



BREDL Founder **Janet Marsh** is a role model to many activists and organizers in the environmental justice movement. In 1984, Janet organized her community to block the citing of a high-level nuclear waste dump in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The group was successful and the principal organizers, recognizing an ongoing need, stayed together to form a 501(c)3 nonprofit. The strategies,



vision, and tactics which helped win our first victory guide us today. Today BREDL is a league of more than fifty community-based chapters serving the Southeast with the founding principles of earth stewardship, public health protection, environmental democracy and social justice.



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The LEAGUE LINE

WINTER 2019

JANET MARSH ZELLER



(1948 - 2019)

It is with deep sadness that we announce the passing of our Founder, Janet Marsh Zeller. Janet was a remarkable woman and will be deeply missed by many. Please keep her husband, Lou Zeller, and her family close in thought and prayer.

Condolences may be sent to Louis Zeller, PO Box 88, Glendale Springs NC 28629. In lieu of flowers, people may make donations to BREDL earmarked for the Janet Marsh Honorary Fund. The honorary fund supports the ongoing mission of the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. All donations to BREDL are tax-deductible.

(More about Janet on page 4-5)





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BREDL: Who and what we are

In March 1984, fifty citizens of Ashe and Watauga Counties met in the Mission House of Holy Trinity Church in Glendale Springs, North Carolina. Teachers and farmers, home-makers and merchants listened to the report of the Episcopal Church Women on the US Department of Energy's siting search for a high-level nuclear waste dump in the rain-rich east.

Recognizing that the North Carolina mountains were a region at risk, the assembled group organized the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) to protect their own backyard and those of other threatened communities.

Grassroots organizing was a cornerstone of our early all-volunteer organization. One of our first multi-county boards of directors adopted our credo, which embodies our mission statement:

BREDL Credo

We believe in the practice of earth stewardship, not only by our league members, but by our government and the public as well. To foster stewardship, BREDL encourages government and citizen responsibility in conserving and protecting our natural resources. BREDL advocates grassroots involvement in order to empower whole communities in environmental issues. BREDL functions as a "watchdog" of the environment, monitoring issues and holding government officials accountable for their actions. BREDL networks with citizen groups and agencies, collecting and disseminating accurate, timely information.

BREDL sets standards for environmental quality, and awards individuals and agencies who uphold these standards in practice.

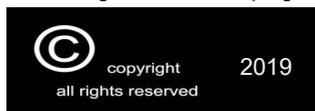
Moving into the future

Since then, the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League has grown to be a regional community-based, nonprofit environmental organization. Our founding principles - earth stewardship, environmental democracy, social justice and community empowerment - still guide our work for social change. Our staff and volunteers put into practice the ideals of love of community and love of neighbor, which help us to serve the movement for environmental protection and progressive social change in Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama and Tennessee.

Grassroots Campaigns

Nothing creates hopefulness out of helplessness like a successful grassroots campaign - and our chapters have a history of winning. For over twenty-eight years Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League chapters have protected their communities by stopping dangerous facilities and promoting safe alternatives.

In the 1980's and 1990's, BREDL prevented a multi-state ThermalKEM hazardous waste incinerator, a southeastern nuclear waste dump and a national nuclear waste dump. In the 2000's, our coordinated grassroots citizens' campaigns have had further victories. We won a legislative victory with the passage of the NC Solid Waste Act, effectively blocking at least four multi-state mega-dumps. Our Person County chapter convinced their Board of Commissioners to reject expansion of the Republic Services landfill. Our Cascade, Virginia, chapter shut down a huge hazardous waste incinerator. We eliminated mercury waste from the Stericycle incinerator, shut down a tire incinerator in Martinsville, won the landmark environmental justice court decision in Greene County, NC. Further, with our chapters we have protected air quality by blocking scores of asphalt plants, four medical waste incinerators, a PVC plant and a lead smelter, and passage by local governments of eight polluting industries ordinances. Our work on nuclear power and coal plants laid the groundwork for our new Safe Energy Campaign. Victories over twenty-four mega-dumps have resulted in our affirmative Zero Waste Campaign. Guided by the principles of earth stewardship and environmental justice, we have learned that empowering whole communities with effective grassroots campaigns is the most effective strategy for lasting change.



