



ABRA Update #172 – March 15, 2018

Outreach to Regulatory Agencies on CSI Begins

ABRA has begun an extensive outreach effort to establish working relationships with the government agencies that have responsibilities for inspecting and enforcing regulations governing the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. A critical component of the Pipeline Compliance Surveillance Initiative (CSI), the new program recently launched by ABRA to organize and embolden citizen oversight of pipeline construction, is to communicate to enforcement agencies incidents of violations.

To establish working relationships with those agencies, ABRA has begun a series of outreach meetings to explain the CSI program and to explore how the program can work constructively with each of them. In January, ABRA representatives met with West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection officials in Charleston. A follow-up meeting with the agency is planned for early April. Last month, a similar meeting was held with the U.S. Forest Service, and a second discussion was held last week in Elkins, WV with officials of the Monongahela and George Washington National Forests and their contractors.

This week, ABRA had a very productive discussion with David Paylor, Director of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, and key members of his staff. In that meeting, as with the other agency meetings, the CSI program was favorably received and avenues of further communications were established. A similar dialogue with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission staff is planned.

First CSI Incident Report is Made

The first incident of a suspected compliance violation has been reported and is being brought to the attention of the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The occurrence is an apparent unauthorized access road and equipment staging area for construction. It is in Augusta County in conjunction with the area where horizontal directional drilling is to occur under the Blue Ridge Parkway and Appalachian Trail. A copy of the incident report is [posted on the CSI website](#). The report results from a flyover by the ABRA/CSI Pipeline Airforce. Similar reports will be posted on the website, as they occur.

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

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

CSI Volunteers Are Needed

The success of the Pipeline Compliance Surveillance Initiative (CSI) depends upon volunteer citizen activists stepping forward to participate in the all-important work of observation and reporting. This was the subject of an email sent Tuesday to the ABRA mailing list. To reiterate that message: WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Here's how you can become involved:

1. Sign up as a CSI volunteer. This can be easily done at <http://pipelineupdate.org/csi-volunteer/>. **Do it today!** And, urge your friends and colleagues who care about preserving the environmental integrity of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge region to become a CSI volunteer.
2. Visit and use the CSI website as a resource for important background information on the program: <http://pipelineupdate.org/csi/>
3. When you see an incident associated with ACP construction you believe could be a violation of permit conditions or regulations, report it to the ABRA hotline at 1-877-Go2ABRA (1-877-462-2272) or send an email to csi@abralliance.org.
4. Stay abreast of all pipeline developments (including the MVP and other projects) by regularly reading *ABRA Update* and visiting our Facebook page, where new developments are reported several times a day (<https://www.facebook.com/abralliance/>).
5. Finally, if you have questions, feel free to call Lew Freeman: [540-468-2769](tel:540-468-2769).

A Pipeline Storage Yard in West Virginia



The photo above, recently brought to ABRA's attention, depicts a pipeline materials storage yard in northern West Virginia. Not sure if it's for the ACP or MVP.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Pipeline Opponents Vow to Act as Environmental Watchdogs During Construction

- NBC29 News – 3/13/18

<http://www.nbc29.com/story/37716663/pipeline-opponents-vow-to-serve-as-environmental-watchdogs-during-construction>

Story highlights the aerial components of the Pipeline CSI program.

Power bills, access at issue

- The Recorder – 3/15/18

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Power_bills_access_at_issue-Recorder_20180315.pdf

Will Dominion pass on increased costs of ACP construction to captive customers? Will parts of the George Washington National Forest be closed to public access during construction?

Related:

- http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/government-politics/dominion-fails-in-attempt-to-bar-testimony-on-pipeline-s/article_fd1b3914-fd12-569e-9c58-77c82a0abo32.html

Norfolk approves gas pipeline construction beneath drinking water reservoirs

- The Virginian-Pilot – 3/14/18

https://pilotonline.com/news/local/environment/article_c007f13c-26db-11e8-9c46-6fac482af94d.html

The pipeline would run beneath the Lake Prince and Western Branch reservoirs in Suffolk, which are on property owned by Norfolk and supply much of the city's drinking water.

