



ABRA Update #313 – July 22, 2021

Issue Highlights . . .

- EIS for Atlantic Coast Pipeline restoration still on schedule at FERC
- White House unveils environmental justice plans permits
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EIS for Atlantic Coast Pipeline restoration still on schedule at FERC

A draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for restoration of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline route is still on track to be released by the end of July, according to conversations ABRA had this week with key staff at the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. FERC announced in May that it intended to prepare a SEIS that assesses the potential impacts on the environment of the restoration plans for the now abandoned Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the related Supply Header Project (SHP). FERC's [May 4 Notice](#) set out a schedule for a draft SEIS to be released in July, with a final SEIS published by November 19, 2021. The Authorization Decision Deadline FERC has set for the project is February 17, 2022. Restoration work cannot commence until sometime after that date.

The draft SEIS for the ACP and SHP is based on plans for the two projects that were previously submitted to FERC. The ACP plan was filed by Atlantic Coast Pipeline, LLC (Atlantic) with FERC on [January 4](#). The SHP plan was filed with FERC by Eastern Gas Transmission and Storage, Inc. (EGTS, the Berkshire Hathaway subsidiary that purchased Dominion Energy's gas transmission assets) on [November 20](#). Public comments on the plans were submitted to FERC in April.

A Notice of Availability of the draft supplemental EIS for public comment will be sent to the FERC environmental mailing list and will also be accessible on the FERC website. ABRA will advise those on our mailing list of the draft SEIS as soon as it is available.

White House unveils environmental justice plans

The Biden White House provided details this week of how it will begin the process of ensuring at least 40% of the benefits from federal energy and environmental spending reach disadvantaged communities. In a July 20 memorandum to the heads of all federal departments and agencies, an interim guidance details the planned implementation of what the Administration's calls its Justice40 Initiative.

Twenty-one federal programs are embraced by the Justice40 Initiative, including those dealing with climate energy, transportation, housing, workforce training, pollution cleanup and water infrastructure. The complete list of covered programs is available at <https://go.max.gov/justice40>. The list of agencies with potential covered programs are:

Appalachian Regional Commission	Department of Housing and Urban Development
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Department of Health and Human Services	National Aeronautics and Space Administration
Department of Homeland Security	National Science Foundation

For a copy of the guidance memorandum, click [here](#).

In the News:

Regional Issues

Developer Abandons Virginia Gas-Fired Power Project

- Power Magazine – 7/12/21

<https://www.powermag.com/developer-abandons-virginia-gas-fired-power-project>

How Va. pipeline ruling may reshape environmental justice

- E&E Energywire – 7/20/21

<https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/How-VA-pipeline-ruling-may-reshape-environmental-justice-EE-Energywire20210720.pdf>

The outcome of the Mountain Valley battle could influence how pipeline emissions are measured in Virginia, which observers say could shift the environmental justice debate in other states.

EPA challenge muddles future of Mountain Valley pipeline

- E&E Energywire – 7/12/21

<https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/EPA-challenge-muddles-future-of-Mountain-Valley-Pipeline-EE-Energywire-7-12-21.pdf>

Related:

- <https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/MVP-response-to-EPAs-May-27-2021-letter-to-the-Army-Corps-7-12-21-1.pdf>

Hadwin: MVP: The whole story

- The Roanoke Times – 7/18/21

https://roanoke.com/opinion/columnists/hadwin-mvp-the-whole-story/article_98858964-e0b2-11eb-8177-af5914582abf.html

Choosing between protecting our water, heritage and property rights versus increased economic activity is a false choice based on incomplete information.

