

July 11, 2016

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David Garg
Waterways and Wetlands Program Manager
DEP Northcentral Region
208 West Third Street
Williamsport, PA 17701

WATERWAYS AND WETLANDS

Dear Mr. Garg:

We are writing to ask that you hold a public hearing on Transcontinental Pipeline Company's (Transco) application for water obstruction and encroachment permits for its proposed Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline (FERC Docket: CP15-138).

The Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline would cause significant impacts to waterbodies and wetlands. Transco is proposing at least 578 waterbody and wetland crossings along the proposed pipeline route in Pennsylvania, impacting numerous exceptional value (EV) wetlands and high-quality watersheds, including Fishing Creek. The DEP has an obligation to protect these sensitive ecological resources under Art. I, Sec. 27 of the Pennsylvania Constitution. Before it can issue permits for a project of this magnitude, we believe that the DEP should first provide citizens the opportunity to voice their opinions on the record at a public hearing.

Our concerns are further supported by the comments of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) regarding the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) released by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). EPA said, in part: "Without further analysis to specific streams of concern, it should not be assumed that impacts have been minimized and are not significant. EPA is particularly concerned about Fishing Creek, which is a high quality water and fishery. Fishing Creek would face complex impacts resulting from a combination of activities, including water withdrawals, blasting, vegetation removal. The combination of impacts from these activities should be considered, especially for sensitive resources, like Fishing Creek." (boldface ours)

We believe that citizens have legitimate concerns that need to be aired at a public hearing. We suggest that, in the best interests of the Commonwealth, an open public meeting be held for the consideration of the proposed water obstruction and encroachment permit which would greatly impact the quality of life in this region by impacting the land, water, animal habitat and citizens.

Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,

Members of the Fishing Creek Watershed Association (See attached page)
Columbia County Conservation District
702 Sawmill Road, Suite 204
Bloomsburg, PA 17815

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