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THE RECORDER, June 25, 2015

## Dominion weighs Highland pipeline worries

BY JOHN BRUCE • STAFF WRITER

MONTEREY – Will Dominion satisfy Highland supervisors' concerns over the proposed interstate natural gas transmission pipeline? Probably not, unless federal regulators step in.

Last week, Dominion responded as to why Highland supervisors were not mentioned among the stakeholders in its responses to comments made last month to federal regulators during the environmental scoping period for the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

Dominion's 105-page "Responses to Issues Raised During Scoping," filed May 19, names several government and private entities who raised concerns. Among those identified were Augusta supervisors, Wintergreen Community Volunteer Fire Department, New Horizons Village, Monacan Indian Nation, Bold Rock Cidery and many others.

Nowhere does the document identify Highland supervisors, despite of a list of 10 issues and mitigations the county sent along with a letter from chair David Blanchard and numerous maps from the comprehensive plan and other sources.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission received those documents April 27.

Asked why Highland supervisors were not recognized as being among the government entities commenting in the ACP response, Dominion spokesman Jim Norvelle said ACP ("Atlantic") has a responsibility to document and respond to each comment received by FERC during scoping. "Not every comment in Atlantic's responses or resource reports to FERC is attached to the name of the commenter; in fact, very few are," Norvelle said.

Stakeholders who want to find the response to their comment should note the category of the comment, such as water, karst, geology or project need, and then review the appropriate and corresponding resource report, he said. "Most of the issues raised in the letter from Highland County were raised by others and shared by many of the other counties along the proposed route. Therefore, the issues identified in the letter are addressed throughout the draft Resource Reports that were filed May 19."

Most issues were addressed, but not all.

The proposed pipeline path would not cross working sugar maple camps, according to Dominion. The company says that no work camps or other housing would be provided for construction crews as specified by Highland's mitigation to FERC.

"Our team that prepared the 12 draft Resource Reports has aligned the information in the reports with the letter from Highland County," Norvelle said.

The following is a listing of the 10 issues presented by Highland County and ACP's response to each.

- "Unique Nature of Highland: The ACP acknowledges the unique nature of the county. We do not believe that a response is required to this statement.

- “Geology and Soils: Karst is addressed in Section 1.5.2.5 of draft Resource Report 1 and in Sections 6.4.4 and 6.6 of draft Resource Report 6. A karst field assessment is ongoing. Additionally, Atlantic is preparing a Karst Monitoring and Mitigation Plan for the ACP. The results of the karst field assessment and the Karst Monitoring and Mitigation Plan will be provided with the final Resource Report 6.
- “Land Use: Land use impacts are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 8. Impacts on tourist resources are discussed in Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 of draft Resource 5, and recreation and special interest areas are discussed in Section 8.8 of draft Resource

Report 8. Sugar maple stands are discussed in Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 of draft Resource Report 5. Atlantic is consulting with landowners to identify working sugar maple stands along the route; at this time, however, there are no working sugar maple stands known to occur along the route. Impacts on agricultural lands, including compensation for agricultural losses, are discussed in Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 of draft Resource Report 5 and in Section 8.3 of draft Resource Report 8.

- “Water Resources: Impacts on water resources (aquifers, wells, springs, water bodies, and wetlands) are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 2.
- “Cultural Resources: Impacts on archaeological, sites, historic sites, and cemeteries are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 4. Atlantic is in the process of conducting archaeological and historic structure surveys along the pipeline route. Impacts on land uses are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 8. Impacts on transportation systems are discussed in Section 5.7 of draft Resource Report 5. The pipeline will be installed beneath most paved roads by bore, which will avoid direct impacts on the road and minimize impacts on traffic. Additionally, roads damaged by construction will be repaired to preconstruction condition by Atlantic.
- “Vegetation and Wildlife: Impacts on vegetation and wildlife are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 3.
- “Air Quality and Noise: Air quality and noise are discussed in draft Resource Report 9. Impacts on air quality and noise during construction will be temporary. There will be no impacts on air quality and noise during operations.
- “Endangered and Threatened Species. Impacts on federally and state listed threatened and endangered species are discussed in Section 3.7 of draft Resource Report 3. Atlantic has consulted and continues to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on federally listed species and with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation and the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries on Virginia listed species. Additionally, Atlantic is conducting habitat assessments and presence/absence surveys for species based on recommendations from those agencies.
- “Socioeconomics: Impacts on socioeconomics (population, employment, economy, housing, revenue, public services, etc.) are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 5. The project will result in a positive economic impact on local businesses during the period of construction. With regard to housing, Atlantic estimates that half of workers will be local, meaning they will live within commuting distance of the project area, which will help mitigate impacts on housing. There are no plans to construct work camps for the ACP.
- “Public Safety: Safety and reliability are discussed throughout draft Resource Report 11. Impacts on public services, such as emergency response, are discussed in Section 5.6 of draft Resource Report 5. Prior to construction, Atlantic will coordinate with local police, fire, and medical services to confirm that adequate resources are available and develop a response plan tailored to the capabilities or needs of each County/City crossed by the ACP. Additionally, the construction contractors will have on-site “medipods”

for administering first aid, and coordinate with regional hospitals for airlift services in the event of a medical emergency.”

To view the resource reports, visit <https://www.dom.com/corporate/what-we-do/atlantic-coast-pipeline/ferc-filings-and-information>