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BREDL Teams with Sioux in Groundbreaking Legal Challenge to FERC's Certification of the Mountain Valley Pipeline

By Ann Rogers



On January 28, Andrea Ferster, the attorney representing BREDL and its chapter organizations, Preserve Roanoke/Bent Mountain and Preserve Franklin, will give oral argument in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit on our Petition for Review of Orders of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC). Other plaintiffs served by Ms. Ferster in this action include Preserve Montgomery County VA, Inc.; Bent Mountain, VA landowners Elizabeth and Mike Reynolds; Steve Vance in his official capacity as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe; and Ben Rhodd in his official capacity as Tribal Historic Preservation Officer of the Rosebud Sioux Tribe. The above-named petitioners are grouped together by the D.C. Circuit Court under the name "Blue Ridge Petitioners".

BREDL and our group of co-petitioners have been consolidated by the D. C. Circuit Court with four other groups of petitioners whose oral arguments will also be heard on January 28. These co-petitioners include Sierra Petitioners, represented by Ben Lockett of Appalachian Mountain Advocates; Craig Petitioners, represented by Julie Gantenbein of Water & Power Law Group; Newport Petitioners represented by Matt Fellerhoff; and Bold Petitioners represented by Carolyn Elefant.

BREDL and our co-petitioners argue that FERC has failed to satisfy the requirements of the National Historic Preservation Act as required under the federally-mandated environmental review process for the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Included in this argument are our claims that FERC unlawfully issued the

Certification Order for the Mountain Valley Pipeline without complying with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act, and that FERC's post-certificate execution of a Programmatic Agreement did not cure this violation. We argue also that FERC's conditional Certificate foreclosed any meaningful ability of FERC and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation to consider alternatives to avoid or mitigate harm to historic properties, and that FERC's refusal to consult with the Tribal Officers, Steve Vance and Ben Rhodd, violates Section 101(d)(6)(B) of the National Historic Preservation Act and the implementing regulations.

Ms. Ferster has a long working relationship with BREDL and its chapters. In 2007, she represented BREDL chapter, Virginians for Appropriate Roads (VAR) in litigation challenging Interstate 73 (I-73) under the National Environmental Policy Act. In that action, VAR, Virginia Forest Watch, and two individually-named co-plaintiffs, Bob and Kris Peckman, claimed that Federal Highway Administration's refusal to study a comprehensive upgrade of U.S. 220 as an alternative to building I-73 was a violation of National Environmental Policy Act. Two years after its inception, this legal action ended in a court-mediated settlement. As of this writing, no segment of I-73 has been constructed in Virginia. In 2016, all the state's funding earmarked for I-73 was "repurposed" by the Obama administration to be spent on upgrades to U.S. 220. There has been no new funding for I-73 since 2005 federal SAFETEA-LU earmarks. I-73 is no longer listed in the Virginia Department of Transportation Six-Year Improvement Program or in the

Federal Highway Administration's Fiscal Management Information System (FMIS). Lacking these listings, there can be no government allocations for I-73.

VAR was formed in 1998 as a coalition of citizen groups organized to oppose I-73. In 1999 VAR began surveying historic resources in the I-73 study area, resulting in the group's successful identification of the Southeast Roanoke Historic District and the subsequent decision in 2004 by the Commonwealth Transportation Board to reroute I-73 to avoid the historic urban area.

A group of BREDL chapter members plan to travel to Washington D.C. for the oral arguments on January 28. BREDL is proud to be among the groups challenging FERC's certificate of the Mountain Valley Pipeline, and proud to have as our co-plaintiffs representatives of the Cheyenne River and Rosebud Sioux Tribes.

