Massive new Algonquin gas pipeline and compressor stations planned; action needed!

Croton Watershed Clean Water Coalition, Inc. (CWCWC) learned only recently the alarming news that Spectra Energy plans to vastly increase its present **Algonquin natural gas transmission pipeline and add huge new compressor stations (CSs) in Stony Point (Rockland), Southeast (Putnam),** and 3 others in Connecticut and Rhode Island. The Algonquin Incremental Market (AIM) Project will run its enormous transmission line from receipt points in Mahwah, New Jersey and Ramapo, New York (Rockland, near the northern terminus of the Ramapo fault line) to Stony Point, under the Hudson River near Haverstraw Bay to Cortlandt (Westchester, near Indian Point nuclear power plant), to Yorktown, Somers, Southeast (Putnam), through Connecticut, Rhode Island, and terminating in Massachusetts Bay (see map in FERC packet). They'll add 2 new CSs in Stony Point, 1 in Southeast, modify 25 existing metering and regulating (M&R) stations and construct 2 new ones. What is the need for this massive increase? Is the future intended use for export under the guise of "energy independence" and increased New England consumer use?

Marcellus shale gas is known for its high content of radioactive material including radon. It will be fed into the system at Ramapo, NY via the Millennium pipeline. Other transmission lines will also feed into the Algonquin at Mahwah, NJ and Ramapo.

To appreciate the enormity of this line and CSs, the Constitution transmission pipeline has a 30" diameter; Texas Eastern 20", 24" and 36": Tennessee 24" and 30"; Iroquois 24" and 30"; and Millennium 24" and 30". Algonquin will replace its existing 26"-diameter pipe between Ramapo and Fairfield County, CT with a **42"diameter** pipe. The Project claims the massive maximum design capacity of the expanded Algonquin system will increase from approximately 3.33 billion cubic feet per day (bcf/d) to **3.75 bcf/d**. But what is the 5-, 10- and 20-year plan? Will the cf/d capacity increase exponentially as did Millennium's over the past years?

We know that explosions by relatively small natural gas pipelines can cause extensive damage. The San Bruno, California's 30" pipeline explosion caused 8 deaths and raised a 1000-foot high firewall. Transmission lines that ship huge quantities of gas from production areas to distribution hubs, however, accounted for more than 80 explosions and fires in 2012, according to the Pipeline Hazardous Materials Safety Administration (PHMSA), a branch of the US Dept. of Transportation that inspects and regulates the nation's pipelines.

In addition to the 24/7 noise generated, air emissions from Marcellus shale gas CSs are extremely harmful as they emit radon, methane, volatile organic compounds (VOCs) such as BTEX (benzene, toluene, ethyl benzene, and xylenes), carbon monoxide, hexane, and nitrogen oxides. They've been associated with harmful effects on the central nervous system, headaches, bloody noses, skin lesions, blisters, rashes, severe respiratory and developmental issues, and breast, kidney, and liver cancer. The air emission problems come not from conventional gas collected from shallow vertical drilling but from unconventional horizontally hydrofracked gas in deep shale such as Marcellus. To protect our health, local and state officials as well as the general public must insist that Spectra use a lower content of sulfur in the compressor station fuel and install the best available technological measures to mitigate the hazardous air emissions. These measures, regardless of whether or not emission limits have been exceeded, must be installed. Will air emissions be monitored and by whom? Which constituents of the above list will be tested? The state regulating agencies govern the trigger limits. In New York, that will be the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation which is sorely understaffed and has the weakest gas regulations in the nation, according to retired oilman, James Northrup.

The Algonquin pipeline crosses Southeast's Starr Ridge Road near Starr Ridge Manor. The Southeast compressor station is at 142 Tulip Road off Dingle Ridge Road, 2 miles from Peach Lake's 500+

homes. The health-impacting CS fumes including methane will be carried in whatever direction the winds are blowing. Methane has 72 times more impact on global warming than carbon dioxide over a 20-year period. For comparison, Millennium Pipeline's big new Minisink compressor station is 12,260 horsepower (hp). This Algonquin project proposes adding new CSs and modifications to the 5 existing CSs and adding 72,240 hp or an average of 14,440 hp to the already existing hp, an amount unlisted in Spectra or FERC literature. The maximum allowable operating pressure downstream of Stony Point and Southeast CSs will be 850 pounds per square inch for the new 42" diameter pipe. Infrared video of big compressor stations shows immense amounts of raw methane and other noxious constituents being emitted accounting for 60% to 75% of fracking's air pollutants, according to John Hanger, former Secretary of Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection.

The only NY public Scoping meeting was held Monday, Sept. 30 in Cortlandt Manor. Others followed in Connecticut and Rhode Island. Why wasn't the general public notified and with sufficient advance notice of these critical public Scoping meetings to design the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)? Surely the town and county officials of the towns and counties through which the proposed pipeline will run were involved parties in the process. Why didn't those supervisors, mayors and county legislators notify their constituents? We rely upon our town and county elected officials to keep us fully informed on proposals that could impact our surroundings, our health and safety, the value of our homes and possible viability of our mortgages.

The Scoping process opened September 13 for the public to submit comments on the EIS and closes October 14, 2013.

Public officials and the public in Rockland, Westchester and Putnam counties should immediately notify their constituents of this project and demand that FERC extend the Scoping Period for 30 days from Oct. 14 to Nov. 13, 2013 to allow time to study and submit informed comments. Further, that officials post all comments at their websites.

The easiest way to submit comments electronically is using the eComment feature at www.ferc.gov under Documents and Filings and to reference the Project docket number PF13-16-000 with submission. Spreading the word to others to immediately do same is critical.

Key issues to include in Scoping comments are for Spectra to:
(A) prove the need for this massive project is not for export;
(B) conduct an official Health Impact Assessment that includes the impacts of radon and all other constituents in the compressor stations' air emissions,
(C) install all best practices technologies to the compressor stations to mitigate hazardous air emission of radon, methane, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds including BTEX, and nitrogen oxides regardless if limits are exceeded; monitor weekly, record keep and post on website for public viewing;
(D) provide safety record of Spectra Energy projects.

See our website www.newyorkwater.org for additional information. We will also post our Scoping Comments as soon as submitted.

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