



For Release May 6, 2015

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Friends of Nelson Asks Dominion Board of Directors and Stockholders to Drop Plans for Atlantic Coast Pipeline

Today, on the steps outside the Dominion Resources Board of Directors and Shareholder's Meeting, Friends of Nelson is asking that Dominion drop its plans to build the Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

Friends of Nelson objects, in the strongest possible terms, to Dominion's current proposal to build the Atlantic Coast Pipeline across the Allegheny and Blue Ridge Mountains, and through Highland, Augusta, Nelson, and Buckingham Counties.

"We want Dominion and its shareholders to know that we are here today because their plan to route the ACP through our home deeply violates so many of our personal and community values," said Joanna Salidis, President of Friends of Nelson. "Nelson County property owners want Dominion to respect that No means No. We want Dominion to uphold their claim that eminent domain is a method of last resort -- not a gift from the government to maximize profit on the backs of unwilling private property owners and communities."

"Landowners in these communities do not want this pipeline," said Ernie Reed of Friends of Nelson. "This pipeline as proposed would tear apart communities, businesses and properties in Nelson, Augusta, Buckingham and Highland Counties and continue across the entire state."

Dominion's lawsuits to force access for surveying reveal they have no compassion for Virginia landowners and no interest in limiting the force they will use to seize private property by eminent domain for their own corporate profits."

- Dominion has chosen a route that maximizes the use of eminent domain, failing to utilize existing infrastructure and rights of way. The few other pipelines of comparable size and pressure in the United States make extensive use of existing rights of way—typically 50% of the length, compared to the ACP's currently proposed 4%.
- Hundreds of property owners will have their property rights taken by eminent domain. In Nelson County alone, 80% of property owners have denied Dominion access to survey their properties and are currently being threatened by court orders.
- Public benefit and public need must be proven to implement eminent domain proceedings against property owners. The Atlantic Coast Pipeline fails to meet these basic requirements.
 - There are no residential or business customers other than Dominion affiliates in the Commonwealth that will be able to access the pipeline's gas. Prohibitively high 'tap in' fees and other factors prevent potential industrial or business users from accessing the highly pressurized gas along the route.
 - Population growth, and therefore increased energy demand in the Tidewater area is projected to be nearly flat for the next five years.
 - In North Carolina, growth is less than half what it was ten years ago.
 - Electricity demand in the U.S. peaked more than 6 1/2 years ago.
 - Natural gas exports from Dominion's Cove Point or speculated Chesapeake Export Terminals provide no public benefits but would maximize domestic rates and corporate profits.

Dominion's proposal to build the ACP where a solid majority of landowners and residents do not want it has greatly raised Dominion's corporate profile.

- Dominion is the largest partner in Atlantic Coast Pipeline LLC, a newly-formed Delaware limited liability corporation with no publicly available contact information for its board of directors or CEO. This LLC shelters its partners from liability, putting all costs and liabilities directly on the shoulders of county governing bodies, individual property owners, customers, and rate-payers.

- Dominion is the largest single non-party political donor in the entire commonwealth doling out \$1.3 million in campaign contributions in 2014. No business gives more to further the political campaigns of Richmond’s Senate and General Assembly than Dominion.
- As a direct result of these campaign contributions, the newly passed SB 1349, which purported to “cap” rates, actually allows Dominion to *increase* ratepayer bills—with no regulatory oversight for 5 years!
- Dominion’s “promise” to build 400 MW of solar has stalled with no movement forward on the horizon. Currently Virginia has the lowest installed solar capacity in the Mid-Atlantic and zero wind farms
- Dominion’s plans will increase global warming carbon pollution by 37% over the next 13 years.
- Dominion’s electrical residential bills are well above the national average.
- Dominion is the only US investor-owned electric utilities to rank in the bottom 3% in Renewable Energy Sales, Cumulative Energy Efficiency and Incremental Energy Efficiency (<http://www.ceres.org/press/press-releases/first-of-its-kind-report-ranks-u.s.-electric-utility-companies2019-renewable-energy-energy-efficiency-performance>)
- Dominion’s safety and environmental record is consistent with the poor record of the industry. Recent erosion and sediment control violations in West Virginia, numerous emissions violations at Cove Point, and nine gas pipeline explosions in the first three months of 2015 continue this legacy.

For these reasons, Friends of Nelson asks that Dominion

- Withdraw its application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline
- Abandon the use of eminent domain in the Commonwealth for proposed pipelines
- Initiate an aggressive investment in incentives for residential and commercial distributed energy systems and energy efficiency.
- Fully utilize solar and off-shore wind technologies to achieve any future increased energy supply proposals in the Commonwealth.

“This pipeline is an ill-conceived travesty,” said Reed. “It has no place here.”

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