

To: Marcus Kohl, Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Harrisburg, PA

From: S. R Walker, Bloomsburg, PA

June 23, 2017

At the public meeting held at the Bloomsburg High School on June 13, 2017, I was one of those who spoke of my concerns regarding the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline.

It amazed me how many people who spoke were not from Columbia County, but who asked DEP to approve the ASP because of the jobs ....theirs.... that it would provide. I was not aware that DEP had the responsibility to provide jobs for those working on fracking/ pipeline/pipe fitting/welding/and excavation! It is my hope that you were also cognizant of the reasons for their attending that meeting....and it had nothing to do with *protecting Pennsylvania's environment*.

The fact that FERC has given the green light to this project is problematic, as they did not consider its true economic impact. The [Key-Log Economic Report](#) does include the economic impact of the ASP as well as its resulting diminished value of the ecosystem services, damages associated with increased greenhouse gas emissions, and public health costs due to release of toxins and smog-forming pollutants. If you do not have a copy of this report, please contact me and I will see that you receive one.

There were many of us in attendance who do live in Columbia County and who will be affected by the ASP. The water issue is major. Our township and several neighboring townships depend on a large aquifer that is the main/only source of water for Orange Township, Mt. Pleasant Township, parts of Scott Township, and Fishing Creek Township. If that aquifer is compromised, a significant population is without potable water. Also, if Little Fishing Creek and/or Fishing Creek are compromised, the water supply for the town of Bloomsburg will be affected....that would include Bloomsburg University, Geisinger-Bloomsburg Hospital, the businesses and citizens in that area.

To think that the above is not likely, one only has to look at the safety record of Williams-Transco. Over the past 15 years Williams has compiled an extensive record of incidents, fines, penalties, property damage, compressor and pipeline explosions and fires. They have been fined for failure to protect their workers, for failing to conduct required annual inspections, for violating Colorado State law. They paid the largest fine ever levied in 2003 for failure to monitor corrosion which led to a pipeline explosion in Appomattox, Virginia. They have lied about energy prices and gave phony information used in sales contracts. Williams had three years of noncompliance with the Federal Clean Air Act, failed to conduct OSHA inspections for a Louisiana Plant for ten years. They leaked chemicals in an explosion and fire at that location. Their Parachute, Colorado plant leaked Benzene which polluted the soil and ground water. In records from 2000 to 2009 Williams was involved in 88 accidents which resulted in property damage of more than \$98,000,000.

More recently (2011) Williams failed to conduct its own annual inspections of compressor stations in Texas and Louisiana. In that same year, Williams' pipeline exploded and burned in Alabama. PHMSA concluded

that continued operation of that pipeline “would result in likely serious harm to life, property, and the environment.”

In 2012 a leak and explosion occurred at the Williams owned Lathrop Compressor Station in Susquehanna County, PA. Williams restarted the station within 24 hours, pumping fracked gas, despite PA Department of Environmental Protection requesting that they not do so. A source revealed that there are no agencies enforcing rules on rural gas facilities in this state.

That same year, in New York State, a compressor station was venting during a lightning storm resulting in a \$50,000 fine for Williams not following their own internal policies.

2012 – 2013 Williams discovered a new leak in their Parachute Colorado plant while working to expand that plant. Benzene had leaked into the soil. During the clean-up from that leak there was no mention of groundwater affected via the nearby creek. Williams claimed they did not realize the extent of the leak and thought it was only a 25 gallon leak. However, it was discovered that the ground water in the community of Parachute had been contaminated with Benzene, a cancer causing agent.

2013 was the year a Williams natural gas line ruptured in West Virginia. There was a compressor station fire in Bradford County, PA. Benzene levels rose in the Parachute, CO creek, violating Colorado law. Also in 2013, there was an explosion and fire in Brooklyn Township/Montrose PA.....all William’s locations.