Thank you to all who have stood beside us in our work to prevent construction of what one Bent Mountain landowner called a "grassy highway" – the Mountain Valley Pipeline – across the ridges of our iconically beautiful Appalachian Mountain range, through our pristine spring-fed wetlands, streams, and rivers, and through sites identified by the Sioux as having spiritual and cultural significance to their tribes. ■

JANET MARSH ZELLER (continued from page 1)

In 1984, when the Department of Energy announced that Ashe County, NC, was being considered as the site of a high-level nuclear waste dump, Janet Marsh organized her friends and neighbors, holding the first meetings at the Holy Trinity Church of what would become the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. At the time, she was raising young children and farming in Glendale Springs, and shared concerns about the Federal Government's plans with other parents, farmers, teachers and merchants in the area. A study group was formed, and the example that has served as the model for BREDL and its chapters was born. Janet served as BREDL's Executive Director for over two decades, 1986 until 2012. From July 2012 until her death, Janet acted as strategic advisor to the BREDL Board Executive Committee.

In her early adult life, Janet was a successful teacher and a rising star in the educational establishment of North Carolina. Blinded by a congenital disorder in her twenties, Janet's career was cut short. Nevertheless, she founded the Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League to fight a national nuclear waste dump near her home in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The community group was

successful in stopping the dump, and the fight brought together the founding members of BREDL. The principal organizers, recognizing an ongoing need, stayed together to form a 501(c) 3 nonprofit. The community organizing strategies, vision, and tactics which helped win BREDL's first victory guide us today. Today BREDL is a league of more than fifty community-based chapters serving the Southeast with the founding principles of earth stewardship, public health protection, environmental democracy and social justice.

A woman who shouldered much responsibility without fanfare, Janet poured herself into the organization she founded. Under Janet's leadership, BREDL received numerous awards and accolades including the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund National Award for Environmental Activism in 1989, CHEJ National Award for Outstanding Work in 1993, the NC Governor's Conservation Achievement Award for air quality protection in 1999, and the Bob Sheldon award in 2014, in honor of BREDL's thirtieth anniversary.

In December 1988, the Winston-Salem Journal featured Janet in the paper's Tarheel Sketch series. In the article, she stated "We think in the short term. We think of the quarterly ledger sheets or of the next sales profit - but not of the consequences of

our actions." Janet was also featured in an article in The Independent from the December 19, 1986-January 15, 1987 edition. That article was titled "She has the vision to see we can live without fear". Sandy Adair, the BREDL administrator at the time, had this to say about Janet: "Her mind is like a steel trap, as far as reading official documents and reading between the lines. She sees shortcomings and she sees places where they've tried to gloss over an issue. She can see the empty loopholes." Most recently, an interview with Janet appeared in the [May 2014 issue of All About Women](#), a lifestyle magazine that recognizes women in leadership in the high country of western North Carolina.

Janet was a role model to many activists and organizers in the environmental justice movement. She served on the board for the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice, and achieved countless grassroots victories through her work with BREDL. Janet's words and work will continue to inspire people with her belief that, "One person speaking alone may not be heard, but many people speaking with one voice cannot be ignored." - Janet Marsh

The BREDL family and communities throughout the Southeast have lost a true friend and advocate.



WTI protest May 19, 1993 in front of White House.

In 1983 permits were granted for Waste Technologies Industries (WTI) to operate a facility, one of the world's largest capacity hazardous waste incinerators, in East Liverpool, Ohio



Nature Sanctuary Work Day 2001



WTI Protest Janet and Denise Lee



BREDL wins CHEJ Award at their 10th Anniversary - May 16, 1993



BREDL Citizen's Conference on High Level Nuclear Waste Transportation in the South on May 24, 1987



American Delegation on Plutonium Fuel: June 2, 2000 Ekaterinburg, Russia hearing with Janet Zeller addressing the assembly. Leonid Piskunov, who chaired the meeting, is seated next to the speaker's podium. On the far right is Fran Macy, of the Berkeley-based Center for Safe Energy, who heads the American Delegation.



BE SAFE Anti-nuclear Days of Action -March 25, 2004 at rallies in Louisa County and Charlottesville,



Roanoke Gas Expansion into Franklin County, VA

By Mark Barker

Franklin County, Virginia is on the cusp of two big decisions which will determine if the county will continue down the tired old polluting path of fossil fuels. On January 15, the Board of Supervisors will vote on a Special Use Permit for a natural gas gate station. A few days later on January 24, the State Corporation Commission will be in town to hold a public hearing on an application by Roanoke Gas to expand service in Franklin County. Both projects are tied to the destructive Mountain Valley Pipeline of which Roanoke Gas has a 1% financial interest.

