



ABRA Update #210 – December 21, 2018

Air Board Again Delays a Vote on Compressor Station

The Virginia State Air Pollution Control Board voted December 19 to delay its vote on a permit for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's proposed compressor station in Buckingham County until after a new public comment period. The basis of the delay was to permit the public to provide input on new information about the project that had become available since the earlier public comment period ended in September.

The new comment period begins today, December 21 and ends January 4. In a December 21 posting on its website, the Department of Environmental Quality stated:

On Wednesday, Dec. 19, the Virginia Air Pollution Control Board (Board) approved a new limited written public comment period on specific documents the Board received since the Nov. 8 and 9 meetings on the proposed permit for the Dominion Energy Buckingham Compressor Station.

The public comment period on the documents begins today, Dec. 21, and closes on Jan. 4, 2019.

Per the Board's instructions, the documents to be considered relate to questions and concerns on demographics and site suitability for the proposed air compressor station.

The Board also clarified that the permit conditions - including the amendments that were discussed and approved at the Dec. 19 meeting - are not subject to this public comment period. In addition, the Board made clear that any potential future health assessments discussed during the last meeting that relate to this permit will not be considered during this public comment period.

"There has been significant interest in this permit across the state," said Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Director David Paylor. "Through their request for a minimum, or limited, public comment period, the Board has indicated the need to expedite this process. It's understood that the public is anxious to get clarity about demographics and site suitability in the Board's subsequent decision. As the Board also has a statutory deadline for this permit, the agency has a legal obligation to resolve this matter as efficiently as possible."

The date and the location for the next Board meeting has not been set, but will be announced as soon as details are available.

More information, including the public notice, is available on the Commonwealth of Virginia Regulatory Town Hall website at <http://townhall.virginia.gov/>. Written comments are to be submitted to DEQ by Postal Mail or hand delivery to the Piedmont Regional Office, Re: Buckingham Compressor Station, 4949-A Cox Road, Glen Allen, VA 23060; E-mail: airdivision1@deq.virginia.gov; or Fax: (804) 527-5106.

The specific documents being considered in this limited public comment period are also available on the DEQ website at www.DEQ.Virginia.gov.

*Volunteer for ABRA's
Pipeline CSI Program*

Volunteer

*Submit a report to
the Pipeline CSI*

Report

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on Facebook.*



*Support ABRA
financially*

GiveNow

ABRA Board of Directors Elects Officers, New Member for 2019

Allen Johnson of the Eight-Rivers Council in Pocahontas County, WV, has been re-elected as Chair of the Board of Directors of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance (ABRA) for 2019. Other officers re-elected at the Board's end-of-the-year meeting on December 14 were: Kate Boyle, Appalachian Voices, Vice Chair; Larry Thomas, West Virginia Highlands Conservancy, Treasurer; and Lewis Freeman, Highlanders for Responsible Development, Secretary. Continuing as Board members in 2019 are: Greg Buppert, Southern Environmental Law Center; Joe Lovett, Appalachian Mountain Advocates; Nancy Sorrells, Augusta County Alliance; Rick Webb, Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition; and Kate Wofford, Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley. Richard Brooks of the Cowpasture River Preservation Association was also elected as a member of the Board. Lewis Freeman will continue serving as the Executive Director of ABRA.

No Response Yet from FERC on Stop Work Order Request

A request to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) to issue a stop work order for the entirety of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) project has yet to receive a response from the agency, as of mid-day December 21. [The agency was asked December 13](#) to revoke the certificate for the ACP by the Southern Environmental Law Center in light of the decision that day by the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals to vacate the U.S. Forest Service's approval for the pipeline to cross national forest lands and the Appalachian National Scenic Trail (ANST).

In the wake of the Fourth Circuit decision, an effort was undertaken by sponsoring companies of the ACP to convince Congress to enact legislation that would circumvent the Court's ruling about the ANST crossing. To date, that legislative attempt does not appear to have been successful.

In the meantime, as reported in [last week's ABRA Update](#), construction activity on the ACP has been voluntarily terminated for now by the company because of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals vacating the Fish and Wildlife Service Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statement for the ACP.

ABRA's Success Depends Upon Your Support and Involvement

The Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance has begun its fifth year of existence. We now have our own Board of Directors (see article above) and late this year received 501 (c)(3) status from the Internal Revenue Service as a tax-exempt organization. Our important work in fighting the unneeded Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) and working to maintain the integrity of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge region cannot be successful without your involvement. There are two important ways you can help:

- Support ABRA financially – Your tax-exempt financial contribution to the support the work of ABRA is vital to our success. You can give on-line by clicking [here](#) or by mailing a check to the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, P.O. Box 96, Monterey, VA 24465.
- Become a volunteer in the ABRA CSI program – ABRA's Pipeline Compliance Surveillance Program (CSI) has already resulted in identifying several violations committed in the construction of the ACP in Virginia. This vital program depends upon the involvement of citizen volunteers. You can become involved in the CSI effort by clicking [here](#). See notice below of our next CSI training workshop.

Happy Holidays
The next *ABRA Update* will be published on January 3.

**PIPELINE
CSI COMPLIANCE
GENERAL INFO MEETING**

**LIGHT
LUNCH
SERVED**

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 5TH
10AM TO 2PM**

**STUARTS DRAFT RESCUE SQUAD
MEETING ROOM
10 MANOR ROAD | STUARTS DRAFT, VA**

**WHILE RECENT WINS ARE TO BE
CELEBRATED, LET'S NOT LET OUR
GUARD DOWN AGAINST THE ACP.**

**JOIN FRIENDS AND NEIGHBORS GETTING
ORGANIZED AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE &
DAMAGING CONSTRUCTION PRACTICES
AND GAIN THE TOOLS AND TRAINING
YOU NEED TO BLOW THE WHISTLE
ON DOMINION.**

sign-up:
www.bit.ly/2C5Gnkm

questions?
ben@blueridgegeographics.com

 **Pipeline CSI**
Compliance Surveillance Initiative

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

4th Circuit Court nixes pipeline permit

- The Recorder – 12/20/18

<https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/4th-Circuit-Court-nixes-pipeline-permit-Recorder20181220.pdf>

In-depth discussion of the decision and context.

