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To: [PipelineContacts](#)
Bcc: Kimberly_Smith@fws.gov
Subject: West Virginia public water supply contamination linked to Virginia pipeline project
Date: Thursday, November 12, 2015 8:01:58 AM

Regulatory System Test

The Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition has submitted a complaint to the Virginia DEQ concerning non-compliance with erosion and sediment control requirements at the Columbia Gas of Virginia (CGV) pipeline construction project on Peters Mountain in Giles County. CGV failed to prepare and adhere to a compliant erosion and sediment control plan, failed to prepare a stormwater management plan, and created a discharge that contaminated a public water supply system. The DEQ failed to provide meaningful regulatory oversight.

Beginning on July 7, 2015, the primary water supply for Peterstown, West Virginia was out-of-service for over two weeks due to diesel fuel contamination associated with the Columbia Gas pipeline project on Peters Mountain in Giles County, Virginia. The problem was first indicated by the smell of diesel at the treatment plant and in the tap water of customers. The DEQ later found that "the only definitive source" of the contamination was a pipeline equipment-staging area in a sinkhole area about half a mile from the town's water supply spring. The DEQ requested removal of contaminated soil, but apparently took no enforcement action.

This incident is perhaps most notable for what didn't happen. It may have been far worse if more-toxic and less-obvious contaminants had been involved. And it may have been avoided altogether if there had been any actual regulatory oversight.

The DEQ, however, failed to review plans for this project prior to construction and failed to conduct inspections during construction. For the DEQ, this is business as usual.

Consider that the Columbia Gas pipeline in question is only 12 inches in diameter. We are currently asked to accept the risk associated with the proposed 42-inch ACP and MVP pipelines, which will cross similar steep mountains, karst terrain, and public water supply recharge areas on a much greater geographic scale. In this context, our state government's lack of commitment to effective review and oversight of pipeline construction is irresponsible in the extreme.

Environmental groups and multiple counties have asked Virginia government officials to

ensure that the DEQ has the resources and direction needed to provide effective review and oversight of pipeline construction projects. To date, however, neither the governor nor other state officials have made any promises.

Our complaint concerning the CGV project provides an opportunity for the DEQ to demonstrate that it can meet its responsibilities for enforcement of environmental laws and regulations.

Our complaint to the DEQ and related information are posted on the DPMC website. See [Regulatory System Test](#).

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