Company exploring new gas pipeline in five central and eastern Va. Counties

- Virginia Mercury – 7/9/21

<https://www.virginiamercury.com/blog-va/company-exploring-new-gas-pipeline-in-five-central-and-eastern-va-counties/>

Related:

- <https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Some-central-Virginia-property-owners-plan-to-fight-proposed-gas-pipeline-Richmond-Times-Dispatch-7-16-21.pdf>
- https://www.thecentralvirginian.com/news/gas-pipeline-shrouded-in-mystery/article_975d7c94-ea59-11eb-a29a-a36463be0318.html

For many Nelson County residents, victory over pipeline remains sweet one year later

- The News & Advance – 7/10/21

https://newsadvance.com/news/local/for-many-nelson-county-residents-victory-over-pipeline-remains-sweet-one-year-later/article_90f3c3be-df2c-11eb-a165-db1acec14ed8.html

More than 100 opponents of the now-canceled Atlantic Coast Pipeline gathered Saturday (July 10) at the Rockfish Valley Community Center in Nelson County for a celebration more than a year in the making.

Big Picture:

From China to Germany, floods expose climate vulnerability

- Reuters – 7/22/21

<https://www.reuters.com/business/environment/china-germany-floods-expose-climate-vulnerability-2021-07-22/>

We need to rethink where and how we live, even as we try to mitigate the threats from climate change. Simply taking the hard steps to avoid it is no longer an option. But yes, we still have to do that, too.

Related:

- <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/jul/21/passengers-tell-of-horror-chinese-subway-floods-zhengzhou>

The day ‘Hot Girl Summer’ came to Congress

- Grist – 7/21/21

<https://grist.org/energy/the-day-hot-girl-summer-came-to-congress/>

I *just* couldn't help myself! Whatever your taste in music, you have to credit Rep. Casten with a novel approach to bringing FERC, it's power to affect the climate fight, and its unfilled vacancy to the nation's attention.

Related:

- <https://www.utilitydive.com/news/as-chatterjees-tenure-ends-ferc-could-be-single-most-impactful-agency-o/603140/>

China Breached Dozens of Pipeline Companies in Past Decade, U.S. Says

- The New York Times – 7/20/21

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/20/us/politics/china-hacking-pipelines.html>

The F.B.I. and the Department of Homeland Security revealed for the first time Tuesday, that the hackers were preparing to take control of the pipelines, rather than just stealing the technology that allowed them to function. This was 10 years ago, so what have they been up to since?

E.P.A. Approved Toxic Chemicals for Fracking a Decade Ago, New Files Show

- The New York Times – 7/12/21

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/07/12/climate/epa-pfas-fracking-forever-chemicals.html>

A class of man-made chemicals that are toxic even in minuscule concentrations, for decades PFAS were used to make products like nonstick pans, stain-resistant carpeting and firefighting foam. The substances have come under scrutiny in recent years for their tendency to persist in the environment, and to accumulate inside the human body, as well as for their links to health problems like cancer and birth defects. And if THAT wasn't bad enough...

The Oil and Gas Industry Produces Radioactive Waste. Lots of It

- Rolling Stone – 7/21/21

<https://www.rollingstone.com/politics/politics-news/oil-and-gas-industry-radioactive-waste-1199707/>

Also see the NRDC report:

- <https://www.nrdc.org/sites/default/files/fracking-mess-regulation-radioactive-waste-report.pdf>

Whistleblowers say 'bad seeds' undermine pipeline safety

- E&E Energywire – 7/15/21

<https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Whistleblowers-say-bad-seeds-undermine-pipeline-safety-EE-Energywire-7-15-21.pdf>

As seems so common these days, a regulatory agency captured and run by the industry it is supposed to regulate...not sure a few “bad seeds” are really the problem.

Exclusive: White House details environmental justice plans

- E&E Greenwire – 7/20/21

<https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/White-House-details-environmental-justice-plans-EE-Greenwire-7-20-21.pdf>

In a draft guidance document obtained exclusively by E&E News, the White House details how federal agencies should begin the process of ensuring that at least 40% of the benefits from federal energy and environmental spending reach disadvantaged communities.

Manchin could get top role in writing clean energy standard

- E&E Daily – 7/20/21

<https://www.eenews.net/articles/manchin-could-get-top-role-in-writing-clean-energy-standard/>

On what *planet* is Joe Manchin a reasonable choice to author a Clean Electricity Standard?