

March 5, 2019



By Email

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Re: Comments on Report for HDD PA-HU-0106.0000-RD-16 (HDD# S2-0154-16)

To whom it may concern:

Pursuant to the Corrected Stipulated Order entered on EHB Docket No. 2017-009-L on August 10, 2017 (“Order”), and on behalf of Clean Air Council, Mountain Watershed Association, Inc., and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network (“Appellants”), please accept these comments on Sunoco Pipeline L.P.’s (“Sunoco”) re-evaluation report (“Report”) for the horizontal directional drilling (“HDD”) indicated by drawing number PA-HU-0106.0000-RD-16 (the “HDD Site”).

1. The Report contains nothing on communications with nearby water supply owners besides doing a survey at an unspecified time.

The Report stated of communications with landowners neighboring the HDD Site:

SPLP subcontractors have researched private water supplies within 450 feet of this HDD. One water supply well was identified within the 450-foot buffer of the alignment; however, a second water supply well was located on a parcel within 450’ of the HDD, but the location of the well itself was approximately 520 feet from the HDD alignment.

Unlike many other re-evaluation reports, there is no discussion of whether any residents wanted their water tested, whether they wanted replacement water during drilling, whether there had been any water supply complaints during the 20-inch drill, or anything else related to water supplies. Moreover, it is unclear when Sunoco conducted this survey. For all we know, this survey could have been done in 2015 when early work was done on the project and the details and risks were much less known. Furthermore, such an old survey would be out of date.

Section 3.0 of the Hydrogeologic Report suggests that a survey was done in January of 2019. Most likely both reports are discussing the same thing; however, it is not clear.

The Department should require clarity in when and how this survey was done, to ensure that Sunoco has complied with the Order and has up-to-date information.

2. The Alternatives Analysis inexplicably rejects available alternatives avoiding wetlands and the use of alternative boring methods across narrower spans.

The Alternatives Analysis rejects a path avoiding wetlands that is plainly visible on the plan view in Figures 1 and 2: deviating to the north along temporary access roads that Sunoco is already using and are already cleared and upland. Sunoco’s explanation for rejecting this route is that it would require “additional environmental impacts.” Every route has some environmental impacts, so this is a non-explanation. The advantage of the northern deviation is that it does not cross wetlands. Frankly, Sunoco should have used this route before installing the 20-inch. It could have crossed the creek using a conventional auger bore and could have avoided a large amount of temporary workspace associated with the HDD pads. It is unclear whether, having already needlessly disturbed such a large amount of space, it is still environmentally preferable to use the northern alternative. But Sunoco has failed to do any good faith analysis of the matter, so the public and the Department cannot evaluate the options. The Department should require a good faith analysis of this route alternative.

3. The Report contains additional irregularities.

In addition, the Figure 1 and Figure 2 drawings do not have parallel revision histories. This is also the case with another recent re-evaluation report. Figure 2 matches the revision history of the permitted drill. It is unclear where Figure 1 came from.

Thank you for considering these comments. Please keep us apprised of your next steps on the HDD Site.

Sincerely,

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