Roanoke Gas Company (RGC) wants to build a \$2.2 million gate station in the Franklin County Summit View Business Park. It would tap into the Mountain Valley Pipeline, if it is completed. The gate station would reduce the pressure from the MVP 42 inch pipe into a 6 inch pipe and add an odorant – Mercaptan – then distribute natural gas to potential tenants of the new business park. Franklin County citizens will have to foot the bill to pay for

the distribution infrastructure. The county will be able to receive a dividend from Roanoke Gas but it will only cover new hookups within eight years after the gate station commences operation.

At its November meeting the Franklin County Board of Supervisors narrowly voted 4 – 3 to approve selling 2.9 acres of land at the business park to Roanoke Gas. The Supervisors held a public hearing in December, but voted to delay the vote until January because there was no RGC representative present to answer questions.

As part of this, RGC has applied to the Virginia State Corporation Commission for a certificate of public convenience and necessity to expand into all of Franklin County. RGC claims it wants to supply the town of Rocky Mount with natural gas. They have no immediate plans to expand elsewhere in the county. The interesting note is that RGC has in hand a certificate issued in 1964 which covers, in general, a path down the U.S. 220 corridor to Rocky

Mount. RGC could have run a line from the Roanoke area down 220 to Rocky Mount years ago if their true aim is to supply Rocky Mount.

So, why now? One reason may be a late attempt to justify the MVP. Another may be to monopolize control of natural gas in the county. RGC says it would cost around \$1 million a mile to run pipe down 220. Once again, any distribution pipe infrastructure bill will be footed by county residents. MVP is not a done deal. The gate station and expansion are both dependent on MVP being completed. Our chapter Preserve Franklin has been leading the fight.

Editor Note: The Franklin County Board of Supervisors approved the RGC Gate Station by a 6-1 vote.

More information about possible impacts from the gate station may be found at http://bredl.org/pdf5/Op-Ed_SayNoToNaturalGas.pdf

Big turnout at the December 18, 2018 Franklin County, VA Board of Supervisors Meeting



