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Opposition to Dominion's Atlantic Coast Pipeline On the Rise

Dominion's recent release of proposed "alternative routes" has Nelson County landowners outraged. And so does Dominion's reliance on eminent domain as the "preferred alternative" to transport vast quantities of natural gas for export.

"The fact that Dominion has now gone on record with a handful of routes doesn't solve any of their problems," said Joanna Salidis, President of Friends of Nelson. "These will impact an entirely new list of landowners, resulting in increased property owner resistance and lawsuits. Dominion continues to ignore all requests to drop the proposal or to use existing pipeline easement infrastructure instead of depending solely on eminent domain to achieve its business goals."

This morning's protests in Richmond give further proof of how widespread and deep-seated is the opposition to Dominion's plans. "You don't have to be a property-owner under threat of eminent domain to see how bad and long-lived the effects of this pipeline would be," Salidis said.

Dominion's latest move is in direct response to widespread opposition to the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline. "Dominion received immense push back from the public from their applications to survey across the George Washington and Monongahela National Forest. Dominion's

application specified that there was 'no alternative' to their proposed route," said Ernie Reed of Wild Virginia. The George Washington National Forest has received over 5,000 comment letters, many of which asked that survey should be denied. Dominion failed to consider an alternative that would minimize impacts to the forest or that would follow existing easements and rights-of-way. "Dominion's only proposed route was in clear violation of the GW Forest Plan, pure and simple," said Reed.

In addition, Dominion's assertion that there is a need for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline is "hollow", says Reed. "Our research, including the growing financial viability of renewables, demonstrates otherwise. Most of this fracked gas will be headed for foreign markets with no public, domestic or local benefits."

"Dominion is just shuffling its cards," said Salidis. "By threatening so many more property owners and landscapes, today's news that Dominion is considering new alternate routes just brings into sharper focus what we already know. Large diameter high pressure transmission lines like the ACP are at the intersection of what may be the most important social issues today - climate change and the rise of special interest domination of fundamental American values like property rights, safety, and civil liberties."