



PennEast Pipeline Co. Proposes 105-mile Large Scale Natural Gas Transmission Line Through the Delaware River Basin

Project Name: PennEast Pipeline (Proposed by AGL Resources, NJR Pipeline which is a subsidiary of New Jersey Resources, South Jersey Industries, UGI PennEast which is a subsidiary of UGI Energy Services, PSEG Power and Spectra Energy Partners.)

Proposed Project Locations: Luzerne County, PA, Carbon County, PA, Northampton County, PA, Bucks County, PA, and Hunterdon County, NJ

Proposed Project Details:

The PennEast Pipeline Co. L.L.C. announced its new pipeline project on August 12, 2014 called the PennEast Pipeline. The PennEast Pipeline is designed to be a large scale 36 inch transmission pipeline that will stretch 108 miles from a gathering system in Luzerne County and terminate at Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Co.'s Trenton-Woodbury Lateral in Mercer County, N.J. The proposed project is planned to transport roughly 1 billion cubic feet of natural gas per day. The project will also require the siting and construction of multiple high-powered compressor stations scattered along the line.

The PennEast Pipeline Project will cut its right-of-way for over 108 miles approximately 87% of which will be within the boundaries of the Delaware River watershed. The company has identified 33 wetland complexes and 60 waterbodies that may be affected by the project. Among the waterways to be crossed are the Delaware, Lehigh and Susquehanna Rivers. Among the federally listed species already identified that could be impacted by the project are the Bog Turtle, the Indiana Bat, the Dwarf Wedge Mussel and the Northern Long-eared Bat which has been proposed-for-listing. Also targeted are forests as well as public and private lands, much of that land being sensitive greenfields that have not previously been disturbed.

The pipeline will affect approximately 1,094 tracts of land and approximately 861 landowners. The company has only been granted access to 38.12% of the proposed Project right-of-way needing to be surveyed – this is a strong show of the high level of opposition to this proposed project. 13 municipalities have already passed resolutions opposing the pipeline including: Hopewell Twp, Delaware Twp, Holland Twp, West Amwell Twp, Lambertville, Alexandria, Milford, Princeton, Clinton Twp, Kingwood Twp and Frenchtown, NJ and Riegelsville and Durham, PA.

The project appears to be entirely redundant, as it will run nearly exactly parallel to an already existing large scale transmission line that is owned and operated by Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Co. Transco's pipeline itself is currently in the process of being upgraded to take on more capacity, called the Leidy Southeast Expansion Project. Another new pipeline proposal called Diamond East is also anticipated to cut a somewhat parallel path, creating another redundant line to PennEast.

The size and scope of the construction activity for the PennEast line and stream crossings associated with this project will have a deleterious effect on the water resources of the Delaware River Basin. Large scale transmission lines such as the PennEast line also result in significant forest fragmentation, invite and propagate the spread of invasive species, and degrade the diversity and dispersion of native flora and fauna. Furthermore, pipeline projects also degrade the functions and values of the wetlands that they plow through, as the construction and operation of the pipeline permanently converts forested wetlands to uplands or emergent wetlands.

There are also significant concerns related to the cumulative impacts of the continuous water crossings and wetlands disturbance that pipeline construction activity has on the health and vitality of the Delaware River Basin. This is particularly a concern with the PennEast line, as many of these same subwatersheds were recently impacted by construction activity on Transco's parallel line. Also, in addition to the Transco's previous and proposed pipeline projects, there are several other pipeline projects that have been concentrated in the same subwatersheds as the PennEast line, such as: Texas Eastern's TEAM 2014 Project and Columbia's East Side Expansion Project.

The PennEast Pipeline will further facilitate the development of new gas drilling wells, access roads, gathering lines, compressor stations, and other supporting infrastructure, which will further degrade our environment.

The PennEast line will need to receive a number of important federal and state permits and authorizations for it to proceed. This includes authorizations from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity – PennEast is currently in the pre-filing stage of the process with pre-filing docket number PF15-1-000), the Army Corps of Engineers (Section 404 permit), the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (Section 401 Clean Water Certifications).

Additionally, the Delaware River Basin Commission has the authority to regulate pipeline construction activity if it involves a "significant disturbance of ground cover" affecting water resources. The PennEast Pipeline project should trigger review under that standard; however, up to this point the Delaware River Basin Commission has failed to exercise its authority for any of the pipelines that have crisscrossed the Delaware River Basin.

DRN is committed to restoring natural balance in the Delaware River and watershed where it has been lost and ensuring preservation where it still exists. As such, we are actively engaged at the local, state, and federal government levels to ensure that full weight of legal environmental protection laws are brought to bear on all pipeline projects under consideration, including the PennEast Pipeline.

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