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## Dominion steps closer to federal review

### Pipeline project:

BY JOHN BRUCE • STAFF WRITER

MONTEREY — As expected, pipeline developer Dominion Resources launched its federal regulatory process with a pre-filing to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission last week.

Dominion Resources subsidiary, Dominion Transmission Inc., took the next step in attempts to get federal approval for a proposed interstate natural gas transmission pipeline project that would cross Highland with a 42-inch mainline on a route from West Virginia to North Carolina. Highlanders for Responsible Development, which opposes the project, wrote in its latest newsletter that “It is important that concerned citizens write the FERC to make their views known.” HRD urged communications should follow the guidelines set forth by the agency: [www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp](http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/ecomment.asp). Those persons wishing to become “interveners” in the proceeding cannot do so during the pre-filing phase as there is no application officially before the commission.

Further details are at: [www.ferc.gov/help/how-to/intervene.asp](http://www.ferc.gov/help/how-to/intervene.asp).

HRD included a Staunton newspaper report that more than 100 letters of concern went on the agency’s website, according to one of the leaders of the Augusta County Alliance.

In Dominion’s letter dated Oct. 31 to Kimberly Bose, FERC secretary, Dominion asks to begin the pre-filing process for the proposed 554-mile Atlantic Coast Pipeline, formerly known as the Southeast Reliability Project.

The Dominion documentation concerning related work and public participation is filed as Docket No. PF15-6-000 in FERC’s online eLibrary system

at: [http://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file\\_list.asp?accession\\_num=20141031-5347](http://elibrary.ferc.gov/idmws/file_list.asp?accession_num=20141031-5347).

A timetable provides for construction to begin in September 2016 and operation in November 2018.

The letter explains Atlantic Coast Pipeline LLC is a joint venture comprised of subsidiaries of Dominion Resources, Duke Energy, Piedmont Natural Gas, and AGL Resources, proposes to construct and operate about 554 miles of natural gas transmission pipeline and associated above-ground facilities in West Virginia, Virginia, and North Carolina.

“This project, referred to as the Atlantic Coast Pipeline, formerly the Southeast Reliability Project, will deliver natural gas from supply areas in West Virginia to growing markets in Virginia and North Carolina. Atlantic Coast Pipeline LLC has contracted with Dominion Transmission Inc. to build and operate the ACP, as well as obtain the necessary governmental authorization, on behalf of the joint venture.”

Dominion requests FERC initiate a National Environmental Policy Act pre-filing review. To support the request to use FERC's pre-filing process, Dominion stated it proposes to construct and operate about 34 miles of pipeline loop and modify existing compression facilities in West Virginia and Pennsylvania, referred to as the Supply Header Project, to transport natural gas to the pipeline.

The key milestones are listed as:

- Dominion files request to use the Commission's pre-filing process in October;
- FERC issues the Director's Notice and a pre-filing docket number in November;
- Dominion files preliminary draft Resource Report 1 and an Alternatives Summary in December;
- Dominion files draft Resource Reports 1 through 12 in April-May 2015;
- Dominion files its Certificate Application in September 2015;
- FERC issues a draft Environmental Impact Study in January 2016;
- FERCE issues a final EIS in May 2016;
- FERC issues Order Issuing Certificate for the pipeline in July 2016;
- Dominion begins construction in September 2016; and
- Dominion puts line in service in November 2018.

The letter explains the pipeline will carry natural gas from West Virginia "to growing market areas in Virginia and North Carolina. Additional supplies of natural gas are needed in Virginia and North Carolina to support power generation and provide fuel for residential, commercial, and industrial uses to meet existing and projected future demand. From 2008 to 2013, demand for gas-fired electric power generation grew by 123 percent in Virginia and 459 percent in North Carolina. Overall, demand for natural gas for all uses grew by 37 and 50 percent, respectively, in Virginia and North Carolina between 2008 and 2012 (U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014 Annual Energy Outlook)."

Dominion wrote, "Natural gas demand in Virginia and North Carolina is expected to grow due to a combination of population growth and displacement of coal-fired electric power generation. By 2025, the U.S. Census Bureau predicts 2.1 million new residents in North Carolina and 1.8 million new residents in Virginia. At the same time, use of natural gas for power generation is expected to increase significantly. By 2035, natural gas is expected to surpass coal as the most common fuel for electric power generation due to coal-fired plant retirements and low natural gas prices," according to the U.S. Energy Information Administration, 2014 Annual Energy Outlook.

The letter describes mainline pipeline facilities:

- AP-1 — About 296 miles of 42-inch outside diameter pipeline in Harrison, Lewis, Upshur, Randolph, and Pocahontas Counties, W.Va.; Highland, Augusta, Nelson, Buckingham, Cumberland, Prince Edward, Nottoway, Dinwiddie, Brunswick, and Greensville Counties, Virginia; and Northampton County, North Carolina.

