



ABRA Update #150 – October 5, 2017

Virginia State Water Board Delays 401 Decisions Until December

The Virginia State Water Control Board (SWCB) announced this week that it will hold town meetings in December to consider the applications for water quality certification for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline and the Mountain Valley Pipeline. The consideration is part of the process required under Section 401 of the federal Clean Water Act. The meetings are scheduled for:

- Mountain Valley Pipeline. 9:30 a.m., Wednesday, December 6, 2017, and Thursday, December 7, 2017. Location: Trinity Family Life Center, 3601 Dill Road, Richmond, VA
- Atlantic Coast Pipeline. 9:30 a.m., Monday, December 11, 2017, and Tuesday, December 12, 2017. Location: Trinity Family Life Center, 3601 Dill Road, Richmond, VA

On the first day of each meeting, those who made oral or written comments during the public comment period will have an opportunity to sign up to speak to the board under the board's policy for public participation. The official agenda containing more details will be available in early November.

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will present a summary of the public comments it received and will make its recommendations to the board on the proposed additional conditions at each meeting. DEQ issued in July an initial recommendation that both the ACP and MVP be certified. The SWCB may approve, deny or amend the recommendations.

Further analysis of the 401 issue in Virginia, West Virginia and North Carolina will be provided in subsequent editions of *ABRA Update*.

New Social Media Ads Released by ABRA Members

New ads against the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, designed for social media consumption, have been released by two ABRA members. The Southern Environmental Law Center has produced a [30 second video](#) that stresses that the ACP is not needed, raise the cost of electricity to consumers and threaten drinking water. A [36 second video produced by the Natural Resources Defense Council](#), also aimed at social media outlets, underscores the lack of need and the threat of the ACP to drinking water and to the ecology of affected species along the route. We urge you go re-post these excellent pieces to maximize their viewing.

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

VOF Poised to Consider Applications for Pipelines to Cross Easements

Proposals for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) and the Mountain Valley Pipeline to cross properties on which the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF) holds environmental easements will be deliberated at a special VOF Board meeting on Monday, October 16 at the offices of the State Corporation Commission in Richmond. Ten easement properties on the ACP route and one (an access road) on the MVP route will be considered.

VOF says that it told the ACP and MVP “that such incursions onto VOF easements would be incompatible with the conservation values of the easements, and would therefore trigger a process in state law known as ‘conversion’ of open space. The developers were [asked in 2016](#) to submit applications for conversion to VOF’s trustees, who have been working with the Office of the Attorney General to determine whether the applications meet the requirements of the law.” Action on these applications is what will be considered at the October 16 meeting.

Specifics on the 11 applications are available [here](#). [VOF staff recommends in its report on the ACP application](#) that if the Board deems the proposed conversions meet the requirements set forth in the statute, that several conditions should be imposed, including that the ACP, LLC “transfer to VOF of fee-simple interest to VOF of the Hayfields Farm (in Highland County) and the Rockfish River Parcel (in Nelson County) as Substituted Land for the converted areas of open space easement property.”

VOF will continue to accept public comments on the conversion applications through October 16. Comments may be submitted electronically to comments@vofonline.org, through an online form at <http://www.virginiaoutdoorsfoundation.org/comments/>, via mail to VOF, 39 Garrett St., Suite 200, Warrenton, VA 20186, and in person during a designated public comment period on the day of the meeting. Comments must include your name and contact information.

In the News:

Local/Atlantic Coast Pipeline

APNewsBreak: Disputed East Coast pipeline likely to expand

- AP – 9/29/17

<https://apnews.com/d9e1216747d642ab025dedb0043462f>

Related:

- http://www.richmond.com/business/does-potential-expansion-of-atlantic-coast-pipeline-to-south-carolina/article_f4395308-6aee-53c1-9474-9ebfe3a43445.html

- <http://www.robsonian.com/news/103331/dominion-denies-plans-for-pipeline-to-extend-to-sc>

- <http://wvtf.org/post/pipeline-expansion-could-mean-additional-compressor-stations>

Proposed pipeline nears crucial phase

- The Recorder – 10/5/17

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Proposed_pipeline_nears_crucial_phase-Recorder_20171005.pdf

There are several agencies making decisions about proposed pipelines soon.

National news cranks up pipeline coverage

- The Recorder – 10/5/17

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/National_news_cranks_up_pipeline_coverage-Recorder_20171005.pdf

A high-level Dominion executive reportedly said the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline is likely destined for South Carolina.

Wilson Community College to hold pipeline summit Saturday

- The Wilson Times – 10/4/17

<http://www.wilsontimes.com/stories/wilson-community-college-to-hold-pipeline-summit-saturday.98738>

The event will cover a wide range of potential effects of the proposed project to transport natural gas from West Virginia through Virginia to North Carolina.

