

May 21, 2018

Department of Environmental Quality

Dear State Water Control Board Members:

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Carole Adams, my husband is John Adams, and we live about 6 miles south of Deerfield, VA on Route 600 in Marble Valley. Marble Valley basically parallels Deerfield Valley with Walker Mountain separating the two valleys. We own approximately 155 acres of land with about ½ mile of river frontage along the Calfpasture River. For this reason we are very concerned about the impact the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is going to have on the Calfpasture River and the tributaries coming out of these mountains into the river.

In 1992 we had a flood which took out our 100 foot-long private bridge across the Calfpasture. At the time it was the only access to our property so we had to rebuild the bridge as quickly as we could. We were told that we needed all the appropriate permits in order to do this. We applied, in this order, to the Army Corp of Engineers, the DEQ, and the Virginia Marine Resource Commission. We were told multiple times, especially by the DEQ that we were not allowed to “muddy the water” and we were absolutely not allowed to have any heavy equipment in the river that would “possibly” leak any hydraulic fluids, gas or oil into the river. **NOT ONE DROP.** We were also told, that the Calfpasture river was the headwaters to the James, and therefore to the Chesapeake Bay. We have since learned that this is correct. We had to produce our architectural plans to the VMRC and answer questions about the “footprint” of our bridge.

We lived for 7 years without our bridge. We had to put in a ford so we had access to our property while we went through this process. We were either flooded in or out of our property on many occasions while we waited.

With this information as a background I would like to ask, “What is the probability that a crossing (and the pipe underneath the stream bed) in a stream, wetland, or river crossing won't fail?” There are 189 stream crossings and 43 wetland crossings in Augusta County. This brings to mind that the engineers for the Challenger predicted there was only 1% probability that the O rings would fail, however as we all remember quite well that they failed.

We live in this area of Augusta County because of what it and especially the mountains and river have to offer. We have guests that visit us that love to picnic, fish and camp along the Calfpasture River. They bring their children and their dogs to enjoy the water and have a fun day or weekend camping. We also see many people come out to canoe or kayak down the river all year long. I can say that I take my dogs down to the river twice a day all year long to play in the water with me, or to explore the banks if it's too cold to swim. We also depend on the aquifer for good drinking water since we all depend on well water, or the Deerfield water tower.

We have a pair of bald Eagles, herons, kingfishers, river otters, beavers, deer, livestock, and I could go on and on that depend on this river and its continued good quality.

I'm attaching several photos of the Calfpasture I took several weeks ago after a flash flood. The water coming down the creeks from the mountains was loud, strong and over the river banks. The pictures I took are from our front gate looking towards our bridge. It's approximately 200 yards to the Calfpasture and our bridge, which we obviously could not reach. We very frequently get these floods, and they have been even worse with tropical storms and hurricanes. In 1985 the river took several lives because of flooding. I have photos somewhere of that damage if you need to see them. As you can see, the type of normal flooding that we get – not to mention the hurricane floods like in 1985 – could destroy the crossing, damage the pipe, and cause catastrophic harm to the habitat and to people. The damage to the water during the construction would be significant and cumulative as it works its way downstream.

In closing, I truly hope you consider what this pipeline can do in damaging these mountains streams and especially the beautiful and wonderful Calfpasture River.

Remember what we had to go through to replace a small bridge over this river? If we had to go through that, please hold Dominion Energy to the same standards to which all of these agencies hold private citizens. Please make the builders of this pipeline go through the same rigorous, inch by inch scrutiny that we had to go through. Our water and our communities are worth doing the right thing – pull those stream crossings out of the Nationwide 12 permit and give each crossing the attention that it deserves. Please, for the sake of our shared water resources, do this.

Sincerely,

Carole Adams

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