



For immediate release, May 17, 2016

Unanimous vote in Bath County marks growing opposition to pipeline

WARM SPRINGS, Va.— Bath County submitted a letter on Monday May 16 stating opposition to the proposed 600-mile, high-pressure Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). County Supervisors voted unanimously to file the letter with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) signaling their opposition to the gas pipeline, which in February was re-routed through Bath County as it crosses from West Virginia, through Virginia, and into North Carolina.

In addition to expressing outright opposition to the project, the letter raises concerns about the pipeline's risk to Bath's fragile karst topography (caves and sinkholes), the possible contamination of private wells and springs, safety risks at federal and state road crossings, and sediment and erosion run-off during pipeline construction.

Bath joins nearby Nelson County and the City of Staunton in opposing the ACP. It also joins neighbors Augusta County, Highland County, and Pocahontas County (W. Va.) in raising concerns about the impacts of the proposed pipeline on local communities.

“Why should our region bear the brunt of a pipeline that Virginia does not need?” asks Mary Hodges, co-chair of Voices from Bath, a local organization formed to protect resources and communities from impacts of the ACP. “The costs to residents and natural resources are high, and the benefits are few. We applaud our county Supervisors for voting to oppose this destructive pipeline.”

Bath's action is indicative of the momentum that is building in opposition to the pipeline. The Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance (ABRA), a consortium of 50 organizations in Virginia and West Virginia, recently posted a compiled list of official letters or resolutions stating concerns about the ACP http://www.abralliance.org/acp-official_concerns/. Many of these actions have been put forth by state and federal elected officials requesting that FERC conduct a single, comprehensive analysis of the cumulative effects of the multiple

pipeline proposals currently proposed through the region of West Virginia and western Virginia and the Piedmont. Such an analysis is known as a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS).

Other official resolutions, letters, and studies by governmental leaders convey citizens' serious concern about issues such as misuse of eminent domain powers, threat to farmland and forest land, impact to private and public water supplies, loss of tourism revenue, and being forced to pay higher utility bills to fund an unnecessary project.

“Bath County is in good company,” says Staunton City Councilmember James Harrington. “Our council has repeatedly conveyed Staunton citizens’ grave concerns about the local impacts of Dominion’s pipeline, beginning with a vote in 2014 to oppose the pipeline. Recently, on May 12, 2016, we unanimously agreed to express our concerns about the ill-conceived new route, which cuts through Bath County and the Deerfield Valley in Augusta County. ”

“I am pleased to see that Bath County Supervisors have also signaled their opposition,” says Connie Brennan, a Supervisor from Nelson County, which has expressed its outright opposition to the project. “The more our local citizens learn about the ACP—the safety risks, the threat to groundwater and streams, the local economic costs—the more concerned they are. Momentum is building across our region to stop this unneeded pipeline.”

####

For compendium of official letters and resolutions raising concerns about the Atlantic Coast pipeline, including Bath County’s recent letter, see:

http://www.abralliance.org/acp-official_concerns/

Contact:

Lewis Freeman, Allegheny Blue Ridge Alliance (ABRA) chair and executive director
LewFreeman@gmail.com Mobile: 703.298.8107

Nancy Sorrells, ABRA communications chair, Augusta County Alliance co-chair
lotswife@comcast.net Mobile: 540.292.4170

Mary Hodges, Voices from Bath co-chair
mhhodges@tds.net Phone: 540-839-5846

James Harrington, Councilmember, City of Staunton
jharring@mbc.edu Phone: 540.885.4643 or 540.887.7163

Connie Brennan, Board of Supervisors, Nelson County
connie@cstone.net Phone: 434.996.5246