Dominion defies environmental findings on project

- The Recorder – 10/5/17

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Dominion_defies_environmental_findings_on_project-Recorder_20171005.pdf

Pipe storage yards sought in McDowell, Monterey

- The Recorder – 10/5/17

https://www.abralliance.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/Pipe_storage_yards_sought_in_McDowell_Monterey-Recorder_20171005.pdf

Pipeline companies anxious to begin tree clearing

- The Roanoke Times – 10/28/17

http://www.roanoke.com/business/news/franklin_county/pipeline-companies-anxious-to-begin-tree-clearing/article_455a54ce-3c62-5cbf-ba7d-abd41eddd612.html

Ruby said Wednesday that if Atlantic Coast isn't able to clear trees during the prescribed period this fall and winter, the project could miss its intended in-service target of late 2019.

Regional/Mountain Valley Pipeline, other

City council wants pipeline developers on hook for any sedimentation of Roanoke River

- The Roanoke Times – 10/5/17

http://www.roanoke.com/news/local/roanoke/city-council-wants-pipeline-developers-on-hook-for-any-sedimentation/article_0c309aa4-770a-539e-ac87-71f645529114.html

The council passed a resolution Thursday to be sent to the governor, the General Assembly and the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

DEQ to make pipeline recommendations in December

- The Roanoke Times – 10/3/17

http://www.roanoke.com/business/news/franklin_county/deq-to-make-pipeline-recommendations-in-december/article_202ecc63-be05-5cf9-b290-1a1045b9f0d2.html

Shingles: Editorial or Promotion? MVP and alleged foreign and domestic policy interests

- The Roanoke Times – 10/29/17

http://www.roanoke.com/opinion/commentary/shingles-editorial-or-promotion-mvp-and-alleged-foreign-and-domestic/article_359d56c6-cf6f-5e32-823b-292fea754021.html

The prospect of using American fracked gas as a tool of U.S. foreign policy is fraught with difficulties.

Op-ed: Governor McAuliffe: Don't Let Hampton Roads Become the Next Houston

- AltDaily – 10/4/17

<http://altdaily.com/op-ed-governor-mcauliffe-dont-let-hampton-roads-become-the-next-houston/>

In the Hampton Roads area, flooding has become an expensive and even dangerous routine.

They'll be singing Kumbaya

- Duke Chronicle – 10/2/17

<http://www.dukechronicle.com/article/2017/10/theyll-be-singing-kumbaya>

Some unnecessary sideline name-calling (author is a college senior), but reasonable synopsis and links to many studies supporting pipeline opposition's case.

Big Picture:

The EPA Could Soon Formally Propose Repealing Obama's Key Climate Change Regulation

- Fortune – 10/4/17

<http://fortune.com/2017/10/04/trump-epa-climate-change-repeal/>

The decision marks the agency's first formal step to sweep away the rule intended to cut carbon emissions from power plants, after President Donald Trump signed an executive order in March launching the EPA's review.

Behind the Backlash to Energy Secretary Rick Perry's Demand for Coal-Nuclear Market Intervention

- Greentech Media – 10/5/17

<https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/behind-the-backlash-to-energy-secretary-rick-perrys-demand-for-coal-nuclear#gs.nabn23E>

Almost everyone outside the coal and nuclear industries wants FERC to turn down DOE's grid market rule.

Related:

- <https://slate.com/business/2017/10/it-turns-out-he-was-serious-about-salvaging-coal-plants-after-all.html>

- <http://www.rstreet.org/2017/10/01/doe-proposal-misframes-grid-resiliency/>

Courts are waking up to the cost of climate change

- Think Progress – 10/4/17

<https://thinkprogress.org/courts-climate-change-costs/>

“At the high level, this wave of court decisions is an indicator that courts are pushing for accountability, and a true accounting of climate and public health costs of these projects.”

Police, protesters prepare for Atlantic Sunrise pipeline construction

- StateImpact Pennsylvania – 10/2/17

<https://stateimpact.npr.org/pennsylvania/2017/10/02/police-protesters-prepare-for-atlantic-sunrise-pipeline-construction/>

Police are expected to have an almost constant presence in Lancaster County during construction later this month of the Atlantic Sunrise interstate natural gas pipeline.

TransCanada scraps controversial Energy East Pipeline project

- The Globe and Mail – 10/5/17

<https://beta.theglobeandmail.com/report-on-business/industry-news/energy-and-resources/transcanada-kills-controversial-energy-east-pipeline-project/article36498370/>

TransCanada Corp. has pulled the plug on its controversial \$15.7-billion Energy East Pipeline proposal, after slowing oil sands growth and heightened environmental scrutiny raised doubts about the viability of the project.

Renewable Energy Comes at You Fast

- Bloomberg Gadfly – 10/4/17

<https://www.bloomberg.com/gadfly/articles/2017-10-04/renewable-energy-iea-projections-coming-at-you-fast>

Renewable power now accounts for the majority of growth in global electricity output.