Shutdown of pipeline project sought

- The Recorder – 12/20/18

<https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Shutdown-of-pipeline-project-sought-Recorder20181220.pdf>

Amid multiple invalidated permits and a less-certain future for the project, lawyers argue all work should be stopped.

Atlantic Coast Pipeline sues Nelson County over zoning decision

- Richmond Times-Dispatch – 12/17/18

https://www.richmond.com/news/virginia/atlantic-coast-pipeline-sues-nelson-county-over-zoning-decision/article_a9605d0f-97ce-5963-bcf1-fb509428534b.html

ACP asks for a judgement saying that the Natural Gas Act preempts Nelson County's floodplain ordinance.

Virginia regulators unexpectedly delay decision on controversial gas project

- The Washington Post – 12/14/18

https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/virginia-politics/virginia-regulators-take-unexpected-delay-in-considering-controversial-gas-project/2018/12/19/2985d952-0319-11e9-9122-82e98f91ee6f_story.html?noredirect=on&utm_term=.e8f5235e3847

Board calls for a new public comment period. Newly appointed members still will not vote.

Nelson native spreads knowledge of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline

- The News & Advance – 12/17/18

https://www.newsadvance.com/news/local/nelson-native-spreads-knowledge-of-the-atlantic-coast-pipeline/article_d6fced09-c4f5-5eb3-8e50-f052b178a21a.html

Administration releases thousands of Atlantic Coast Pipeline documents

- WRAL News – 12/20/18

<https://www.wral.com/administration-releases-thousands-of-atlantic-coast-pipeline-documents/18078236/>

Related:

- <https://www.yourdailyjournal.com/news/84287/pipeline-panel-chairmen-rebuff-records-request-from-governor>

Clean Virginia: Most Virginians should be paying \$250 less each year on energy bills

- Augusta Free Press – 12/18/18

<https://augustafreepress.com/clean-virginia-most-virginians-should-be-paying-250-less-each-year-on-energy-bills/>

The calculation analyzes how Dominion and APCO are charging their ratepayers not only for energy use and delivery but also to subsidize excess corporate profits, executive pay, lobbying, campaign contributions, and more.

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

After a year of strong resistance, future looks uncertain for 2 controversial pipelines

- Think Progress – 12/21/18

<https://thinkprogress.org/battle-over-atlantic-coast-and-mountain-valley-pipelines-2019-241abe07b002/>

The Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley pipelines will continue to face major legal and regulatory hurdles in 2019.

Editorial: Something stinks with air board

- The Roanoke Times – 12/21/18

https://www.roanoke.com/opinion/editorials/editorial-something-stinks-with-air-board/article_fa2d4232-d9ab-5935-80fe-6ea14e3a5a7a.html

Air board appointments probably not conspiracy, but certainly terrible PR.

Blue Ridge Enviro Defense League Requests AG Mark Herring Seek Injunctive Relief Re: Mountain Valley Pipeline's Section 401 Certification

- Blue Virginia – 12/20/18

<https://bluevirginia.us/2018/12/blue-ridge-enviro-defense-league-requests-ag-mark-herring-seek-injunctive-relief-re-mountain-valley-pipelines-section-401-certification>

Mountain Valley Pipeline says projects may never be finished

- NBC 10 News – 12/18/18

https://www.wsls.com/news/virginia/mountain-valley-pipeline-says-projects-may-never-be-finished?fbclid=IwARoGM12hD8qQorc1AdHl1_jVqvXlmJg8bvjZadTiBnhCXNAO7zYizTZsdmQ

The comment came in report filed with federal agency.

Big Picture:

Calls mount for Trump's newest energy regulator to recuse himself over conflicts of interest

- Think Progress – 12/19/18

<https://thinkprogress.org/calls-mount-for-trumps-newest-energy-regulator-to-recuse-himself-over-coal-bailout-connection-feeede7aocco/>

FERC Commissioner Bernard McNamee's rushed Senate confirmation viewed as deeply irresponsible.

Rules on Fossil Fuel Pollution Cuts Adopted at Climate Talks

- Bloomberg Quint – 12/15/18

<https://www.bloombergquint.com/china/rules-on-fossil-fuel-pollution-cuts-adopted-at-un-climate-talks>

Negotiators in Poland have finally secured agreement on a range of measures that will make the Paris climate pact operational in 2020.

New York Gov. Cuomo pledges 100% carbon-free electricity by 2040

- Utility Dive – 12/18/18

<https://www.utilitydive.com/news/new-york-gov-cuomo-pledges-100-carbon-free-electricity-by-2040/544587/>

Cuomo's announcement adds to a growing number of state and city initiatives aimed at reducing carbon emissions, a response, in part, to federal inaction on climate change.

UPDATED: Massachusetts lease sale 'shows US offshore wind is set to soar'

- Offshore Wind Journal – 12/20/18

https://www.owjonline.com/news/view.updated-massachusetts-lease-sale-shows-us-offshore-wind-is-set-to-soar_56240.htm

If fully developed, the lease areas could support approximately 4.1 GW of commercial wind generation.

Extreme climate change science, from the ground up

- Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists – 12/20/18

<https://thebulletin.org/2018/12/extreme-climate-change-science-from-the-ground-up/>

Just TOO cool not to include!