



ABRA Update #261 – January 30, 2020

Issue Highlights . . .

- New Paper Underscores Lack of Need, High Risks of the ACP
- Camp Waldo Provides a Unique Summer Experience for Youth
- Ex-Heads of Park Service & Appalachian Trail Oppose ACP Crossing
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New Paper Underscores Lack of Need, High Risks of the ACP

“Continued efforts to complete the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) are fraught with risks” to investors, ratepayers and those who live along the route of the ACP, according to a new paper released January 30 by ABRA. “[Why Support for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline Adds Risks to Shareholders and Ratepayers](#)” is authored by Thomas Hadwin, a former utility executive who is a member of ABRA’s Steering Committee.

Hadwin points out that since 2014, when the ACP was proposed, existing pipelines serving Virginia and the Carolinas have increased in capacity more than the ACP would provide. The paper explains that the cost for Dominion subsidiaries to use gas from the ACP would be over four times as expensive as gas transported by the Transco system, where sufficient capacity exists. The same would be true for Duke Energy’s subsidiaries.

Describing the environmental risks associated with the project, the paper notes that over 150-miles of the ACP route – one-fourth its length – would traverse terrain that is landslide prone. ABRA will be releasing next month a study on the landslide threat to pipelines built through the central Appalachian region. The paper concludes: “We have an overabundance of gas-fired generating capacity and gas transmission pipeline capacity. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is not a solution. It is part of the problem.”

Camp Waldo Provides a Unique Summer Experience for Youth

Appalachian Headwaters, the new venture dedicated to developing sustainable economic opportunities that restore damaged ecosystems in central Appalachia, which was profiled in the [November 15 issue of ABRA Update](#), is seeking campers its unique, environmentally-focused summer camp experience for young people, 4th through 7th grade. The camp is also accepting applications for counselors for the 2020 camp, June 13 to July 3.

Camp Waldo, located near Hinton, WV on the Greenbrier River, is dedicated to adventure, fun, and teaching children about nature and ecological principles. In addition to traditional summer camp activities, the camp offers instruction in beekeeping, native plant propagation, astronomy and ecology, and includes science lab. Click [here](#) to view the camp brochure. Information on camp registration is at <http://www.campwaldo.org/join-us-at-camp/>.

Camp counselor info is at <http://www.campwaldo.org/jobs/>.



Ex-Heads of Park Service & Appalachian Trail Oppose ACP Crossing Trail

Among the amicus briefs filed with the U.S. Supreme Court on January 22 in support of the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals decision to vacate the U.S. Forest Service permit for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline to cross the Appalachian Trail (see [ABRA Update #250 article](#) on this) was one jointly filed by: John Jarvis, former Director of the U.S. Park Service; Pam Underhill, former Superintendent of the Appalachian Trail; and the National Parks Conservation Association. The [Jarvis/Underhill/NPCA brief](#) sets forth three-principal arguments:

1. Federal agencies may not issue pipeline rights-of-way through federal lands in units of the National Park System, including the Appalachian Trail, without express authorization from Congress;
2. There exist other well-established means of obtaining authorization for pipeline rights-of-way in or through National Park System lands; and
3. Congress's delegation to the Park Service of administrative jurisdiction over the Appalachian Trail also ensures the Trail's long-term conservation in the manner Congress intended.

In concluding its brief, the joint petitioners stated:

While the Forest Service and its staff members are critically important partners in cooperatively managing the Appalachian Trail on Forest Service lands, Congress recognized that the Park Service was best situated to play a special role in administering the entire stretch of this unique national treasure and assuring that its purposes are fulfilled in perpetuity. As such, it is imperative that this Court affirm the Fourth Circuit's ruling, which will ensure that this foundational national scenic trail continues to be overseen and conserved as a crown jewel of the National Park System, in the manner that Congress envisioned when it deliberately charged the Park Service with administering the Appalachian Trail.

Another Departure from FERC's Membership Is Announced

Bernard McNamee, the most recent appointee to the Federal Energy Regulatory (FERC) Commission, announced on January 23 that he will not seek reappointment when his current term expires on June 30, 2020. McNamee, a former partner in the Richmond law firm of McGuireWoods, was appointed to FERC in December 2018 to fill the remainder of the term of Commissioner Ron Powelson, who resigned to become CEO of the National Association of Water Companies. Currently, FERC has only 3 of its authorized 5 commissioners, the number required for a quorum. Should McNamee leave FERC before a replacement is confirmed, FERC would have no quorum to enable it to act.

The Trump Administration has not yet appointed replacements for former commissioners Kevin McIntyre, who passed away in January 2019, and Cheryl LaFleur, whose term ended last summer. For Commissioner McNamee statement on his departure, click [here](#). For more insights, click [here](#).

<p>Volunteer for ABRA's Pipeline CSI Program</p> <p><u>Volunteer</u></p>	<p>Submit a report to the Pipeline CSI</p> <p><u>Report</u></p>	<p>Stay informed, like us on Facebook.</p> 	<p>Support ABRA financially</p> <p><u>GiveNow</u></p>
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In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Recovery plan proposed for endangered bumble bee involved in pipeline litigation

- Charleston Gazette-Mail – 1/26/20

https://www.wvgazette.com/news/recovery-plan-proposed-for-endangered-bumble-bee-involved-in-pipeline/article_b1d1aeco-eb2a-58fc-ac29-0270f70f7c11.html

Great. A plan. If the endgame is the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and its ilk, then it's End Of Game for this species...and many, many others.