BREDL 2018 Stats for Websites and Social Media

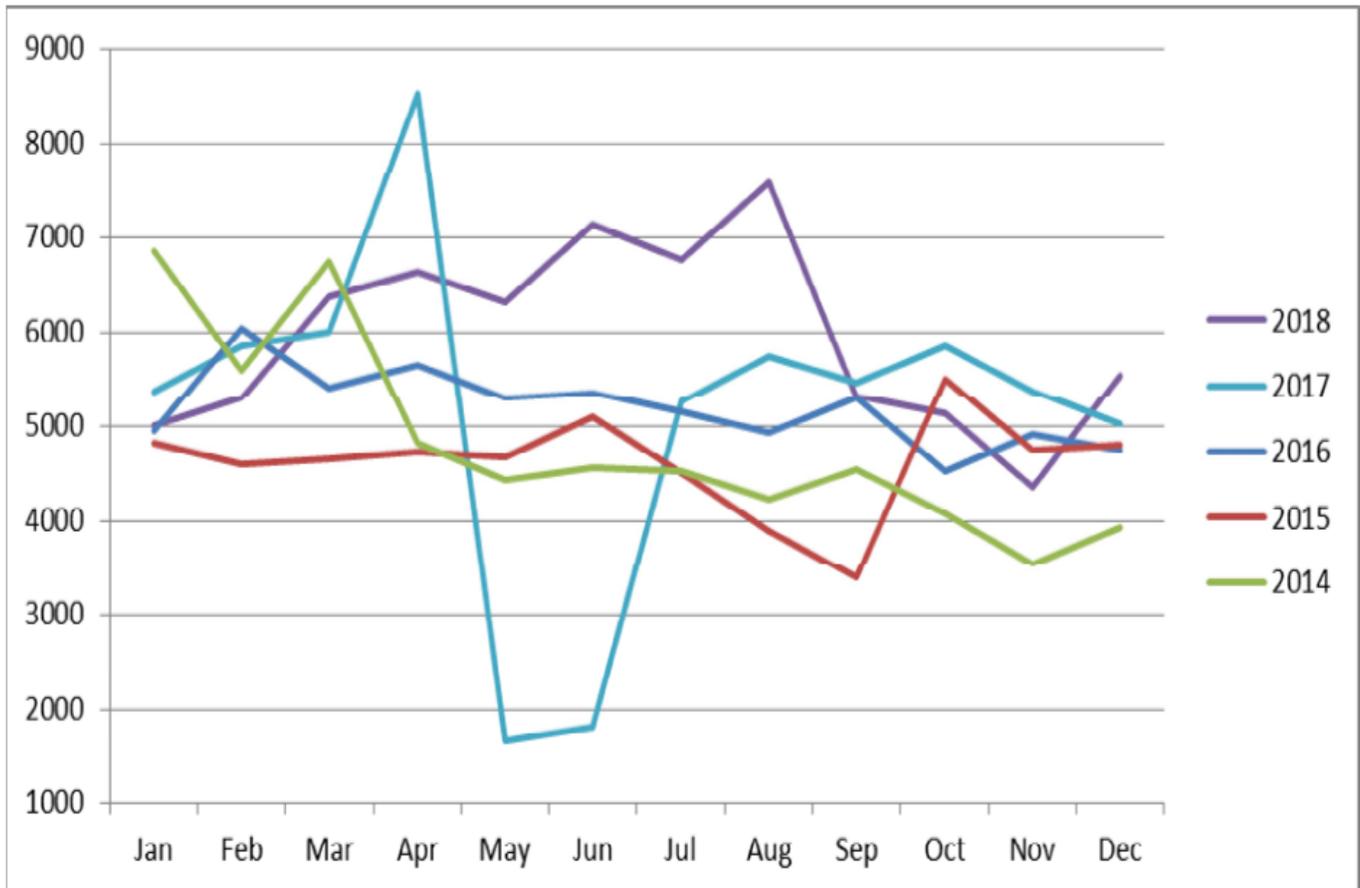
In December 2018, www.bredl.org reached 25 million hits since its launch Feb. 1999. We had over 2.1 million hits in 2018 on www.bredl.org for a daily average of 5961 hits. We averaged around 2773 page views and 521 visits per day in 2018. 5 of our Top 20 highest hits all time were during 2018. August 21 saw our biggest daily hits day at 20,348 hits. 6 of our Top 10 highest Monthly hits were in 2018 with August having 234,870 hits.

Google Analytics show that 92.2% of users were new users with 7.8% returning visitors. Over 77% of users were from the U.S. with users from 81 different countries. In the U.S. over 20% of users were from 150 communities in North Carolina.

October saw two big hits days for nopipeline.net.

Our facebook presence grew around 11 percent from June to December. Our twitter presence grew around 2 percent from June to December. Our most viewed tweet was about our comments on the Mountain Valley Pipeline Variance which increased their work hours. That tweet saw 916 impressions. That MVP tweet along with a Chatham coal ash tweet both had 23 engagements, the most for 2018.

BREDL.org Daily Average Hits Per Month



What does a huge document dump on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline tell us?

That the Governor should have dumped the ACP



By Therese Vick

On the Friday before Christmas, December 20, 2018, North Carolina Governor Roy Cooper's office released 19,216 pages of documents on the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP). These documents were pertaining to the permitting process for the 401 water quality certification, and its companion "memorandum of understanding" (MOU). You can find some background and a link to the documents which were posted by WRAL, here: <https://www.wral.com/cooper-administration-releases-thousands-of-atlantic-coast-pipeline-documents/18078236/>.

The MOU, for a 57.8 million fund to be paid by Dominion Energy, was announced the same day the 401 permit was issued. This spawned many questions, and Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League (BREDL) submitted a records request to Governor Cooper on February 9, 2018. In addition to BREDL, media outlets, other organizations and the legislature also submitted records requests. The North Carolina General Assembly has launched an investigation into the matter.

Most of the documents were not relevant to the 401/MOU. However, there were enough to give us a few answers about how it came about, and how involved the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) was, although questions remain.

