

# Friends of Wintergreen Calls Atlantic Coast Pipeline Routes “Irresponsible”

Asks FERC to require a thorough, point-by-point, evaluation of its alternative routes

NELLYSFORD, VA, USA, June 2, 2016 /EINPresswire.com/ -- On May 16, 2016, [Friends of Wintergreen](#) submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) [a 128-page analysis of four alternate routes](#) for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) using analysis from its national environmental, legal and pipeline engineering firms.

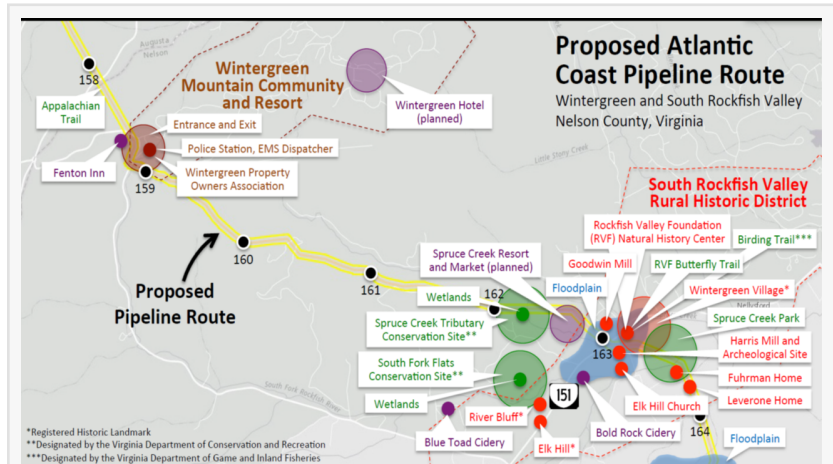
“We have laid out in great detail the significant environmental, economic and safety problems Dominion’s proposed route will create for Virginia’s largest resort and the nearby tourism corridor of wineries, breweries, cideries, and restaurants,” said Jonathan Ansell, Chairman of Friends of Wintergreen. “Our pipeline engineers also developed several alternative routes that are less damaging.”

Ansell continued, “We favor the greater use of colocation and existing rights-of-way, especially since Dominion’s ACP has one of the worst records in America. This is irresponsible to Virginians.”

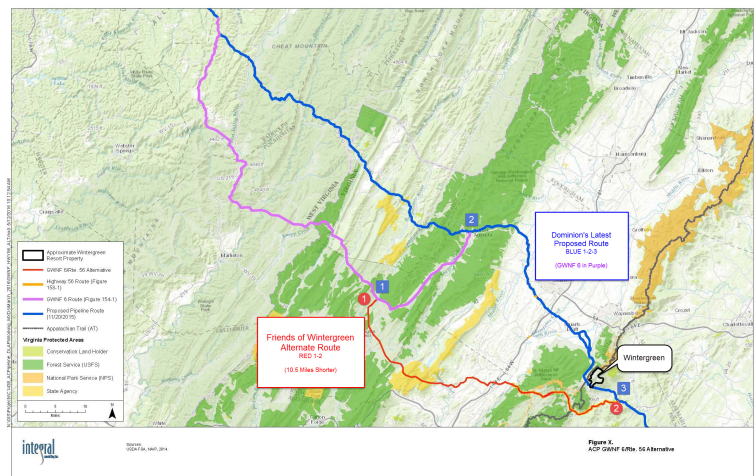
Within hours of Friends of Wintergreen’s formal submission to the FERC, Dominion issued a response rejecting the proposals. Dominion claimed they gave “these alternatives the careful consideration they deserve.”

“As Dominion rejected our alternatives within hours, we don’t see how a thoughtful evaluation was possible.” Ansell said. “Two of our route proposals are novel and supported with many pages of new technical analysis from our engineers.”

“Our detailed analysis demonstrates there are less damaging alternatives than those proposed by Dominion, an investor owned company beholden to the interests of its shareholders. We call on



Top tourism region is also recognized as an area for environmental conservation and home to one of Virginia’s Most Endangered Historic Places



Wintergreen's alternative route is 10.5 miles shorter than Dominion's proposal

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FERC and our elected officials to insist Dominion provide a detailed, point-by-point response to our proposals and to other colocation alternatives, rather than accept general, non-specific statements that typically accompany the company's rejection of any proposal other than its own."

Among the concerns Dominion raised, Friends of Wintergreen's technical experts do not consider any of them insurmountable:

Dominion, on federally managed lands: "Most of the routes proposed by Friends of Wintergreen cross federally managed lands that do not allow utility corridor

crossings. Two of the routes cross land administered by the National Park Service (NPS) in areas where the agency does not have the administrative authority to approve pipeline crossings.

Therefore, these routes are not feasible as a matter of current law. Additionally, two of the routes cross areas designated by the U.S. Forest Service as Remote Backcountry or Wilderness Areas, which are either incompatible with or prohibited for pipeline crossings."

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We favor the greater use of colocation and existing rights-of-way, especially since Dominion's track record in this area is one of the worst in America.

*Jonathan M. Ansell*

Fact: None of our proposed routes cross federally managed lands that prohibit utility corridor crossings, nor do they cross Remote Backcountry or Wilderness Areas. Furthermore, other remedies are available to Dominion should NPS administrative approvals be inadequate.

Dominion, on constructability: "Constructability is also a significant challenge with these alternatives. For example,

extremely steep terrain and severe side slopes, as well as sharp elevation changes at one of the proposed HDD crossings would prevent safe construction in many of these areas. A major interstate highway interchange and multiple abandoned railroad tunnels...would also prevent us from crossing at this location."

Fact: "The routes we proposed are constructible and safe if built correctly", said Bryan Melan of Tidewater Integrity Services based in Houston, Texas. "Moreover, these 'challenges' are not different than those Dominion faces on routes it has already proposed. We also never proposed using abandoned railroad tunnels."

Dominion, on comparisons to California: "We often hear Nelson County referred to as the "Napa Valley of Virginia," so it's important to look at Napa Valley's experience. More than three dozen hotels, wineries and resorts in the Napa Valley are located within just a few miles of major natural gas pipelines. These pipelines have not inhibited the success of Napa Valley's tourism industry, and there is no reason to believe Nelson County would be any different."

Fact: Dominion's ACP will not be located "within just a few miles" of Nelson County's major tourism destinations. Dominion proposes to build the pipeline within feet of the only entrance and exit to



Clearcut area would exceed the width of Interstate I-64 for 600 miles

Wintergreen, the largest resort in Virginia with more than 10,000 residents and guests attending daily during peak vacation and holiday periods. Dominion also plans to build the pipeline through Spruce Creek Resort and Market, a 100-acre, five-star resort, hotel, restaurant and public market that is proposed to be built along Virginia Route 151 in Nelson County.

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Friends of Wintergreen is a Virginia nonstock, 501c(3) not-for-profit corporation dedicated to protecting and enhancing the value, beauty, integrity, and sustainability of Wintergreen, Nelson Route 151, and neighboring communities.

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