Prominent Park Advocates and Leaders Take Battle Over Atlantic Coast Pipeline to the Supreme Court

- National Parks Conservation Association – 1/22/20

<https://www.npca.org/articles/2417-dominion-energy-s-proposed-atlantic-coast-pipeline-would-cut-through>

Last week, the National Parks Conservation Association joined the Coalition to Protect America's National Parks and prominent park advocates Jon Jarvis, former director of the National Park Service, and Pam Underhill, former Superintendent of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, in filing a joint amicus brief supporting conservation respondents in U.S. Forest Service, et al. v. Cowpasture River Preservation Association, et al.

Va. attorney general seeks pipeline case Dismissal

- The Recorder – 1/30/20

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/Va.-attorney-general-seeks-pipeline-case-dismissal-Recorder_20200130.pdf

Herring argued the requirements the USFS ignored when it granted the pipeline permit were crafted by Congress with an eye toward protecting the National Forests for generations to come.

State And Local Leaders Set Climate Goals, But Can We Meet Them?

- Blue Ridge Public Radio – 1/27/20

<https://www.bpr.org/post/state-and-local-leaders-set-climate-goals-can-we-meet-them#stream/o>

Offshore Wind Mandate Advances, Cost Ignored

- Bacon's Rebellion – 1/29/20

<https://www.baconsrebellion.com/wp/offshore-wind-mandate-advances-cost-ignored/>

Yes, we need offshore wind, but VA legislators seem all too keen to jump on the Dominion bandwagon yet again...and not ask questions, or demand answers. The Dominion Gravy Train appears to be leaving the station yet again...

Dominion Energy Appears to Be Circulating an Alternative to the Virginia Clean Economy Act...and It Doesn't Look Good

- Blue Virginia – 1/23/20

<https://bluevirginia.us/2020/01/dominion-energy-appears-to-be-circulating-an-alternative-to-the-virginia-clean-economy-act-and-it-doesnt-look-good>

Wait...WHAT? Dominion launches another attempt at an 'under the radar' maneuver to neutralize efforts to rein in its outsize influence...and profits.

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

SCC approves Roanoke Gas rate increase in part; customers to get refunds

- The Roanoke Times – 1/27/20

https://www.roanoke.com/business/scc-approves-roanoke-gas-rate-increase-in-part-customers-to/article_15158c2f-66f8-5f57-93df-b9da8329f9d4.html

During a yearlong regulatory review of the rate increase, Roanoke Gas' involvement in the controversial Mountain Valley Pipeline took a high profile.

W.Va. committee votes for tax credit for natural gas storage hub

- The Register-Herald – 1/28/20

https://www.register-herald.com/news/state_region/w-va-committee-votes-for-tax-credit-for-natural-gas/article_8bcdac1e-0992-53c5-843e-04008bc6e6a9.html

Yet nobody seems to know what it really means...for the industry or for the state budget.

Big Picture:

Trump Removes Pollution Controls on Streams and Wetlands

- The New York Times – 1/22/20

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/01/22/climate/trump-environment-water.html>

The new water rule will for the first time in decades allow landowners and property developers to dump pollutants such as pesticides and fertilizers directly into hundreds of thousands of waterways, and to destroy or fill in wetlands for construction projects.

Speaking on Thursday at a conference of the National Association of Home Builders in Las Vegas, Andrew Wheeler, the administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, framed the new rule as the rightful return of power from the federal government to landowners and states.

Glick Calls for Congressional Review of FERC Pipeline Tolling Orders

- Natural Gas Intelligence - 1/27/20

<https://www.naturalgasintel.com/articles/120861-glick-calls-for-congressional-review-of-ferc-pipeline-tolling-orders>

Deep Decarbonization: A Realistic Way Forward on Climate Change

- Yale Environment 360 – 1/28/20

<https://e360.yale.edu/features/deep-decarbonization-a-realistic-way-forward-on-climate-change>

The need for a realistic blueprint to wean our economies off fossil fuels has never been more urgent.

Grid congestion costs billions, stymies renewables

- E&E News – 1/27/20

<https://www.eenews.net/stories/1062188485>

A new way to calculate the real-time carrying capacity of transmission lines may ease bottlenecks and lower costs. But we will still need more lines to build the grid we'll need to fight climate change.

Scotland to reach 100% renewables in time to host 2020 climate summit

- Renew Economy – 1/23/20

<https://reneweconomy.com.au/scotland-to-reach-100-renewables-in-time-to-host-2020-climate-summit-60854>

Hawaii Is a Test Bed to See if Renewables Can Meet Peak Energy Demands

- Scientific American – 1/29/20

<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/hawaii-is-a-test-bed-to-see-if-renewables-can-meet-peak-energy-demands/>

More agile solar and storage installations could help replace fossil fuel-burning peaker plants