Upon review of all 19, 216 pages, this much is clear:

- Governor Cooper was aware that gas would not likely be available to existing industry or future industry

that might choose to locate in the counties impacted by the ACP

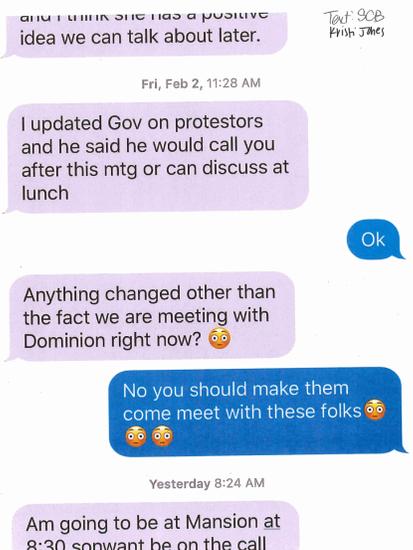
- He was also aware of the inflated job claims made by ACP
- Both Duke and Dominion Energy had easy access to Cooper. For example, the Governor met one-on-one, no staff present, with Duke Energy CEO Lynn Good. During a February 2, 2018 sit-in at Cooper's office, staff were texting that Dominion was in the building at the same time. Impacted communities have repeatedly requested to meet with the Governor since he took office, but he has deigned not to meet with them.
- Despite claims to the contrary, DEQ knew the MOU was being negotiated and that it was coming.
- DEQ upper management were in frequent communication with the Governor's staff regarding permits disapproved, press releases, etc.
- Cooper's staff, and perhaps DEQ upper management used private email accounts to communicate, such as Gmail.
- BREDL also requested records from DEQ, including texts, meeting notes and call logs. We received a few from permitting staff, but no texts or meeting notes, and very few emails from DEQ upper management, including Secretary Michael Regan. We continued to request these items formally and informally, but none were provided. However, there were texts, emails (including some sent to DEQ staff using Gmail), mentions of calls, and meeting attendance documents to various

members of DEQ upper management in the December 20 document dump.

- Soon after the issuance of the 401, DEQ upper management met with gas-industry types who wanted to discuss the benefits of extending the ACP to South Carolina and storing fracked gas in granite caverns along the ACP route.

What we don't know is if any pressure was brought to bear on DEQ permitting staff, because documents from upper management were not provided as requested by BREDL. That said, DEQ has posted tens of thousands of pages of records in response to a records request from the legislative committee looking into the issue. Our review has just begun, perhaps answers to our questions are buried there somewhere.

My father says he should have named me "stubborn". Stay tuned. ■



You Ain't Seen Nothing Yet

By Sharon Ponton



Much has occurred since we last updated our members on the progress of the efforts of the “collective” resistance to the Atlantic Coast and Mountain Valley Pipelines. We’ve seen victories and defeats in the courts, in the permitting process, and in those participating in direct action against the pipelines.

BREDL chapter, Concern for the New Generation, along with others, worked with the Governor’s Advisory Council on Environmental Justice regarding both the ACP and MVP. This important work resulted in a statement from the ACEJ asking the Governor to stop work on both the MVP and ACP and declaring that the compressor station site in Buckingham was environmental racism. Virginia’s Governor Northam ignored the statement and as of today, the status of the Board’s existence, itself, is in question.

We re-filed our Title VI Civil Rights complaint with the Environmental Protection Agency against Virginia’s Department of Environmental Quality in November, 2018 within the 60-day window allowed us after Dominion reinitiated work on the ACP, September 17, 2018. The updated November complaint was determined by the EPA to again “not appear to be ripe for review” based on four issues:

- 1) The Army Corps of Engineer’s suspension of the Nationwide Permit 12 on November 21, 2018, which disallows wetland, stream and river crossings in West Virginia, Virginia and North Carolina;
- 2) The US Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals decision to stay the implementation of the US Fish and Wildlife Service’s 2018 Biological Opinion and Incidental Take Statement on December 7, 2018;
- 3) Dominion Energy’s letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) stating that it had voluntarily stopped construction on the entire project, except for stand-down activities needed for safety and that are necessary to prevent detriment to the environment; and
- 4) The US Fourth Circuit Court of

Appeals opinion which vacated the US Forest Service’s permits for the construction of the ACP across National Forest land, the Appalachian Trail and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

BREDL has been given another 60-day period to re-file our Title VI complaint once a “subsequent act or event that raises an allegation of discrimination” occurs. The four issues above are all victories for the resistance.