Coalition files requests to stop pipeline

- The Recorder – 3/15/18

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Coalition_files_requests_to_stop_pipeline-Recorder_20180316.pdf

Parts of Monongahela Forest to close during Atlantic Coast Pipeline construction

- WVNS59 News – 3/9/18

<http://www.wvnstv.com/local-news/pocahontas-county/parts-of-monongahela-forest-to-close-during-atlantic-coast-pipeline-construction/1026425453>

Governor signs sweeping utility overhaul affecting 3 million Virginia ratepayers

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 3/9/18

http://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/governor-signs-sweeping-utility-overhaul-affecting-million-virginia-ratepayers/article_ce65175d-c789-5517-bc0c-e4cbd5d2c554.html

Related:

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/all-opinions-are-local/wp/2018/03/12/virginias-electric-utility-overhaul-paves-way-for-cleaner-more-efficient-energy/?utm_term=.4e8676bed8bc

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

Judge grants injunction against tree sitters

- The Register-Herald – 3/14/17

http://www.register-herald.com/news/judge-grants-injunction-against-tree-sitters/article_0313829b-022b-5b1b-bb10-491d25b6ec11.html

It is unclear exactly what actions would be taken if law enforcement is directed to enforce the injunction.

WV DEP orders Rover Pipeline to stop construction, citing multiple violations

- Charleston Gazette-Mail – 3/13/18

https://www.wvgazette.com/news/wv-dep-orders-rover-pipeline-to-stop-construction-citing-multiple/article_db7fe0c-d699-58bc-b2d2-a06e1adbfe94.html

The alleged offenses include leaving trash and construction debris partially buried on site, improperly installing perimeter control and failing to inspect or clean public and private roads around the construction site.

Majors, Chisholm and Bondurant: A dispatch from the path of the Mountain Valley Pipeline

- The Roanoke Times – 3/14/18

http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/commentary/majors-chisholm-and-bondurant-a-dispatch-from-the-path-of/article_1b9203e5-f26f-5c1f-9948-87a9169a796a.html

Forest service imposes emergency closure along Mountain Valley Pipeline route

- The Roanoke Times – 3/11/18

http://www.roanoke.com/news/local/forest-service-imposes-emergency-closure-along-mountain-valley-pipeline-route/article_a5762f9f-3f80-5f3b-b84e-3a0b736249d5.html

With the exception of authorized personnel, the order prohibits anyone from being within 200 feet of either side of a right-of-way established for the pipeline to pass through the national forest in Monroe County, WV and Giles and Montgomery counties in Virginia.

Big Picture:

The government is nearly done with a major report on climate change. Trump isn't going to like it

- The Washington Post – 3/12/18

https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp/2018/03/12/the-government-is-close-to-finishing-a-climate-change-report-trump-wont-like-it/?utm_term=.64fd324384a5

The National Climate Assessment is based, in significant part, on another report, dubbed the Climate Science Special Report, a document that found there was “no convincing alternative explanation” for climate change other than human activities such as fossil fuel burning.

Pompeo, Trump's Pick for Secretary of State, Is a 'Great Climate Skeptic'

- The New York Times – 3/13/18

<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/13/climate/pompeo-state-department-climate-change.html>

Mike Pompeo, President Trump's pick to succeed Rex W. Tillerson as Secretary of State, received considerable funding from oil and gas companies while in Congress.

How Climate Activists Failed to Make Clear the Problem with Natural Gas

- Yale Environment 360 – 3/13/18

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/how-climate-activists-failed-to-make-clear-the-problem-with-natural-gas-mckibben>

The climate movement's biggest failure has been its inability to successfully make the case that natural gas is not a clean replacement for other fossil fuels. So as natural gas has boomed, U.S. emissions of methane, a potent greenhouse gas, have increased dramatically.

Related:

- <https://energynews.us/midwest/methane-explosions-trigger-questions-about-greenhouse-gas-emissions/>

ISO New England resiliency report to FERC warns fuel security at risk

- Electric Light & Power – 3/ /18

<http://www.elp.com/articles/2018/03/iso-ne-resiliency-report-to-ferc-warns-that-fuel-security-at-risk.html>

Related:

- <https://www.nrdc.org/experts/bruce-ho/clean-energy-key-new-englands-fuel-security>

Court backs FERC on Millennium project, finds New York review exceeds a year

- Platts – 3/12/18

<https://www.platts.com/latest-news/natural-gas/washington/court-backs-ferc-on-millennium-project-finds-21543047>

The court agreed with FERC that the state agency had waived its authority to review Millennium's request for a Clean Water Act Section 401 certificate by failing to act on the company's application within one year.