

[http://www.therecorderonline.com/news/2015-04-30/Home %28and%29 Property/HRD\\_opposes\\_pipeline\\_impacts.html](http://www.therecorderonline.com/news/2015-04-30/Home%20and%20Property/HRD_opposes_pipeline_impacts.html)

4/30/15

## HRD opposes pipeline impacts

MONTEREY — The citizens group Highlanders for Responsible Development went on record Tuesday in opposition to proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline routes in Highland.

HRD announced Monday it would file comments around noon on April 28, the final day of the environmental scoping period of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.

The 21-page HRD filing expresses opposition to the various routes under consideration. Noting the pipeline would be the largest construction project ever undertaken in Highland County, HRD president Lew Freeman said the ACP would bring “far-ranging, long-lasting impacts that threaten the many features that make our county so unique: water, topography, vegetation and animal species and habitats. Moreover, it would disrupt and diminish the commerce and quality of life of the county and its residents.”

Specific points made in the HRD submission were that:

- A pipeline built along the routes under consideration would seriously threaten the integrity and safety of water supplies for many county residents, particularly those in the towns of Monterey and McDowell;
- There are serious safety risks associated with the construction of a pipeline through Highland because of the proven instability of the karst topography that exists in the county;
- Building the ACP through the rugged and steep mountain terrain would endanger the structural character of the mountains it crosses and seriously increase the possibility of long-term erosion;
- The proposed routes would harm the habitat of many protected species of plants and animals that are unique to the Allegheny-Blue Ridge region;
- The routing of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline through Highland County would diminish the value of private property and adversely affect innumerable cultural and recreational features of our county;
- The proposed routes could adversely impact several conservation easements in Highland County; and HRD continues that the project must be economically justified before it could proceed, and supply life of the Marcellus shale field needs to be quantified.

At several of its open houses, Dominion said the ACP route would avoid karst topography. However, it is not possible to build a pipeline through Highland County without encountering karst topography and creating the prospect of safety problems because of the instability of the rock formations, the HRD filing contends. HRD’s comments to FERC asked that the agency rigorously examine the economic justification for the pipeline, including identifying the future demand for additional natural gas the markets the ACP proposes to

serve, the adequacy of existing pipelines to meet any increased demand and the likely life of the Marcellus shale field in West Virginia.

HRD noted recent studies, including one from the U.S. Department of Energy, have concluded that existing pipeline infrastructure is underutilized and fewer new pipelines will be needed to serve projected demand for natural gas.