

NEW GEOLOGY STUDIES SHOW BUILDING THE ATLANTIC COAST PIPELINE IN THE STEEP MOUNTAINS BY WINTERGREEN (VA) IS RISKY

Dominion has not adequately identified site-specific hazards from debris flows and landslides that can put people, property and water quality at extreme risk.

NELLYSFORD, VA, UNITED STATES, March 14, 2017 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Friends of Wintergreen released two geological and soils studies that highlight the extreme risk of building the 42 inch, compressed natural gas Atlantic Coast Pipeline in the mountainous areas of Nelson County, Virginia.

The studies also concluded that Dominion Transmission Inc., the lead sponsor of the ACP, inadequately analyzed the risks required for major construction in the steep slope areas like

Wintergreen. Similar critiques have been leveled against Dominion by some environmental groups and the US Forest Service. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) recently issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that included information supplied by Dominion. FERC, the federal agency that must ultimately approve the pipeline, is seeking comment from interested parties to the DEIS.

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Even moderate rainfall and groundwater movement along faults and shear zones, bedding contacts, foliation planes and joints can trigger landslides in the Wintergreen area.”

Mervin J. Bartholomew, Ph.D

and recommendations:

"Dominion has not adequately identified those soils and landforms that are prone to debris



Dominion pipeline in West Virginia

[Analysis and Field Verification of Soil and Geologic Concerns](#) with the Atlantic Coast Pipeline in Nelson County, VA was prepared by Blackburn Consulting Services/Soil Foundation of Berryville, VA. Blackburn was engaged by Friends of Nelson, Friends of Wintergreen and the Wintergreen Property Owners Association to evaluate the adequacy of the soils/geological information submitted by Dominion to FERC and to identify areas of high risk for debris flows/landslides that are unsuitable for pipeline construction. Among the conclusions

flows/landslides, nor have they adequately addressed how they plan to mitigate those site-specific hazards that can put people, property and water quality at extreme risk."

"Dominion must: 1) update its corridor studies with much more detailed topographic analysis, 2) perform an Order 1 soil study along Nelson's ridgetops and steep slopes, and 3) identify and map all recent, historical, and potential debris flow areas within the pipeline alignment and its buffer and enlarge the study area to 525 feet from the current 125 feet."

In a separate evaluation filed with FERC last week by the Wintergreen Property Owners Association (WPOA), Mervin J. Bartholomew, Ph.D., Professor and Former Chair of the Department of Earth Sciences at the University of Memphis and nationally-renowned geologist, has been studying and [writing about the geology on the Wintergreen area since the 1970s](#). His [latest report](#) indicates:

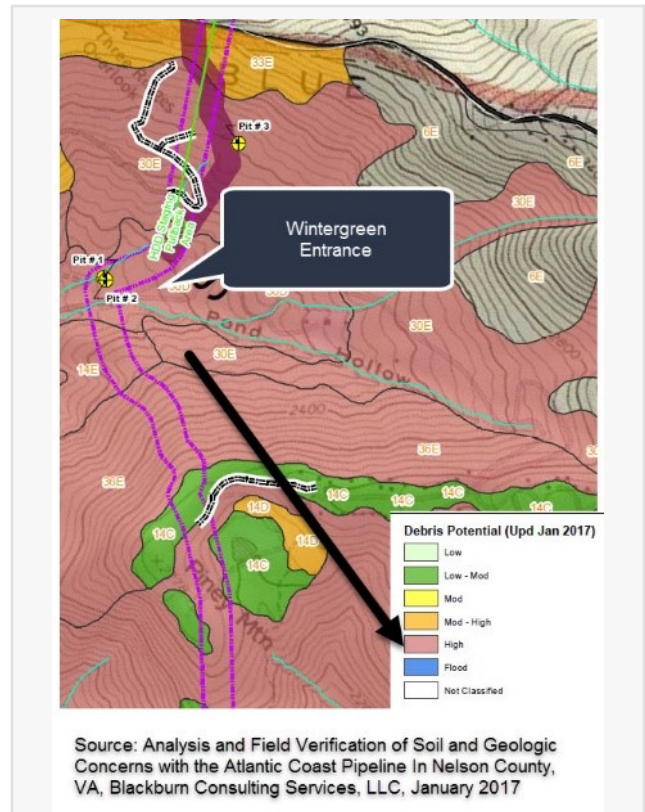
"Even moderate rainfall and groundwater movement along faults and shear zones, bedding contacts, foliation planes and joints can trigger landslides...at Wintergreen."

"Considering the size of many very large boulders in past debris flows and the sheer weight and size of these debris flows, a gas pipeline is not a safe structure to install on the surface of the ground nor within surficial debris-flow deposits in this catchment area."

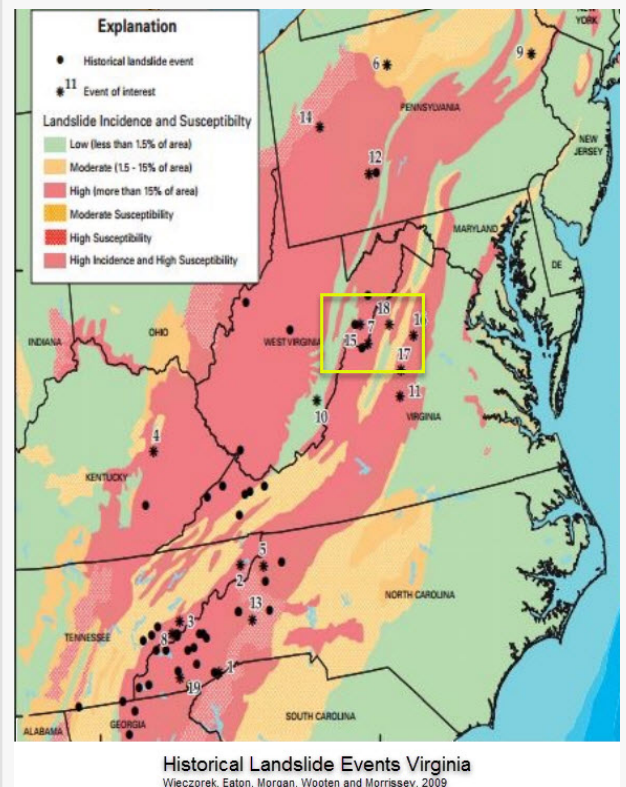
"Because this location is the only entrance and exit for both security and administrative buildings as well as for the larger community, the current route is inadvisable and the risk of failure is high."

"This is an example of the type and quality of analysis FERC should be requiring from Dominion so stakeholders can be fully and properly informed, alternatives can be compared, and the agency's obligations properly fulfilled", said Jonathan M. Ansell, Chairman of Friends of Wintergreen. "It also confirms what we and many others have been saying all along: this area is just not suitable for a 42-inch compressed natural gas pipeline."

Jonathan M. Ansell



Map of debris and landslide risk at Wintergreen



Nelson County and Wintergreen are high risk areas for erosion and landslides

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