On December 4, 2018, BREDL and our Buckingham chapter, Concern for the New Generation’s case regarding the Special Use Permit for the proposed ACP Compressor station was heard before a 3-judge panel in the Virginia Supreme Court. The court denied our request for appeal early this month.

Virginia Governor Northam fired two members of the State Air Pollution Control Board (SAPCB) after its initial November 8 -9 public hearing regarding the Air Permit for the ACP compressor station sited in the Union Hill Community. The two members fired, Rebecca Rubin and Sam Bleicher, had asked pointed direct questions of Dominion regarding the environmental justice issue, as well as the need for the pipeline based on its decision to not build additional natural gas generation plants. We have filed a request with the Virginia Inspector General to investigate the Governor’s actions in replacing these two board members because we believe he inserted himself into the permitting process on behalf of Dominion Energy.

After delaying the permitting process twice, on January 9, 2018, the SAPCB, spouting Dominion talking points and information completely irrelevant to the permitting process in their remarks, approved the air permit for the compressor station in the predominantly African American community of Union Hill. We are determining avenues we can take to challenge the Air Board’s decision. We must note only 4 of the 7 members of the Air Board voted on this permit. One member had recused himself, and the two new board members appointed by Governor Northam after the firing of Rubin and Bleicher in November were not

allowed to vote.

Along the Mountain Valley Pipeline route our chapters and other grassroot groups have continued their resistance.

In October, the Army Corps of Engineers suspended the Nationwide Permit 12 for the Mountain Valley Pipeline which removed permissions to cross wetlands and streams. This permit suspension did not stop the MVP from continuing its devastating construction activities which with the tireless work of citizens and landowners documented hundreds upon hundreds of violations. Even though the VADEQ never saw fit to issue a stop work order which is within their power, the Virginia Attorney General Mark Herring filed a lawsuit against MVP for over 300 violations on December 7, 2018. On December 20, BREDL requested Attorney General Herring seek injunctive relief from the court to stop work. The request written by Attorney Tammy Belinsky stated in part, “MVP is clearing land and burying pipe even though it is not possible to grow grass this time of year. The company consistently acts in callous disregard of the law even in the face of a lawsuit for these violations. The construction must stop while the action for violating the law is litigated.”

Additionally, the State Water Control Board which issued the 401 water certification for MVP in December, 2017, voted 4-3 in December, 2018 to begin proceedings to revoke that certification. As of this writing, the VADEQ has yet to schedule that hearing. We must say we find this odd, because the VADEQ scheduled a new comment period and hearing for the air permit within two days.

The Section 106 Historic Preservation lawsuit filed on behalf of our BREDL chapters along the MVP route will be heard January 28 in the US District Court in the District of Columbia.

As you can see, many positive results have been achieved, but there is much yet to do. Keep an eye out for a new campaign, “You Ain’t Seen Nothing Yet.” ■

Why is Enviva's Proposed Permit with "pollution controls" worse than the original?

In 2017 North Carolina Department of Air Quality (DAQ) permitted Enviva to construct and operate an industrialized wood pellet mill that will annually dump over 250,000 tons of toxic air in the lungs of hundreds of vulnerable citizens that live in the Dobbin Heights area of Richmond County, North Carolina. Enviva pellet mills not only pollute the air, but they devastate the beautiful local woods and forests within a fifty mile radius of their operation. Soft and hard wood trees are cut by the thousands and brought to Enviva to be processed into wood pellets that are then exported to European markets overseas to be burned in their power plants. The power plants in the United States do not use wood pellets because of its inefficiency. The production of these wood pellet mills create tons of CO₂e, particulate matter, volatile organic compounds, carbon monoxide, and nitrogen oxides that have been directly linked to asthma, chronic lower respiratory diseases, and cancer.

