.wilsontimes.com/stories/atlantic-coast-pipeline-inched-closer-in-2017.109176>
- Though experiencing delays and some opposition, 2017 saw developers of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline overcome major hurdles toward implementing the \$5 billion project.

Tracing the anti-pipeline fight in Nelson County

- The News & Advance – 12/28/17
http://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/tracing-the-anti-pipeline-fight-in-nelson-county/article_133210e4-ec1d-11e7-b6d2-23eboeodcof5.html
- It all started about 3½ years ago, when Nelsonians learned their county would be one of 12 counties — along with two cities — in Virginia that would be crossed by the 600-mile pipeline.

N.C. officials emphasize due diligence in Atlantic Coast Pipeline analysis

- Triangle Business Journal – 12/22/17
<https://www.bizjournals.com/triangle/news/2017/12/22/n-c-officials-emphasizes-due-diligence-in-atlantic.html>
- While Atlantic Coast Pipeline officials are still bullish on their timeline for the 600-mile natural gas pipeline, North Carolina environmental regulators continue to sort through the paperwork.

County tweaks pipeline support letter

- The Record Delta – 12/22/17
<https://therecorddelta.com/article/county-tweaks-pipeline-support-letter>
- Upshur County Commissioners voted to modify a letter they will send in support of Atlantic Coast Pipeline construction in an effort to address local concerns about water safety.

Town: 2017 election outcome a huge win for the environment

- The Roanoke Times – 12/28/17
http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/commentary/town-election-outcome-a-huge-win-for-the-environment/article_ca92ea2d-36ae-580a-a997-8c3aaef6662d.html
- Let's see what our legislators do with it.

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Two Pipelines, Two Different Decisions

- NPR WVTF – 12/26/17

<http://wvtf.org/post/two-pipelines-two-different-decisions>

After Virginia's State Water Control Board came to two different conclusions about two, proposed natural gas pipelines, the group filed a lawsuit asking a court to reconsider the decision.

Landowners say Mountain Valley Pipeline shouldn't gain immediate access

- WV Metro News – 1/3/18

<http://wvmetronews.com/2018/01/03/landowners-say-mountain-valley-pipeline-shouldnt-gain-immediate-access/>

Letter: Board should reconsider MVP decision

- The Roanoke Times – 1/1/18

http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/letters/letter-board-should-reconsider-mvp-decision/article_bd4eab9b-d113-5cad-a345-e59db9d2a5f3.html

Shopping center developer at odds with pipeline developer

- WV Metro News – 12/23/17

<http://wvmetronews.com/2017/12/23/shopping-center-developer-at-odds-with-pipeline-developer/>

Owner claims offered compensation inadequate and that MVP has not demonstrated an ability to pay.

General Assembly Back In Session With New Governor at The Helm

- The Roanoke Star - 1/3/18

<http://theroanokestar.com/2018/01/03/general-assembly-back-in-session-with-new-governor-at-the-helm/>

Big Picture:

America's Power Grid Still Hangs Tough in Face of Winter Wallop

- Bloomberg Technology – 1/4/18

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-01-04/america-s-power-grid-still-hangs-tough-in-face-of-winter-wallop>

Arctic Blast Costly To New England Consumers And Environment

- Hartford Courant – 1/2/17

<http://www.courant.com/business/hc-biz-arctic-cold-electricity-prices-20180102-story.html>

Related:

http://www.newburyportnews.com/news/cold-snap-drives-gas-prices-rekindles-pipeline-debate/article_34821933-110e-5f53-b8e7-721da458f38a.html

FERC Approves TransCanada's Mountaineer XPress, Gulf XPress Projects

- Natural Gas Intelligence – 1/3/17

<http://www.naturalgasintel.com/articles/112947-ferc-approves-transcanadas-mountaineer-xpress-gulf-xpress-projects>

The overbuild continues...

Pennsylvania DEP Shuts Down Sunoco Pipeline Construction

- NBC10 Philadelphia – 1/3/18

<https://www.nbcphiladelphia.com/news/local/Pennsylvania-DEP-Shuts-Down-Sunoco-Mariner-East-Pipeline-467876623.html>

The pipeline known as Mariner East II has been beset by construction issues and allegations of permit violations over the past year.

Governor Cuomo's Call For New York Pension Funds to Divest From Fossil Fuels is Fiscally Responsible

- IEEFA – 1/4/17

<http://ieefa.org/governor-cuomos-call-new-york-pension-funds-divest-fossil-fuels-fiscally-responsible/>
Oil Stocks are Not the Reliable Performers They Used to Be; Divestment Would Improve Pension Fund Portfolios

The Year Climate Change Began to Spin Out of Control

- MIT Technology Review – 1/4/18

<https://www.technologyreview.com/s/609642/the-year-climate-change-began-to-spin-out-of-control/>

For decades, scientists have warned that climate change would make extreme events like droughts, floods, hurricanes, and wildfires more frequent, more devastating, or both. In 2017, we got an up-close look at the raw ferocity of such an altered world

Related:

<https://blog.ucsusa.org/brenda-ekwurzle/the-polar-vortex-winter-storm-grayson-and-climate-change-whats-the-connection>

Clean Energy Soared in the U.S. in 2017 Due to Economics, Policy and Technology

- Inside Climate News – 1/3/18

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/03012018/clean-power-renewable-energy-jobs-technology-grids-policy-2017>