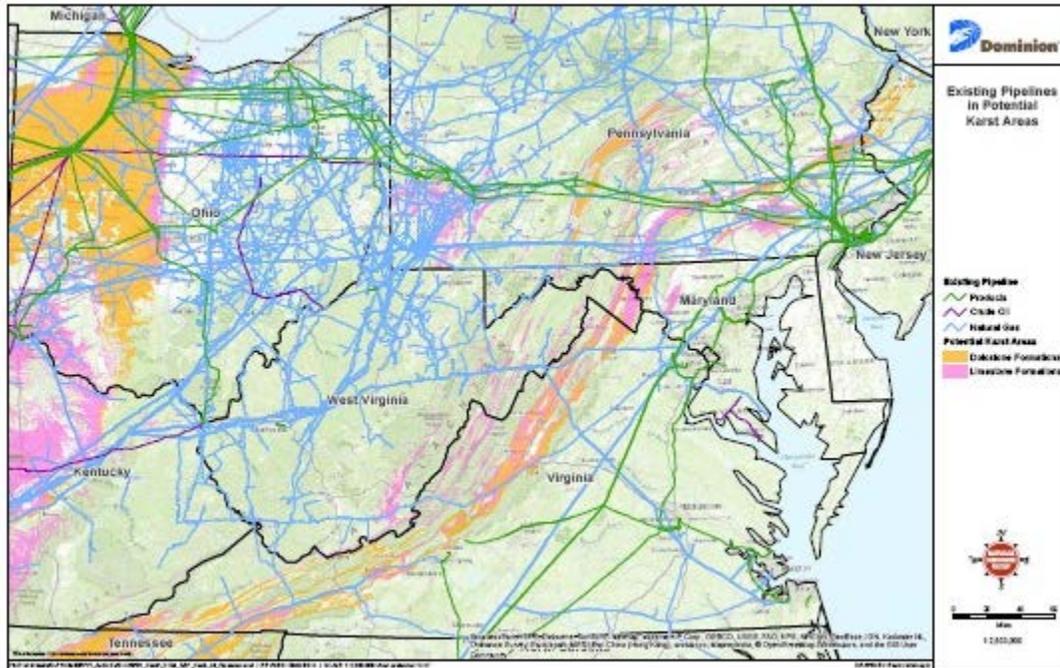


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Karst will be focus at pipeline meeting

BY JOHN BRUCE • STAFF WRITER



Dominion provided this map to show that pipelines operate in “potential” karst regions.

MONTEREY — In response to community concerns, karst will play a role in the Dominion Resources Atlantic Coast Pipeline open house Tuesday, Sept. 16 in The Highland Center.

A karst map will be featured during the open house to demonstrate that pipelines already operate “through potential karst areas,” a Dominion spokesman said.

Karst is a geological term that refers to limestone formations that are essential to Highland’s water supply. The open house format encourages one on one participation between landowners and Dominion specialists, company spokesman Jim Norvelle said. The open house is for landowners between 5 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. and landowners and the general public between 6:30 p.m. and 8 p.m.

Landowners can go from station to station and ask questions. “There is no order as to which station they go to first, but I would not be surprised if the station with the maps gets the most attention,” Norvelle said.

“This is just one of several meetings that will occur in Highland County over the next two years as the project goes through the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission review process, which includes FERC performing a thorough analysis under the guidelines of the National Environmental Policy Act,” Norvelle said.

“I know that there has been a lot of conversation about karst in Highland County. First, I just want to reiterate what we have said – we will take all measures to build a pipeline safely and to choose the best route with the least impact to the environment, historic and cultural resources. This is the way that Dominion does business wherever it has facilities,” Norvelle said.

“We asked our project consultants to overlay a map of all existing pipelines with a map of potential karst areas in a multistate region.”

Norvelle provided a map for The Recorder.

“As you can see, there are many existing pipelines that safely transport natural gas, crude oil and other products through potential karst areas, including the Columbia interstate natural gas pipeline in Augusta County. We are still surveying for a proposed route and will take all of this karst information into our analysis to determine the best route with the least impact,” Norvelle said.

The Atlantic Coast Pipeline is a 550- mile interstate natural gas transmission project proposed to transport gas from West Virginia to the Carolinas and would cross Highland County.