As Enviva chokes out communities with its toxic mess, it is in the business of literally burning our forests! Enviva's business model is literally a "delayed" forest fire. The forests are not burned immediately, but its destruction is still the same.

Richmond County and its surrounding counties are already major sources for the wood industry in which many pine trees and other trees are cut for the purpose of making furniture, buildings, and houses. Adding Enviva's operation will only increase the destruction our beautiful natural forests just for burning them overseas!

Enviva was given a permit to pollute by DAQ as a major source of pollution without a public hearing. Many would think that public hearings are automatic when a major source of pollution is proposed to operate in a particular community. According to DAQ it is mainly up to the discretion of administration. BREDL chapter, Concern Citizens of Richmond County (CCRC) upon learning about Enviva's permit its inconsistencies, vehemently spoke up against to the county commissioners and DAQ. CCRC's opposition was factual, convincing, and powerful, but DAQ refused to revoke the permit and have a public hearing.

In the original permit Enviva was not required to use pollution control technology. In order to mitigate the

pollution from Enviva, CCRC sent compelling letters to DAQ, Enviva, and the county commissioners to request that Enviva add pollution controls. A few months later DAQ sends out a public notice that Enviva has made a request to modify their permit to add pollution controls and change their pollution status from major to minor source and that a public hearing would take place. Initially, this appeared to be a small victory for the health of the citizens of the community. It appeared that the pollution controls were going to make a significant impact on the pollution output.

Upon further review, DAQ failed to mention in their public notice that Enviva also requested to increase their wood pellet production by 87,385 tons and total pollution output! Why was this vital information not initially given the public through the notice? Do you think it is oversight or intentional?

By Pastor Cary Rodgers



Even with adding “pollution controls” the proposed permit modifications according to DAQ’s report reveals that it will be an increase of total toxic pollution by 34,176 tons **(68,352,000 pounds)** compared to the existing permit! The existing permit is 231,496 tons of total toxic pollution output compared to 256,672 tons of the draft permit. Do the math and it will reveal the truth. The numbers don’t lie. This proposed permit is worse than the original! The pollution controls added to the draft permit have NO impact on the total pollution compared to the existing permit.

This is not a game nor a joke. This is a matter of life and death! Richmond County is already suffering the negative health effects from the cumulative impacts of air pollution from other Title V polluting industries. According to the Richmond County Health Department, Richmond County already has one of the highest incidents of asthma related emergency room visits compared to all the surrounding counties in the region. Enviva’s operation would significantly add to the respiratory disease problem in Richmond County.

It was already an insult that DAQ refused to take public comments and have a public hearing on the original permit, but to try make it appear that Enviva’s proposed modification was going to be an improvement is a sad reality of the state of our regulatory agencies. This is why local communities and citizens must be vigilant about their air, water, rights, and property. They cannot sit quiet and expect their federal and state regulators to protect them. They must speak up, organize, and implement plans to protect themselves, family, and their community. ■



Illustration 1: "Logging truck loaded with trees drives inside the Enviva Ahoskie facility. Trucks just like these enter the pellet facility at estimated rates of 10-25 trucks per hour." Source: DogwoodAlliance.org



Illustration 2: "Cypress stumps and knees of a once great wetland forest." Source: DogwoodAlliance.org

BREDL
PO BOX 88
Glendale Springs
NC 28629



Contact BREDL to help organize your community and plan events to educate others about your issue and expand your membership so you can win!

BREDL is a regional, community-based non-profit environmental organization founded in 1984. BREDL encourages government agencies and citizens to take responsibility for conserving and protecting our natural resources. BREDL advocates grassroots involvement in environmental issues. Protecting children's health from environmental poisons, empowering whole communities to engage in crucial decision making, and changing the balance of power to prevent injustice are key components of our work.

Visit www.bredl.org to view our interactive timeline that spans 30 years of environmental work across the southeast.
Your donation will help us to carry on for years to come!

Thank you for supporting Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League
It's easier than ever to **join**, **renew** and **donate** online.
Check out our secure online donation forms and use your credit card at www.BREDL.org.
Or send your check to: BREDL PO Box 88 Glendale Springs, NC 28629
For more information contact BREDL at 336-982-2691.
All donations are tax deductible.

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