- AP-2 — About 180 miles of 36-inch outside diameter natural gas transmission pipeline in Northampton, Halifax, Nash, Wilson, Johnston, Sampson, Cumberland, and Robeson Counties, N.C.

Lateral Pipeline Facilities:

- AP-3 — About 76 miles of 20-inch outside diameter natural gas lateral pipeline in Northampton County, North Carolina; and Greensville and Southampton counties, and the cities of Suffolk and Chesapeake.

- AP-4 — Three miles of 16-inch outside diameter natural gas lateral pipeline in Brunswick County.

Compressor Stations:

- Compressor Station 1 — A new, natural gas-fired compressor station, about 55,000 hp, to be constructed near the beginning of AP-1 in Lewis County, W.Va.

- Compressor Station 2 — A new, natural gas-fired compressor station, about 32,000 hp, to be constructed in Buckingham County.

- Compressor Station 3 — A new natural gas-fired compressor station, about 22,000 hp, to be constructed along the Virginia/ North Carolina border in Northampton County, N.C.

Other Facilities:

- Eight new metering and regulating stations to be constructed at receipt and/ or delivery points along the new pipelines.

- Valve sites at select points along the new pipelines at intervals specified by U.S. Department of Transportation regulations.

- Seven sets of pig launcher and/or receiver sites at select points along the new pipelines.

The capacity of the new pipeline system will be up to 1.5 billion cubic feet per day of natural gas supply. The Maximum Allowable Operating Pressure of the new pipelines will be 1,440 pounds per square inch gauge.

A majority of the pipeline facilities (greater than 90 percent) will be constructed along a new (greenfield) corridor on privately owned lands.

The letter points out the proposed route of AP-1 will cross roughly 17 miles of U.S. Forest Service lands in the Monongahela National Forest; 13 miles of USFS lands in the George Washington National Forest; and less than one mile of National Park Service lands at the Blue Ridge Parkway and Appalachian Trail Corridor; one mile of state land in West Virginia; and less than one mile of state lands in Virginia. AP-3 will cross about five miles of U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lands in the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge.

No federal or state lands are expected to be crossed by AP-2 or AP-4, the letter states.

An overview map, detailed route maps, a table listing relevant federal and state regulators, a table listing each permit or approval required, list of stakeholders, confidential list of landowners and “key” information from open houses are all listed in separate exhibits.

The letter explains activities conducted to date by Dominion's engineering group include: preliminary project design; identification and refinement of a preliminary route; identification of potential aboveground facility sites; route review via helicopter survey and ongoing pedestrian reconnaissance; initial design planning; initial hydraulic analysis; and ongoing routing and civil surveys.

The letter says subcontractor GeoConcepts Engineering Inc. is conducting a karst terrain assessment, including field survey, of the AP-1 pipeline route in Randolph and Pocahontas counties, W.Va., and Highland, Augusta, and Nelson counties in Virginia.

Dominion explained this portion of the route crosses about 50 miles of potential karst terrain, primarily dolomite or limestone formations. "Desktop analysis of known karst features and survey along the route is ongoing. Operator anticipates that a majority of the field survey for the karst terrain assessment will be completed in the fall of 2014, with the remainder to be completed in the spring and summer of 2015. Results from the karst terrain assessment will be provided in stand-alone reports and summarized in the draft and final Resource Reports that Operator will file with the FERC.

"Dominion has identified preliminary desktop routes for each of the proposed pipelines based on potential receipt and delivery points, review of engineering and constructability constraints, and review of environmental, cultural resource, and landowner constraints. Operator is currently conducting a pedestrian reconnaissance survey to verify the alignment of the routes and make minor adjustments to the proposed centerlines, as necessary, to address engineering, residential, environmental, and cultural resource issues; to provide a route that can safely be constructed; and to avoid sensitive features, where feasible.

"As of this filing, the routing survey has been completed along approximately 392 miles or approximately 71 percent of the combined length of the proposed pipeline routes. Operator anticipates that a majority of the routing survey will be completed in the fall of 2014, with the remainder to be completed in the spring or summer of 2015," the letter says.

The engineering is being done in-house, "and additionally will be utilizing subcontractor engineers, for which operator is currently in the process of soliciting bids. Operator contracted with GAI Consultants Inc. to conduct centerline and civil surveys and prepare aerial-based construction alignment sheets for the Project. Operator contracted with Natural Resource Group LLC to provide environmental and permitting support services, conduct and manage environmental field surveys, and support stakeholder engagement activities. NRG retained D&D West, Environmental Services Inc., Woodard and Curren, and Environmental Solutions and Innovations Inc., to assist with biological field surveys; and Dovetail Cultural Resources Group to assist with historical architectural review. Operator contracted with GeoConcepts Engineering Inc. to assist with studies of karst features along the AP-1 pipeline route."