That same year, a Williams’s company compressor station exploded in Branchburg, NJ. There was a Williams plant explosion in Geismar, LA where two workers were killed and 114 were injured. It was due to this explosion that Williams was fined \$99,000 for willful violation defined as one “committed with intentional, knowing or voluntary disregard for the law’s requirements.”

And the beat goes on with regard to Parachute, Colorado where 28 million gallons of groundwater was removed to a deep well injection site in Utah.

Again in 2013, federal regulators fined subsidiaries of Williams’ Bluegrass Pipeline in Kentucky nearly \$2.3 million for incidents over an 18 month period that included failing to monitor corrosion or to repair a natural gas line.

As if 2013 weren’t bad enough for Williams, 2014 and 2015 were little better. Plymouth, WA sustained an explosion that injured five and leaked a billion cubic feet of liquid natural gas. In Portland, OR there were three gas leak incidents over a period of months. The air in that part of Oregon had to have been toxic. Opal, WY also was home to an explosion and fire at the hand of Williams.

In the area of Pennsylvania very near where I live, there was an explosion at Unityville, PA. It occurred shortly after Williams had reversed the direction of the flow of gas in that line. This, after receiving a warning regarding the dangers of reversing the flow of gas in a line. The frightening thing about that

**explosion is that there appeared to be NO ONE IN CHARGE. There was uncertainty about who should receive that report of an explosion.**

**Keep in mind that the proposed Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline is a 42" pipe with a flow of gas through it of 1400 pounds of pressure per square inch. That is one huge explosion waiting to happen right over our water supply and through our most important streams and river. The air we would be breathing would be compromised to a point of danger to human health.**

**Just to be clear, I live a few hundred feet from Fishing Creek which is one of the best Trout Fishing streams in the state, yet the ASP will be crossing that creek at several places, at least one of which is not far from Buckhorn, PA.**

**The clear cutting of thousands of trees on the pipeline route will have a long range affect upon the aquifer, as trees not only sequester carbon, but they regulate water retention for an aquifer and clean the air. We are crazy to think that taking down so many trees will have no effect upon our water and our air.**

**Columbia County is on the map as a site for a compressor station. That compressor station will have regular "blow downs" which emit gases into the air for all of us to breath. The potential for benzene, Formaldehyde, Methyl Ethyl Disulfide, Naphthalene, 1,1,1, 2 – Tetrachloroethane, Trichloroethylene, Trimethyl Benzene 1,2,4 – Trimethyl Benzene, Styrene, Methane, Ethane, Butane, Propane, n-Butyl Alcohol, Carbon Disulfide, Carbonyl Sulfide, Chlorobenzene, Chloromethane, 1, 2-Dichloroethane, Diethyl Benzene, Dimethyl Disulfide, Toulene, Nitrogen Oxide, Ethylbenzene, and 1,3-Butadiene to enter the atmosphere and the air we breathe is frightening. The health effects are life threatening.**

**It is alarming to know that with the continued expansion of fracking one does not need to be "near" a compressor station/a leaky pipeline/ or fracking well to be subject to poor air quality. The four-corners of our Southwest of the U.S. can attest to that. As large methane cloud hangs over that huge geographic area due to the very thing we are hoping to avoid here in Pennsylvania.**

**Your job is to protect the environment in the state of Pennsylvania. That means our water and our air, our trees, our wild animals – our flora and fauna. It is my hope that you will understand that Williams-Transco cares little about Pennsylvania except what they can take away from us. Their headquarters are in Oklahoma which is reaping the effects of the gas industry there with polluted water and earthquakes.**

**I am depending upon you to have the good sense to do what those states to our north and south have done and deny further exploration and development by the gas industry, which, for you, means denying the Atlantic Sunrise-Transco application. We both know that you do not have the people power you need to oversee the protection of the environment with such a project both now or into the future.**

**If you would like clarification regarding the facts contained here, I will be happy to talk or meet with you.**

**Sincerely,**

**S.R. Walker**

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