

Scoping Comments from Shannon Farm Community --  
(Nelson Tax Parcels #13 4 2 and 13 A 67)

These comments are made on behalf of all 90 residents of a parcel that is the site of an intentional community called Shannon Farm Community -- home to 64 adults and 26 children. At over 40 years old, we are one of the older Intentional Communities in the United States.

We naturally share many of the same concerns that have been, and will be raised tonight by our neighbors.

So these remarks focus on the serious negative impacts of the proposed pipeline on features that make our parcel unique. (We will be submitting more extensive written comments in the coming weeks.)

Shannon Farm Community is an important pioneering experiment in ways to live more sustainably, using a fraction of the resources typically consumed in the US. Our bylaws state that we affirm and promote:

“Ecologically-sound...stewardship of all our assets including land, dwellings, and infrastructure, reflecting our respect for the plants and animals with whom we share the land.”

In keeping with this purpose, our homes are arranged in clusters to concentrate impacts and leave most of the land undeveloped. Solar arrays for some of our homes and our community center offset our use of conventional energy sources.

The one-mile swath of pipeline proposed for Shannon Farm would tear up sensitive wetlands and plow through the climax beech forest in our designated wilderness area. It would disrupt our organic gardens, where some members, including seniors on reduced income, grow a sizeable portion of their food. It would destroy at least four land-based art works protected by federal copyright.

The pipeline threatens our economic viability as well. Our ability to pay future property taxes and infrastructure expenses depends on our ability to attract new generations. Young people seeking an eco-friendly lifestyle would be deterred from joining a community where a fracked gas pipeline cuts an ugly scar and poses safety hazards.

We have heard that FERC does not concern itself with what was dismissively termed “landowners’ idiosyncratic attachment to their land.” But this is at the very heart of our concerns. We *are* part of the back to the land movement of the 70s and we *did* buy this land in order to live a food-growing, reduced-fossil-fuel lifestyle and yes, we *do* love the trees and streams, hawks and coyotes.

This proposed taking for private shareholder gain tramples on our property rights and disturbs our quiet enjoyment of our land. ***There IS no monetary compensation that can make whole our loss.*** Therefore, we will not negotiate a settlement with Dominion. The only way this precious land could be ripped from our 90 pairs of hands is through the coercive force of an eminent domain taking.