

Pipeline assessment won't protect PA communities

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Monday night, I watched as dozens of community members from Lancaster County voiced their opposition to the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline. Missing information. Pipeline explosions. Property devalued. Local control pre-empted. Disruption of natural areas. Air and water pollution. These were a few of the many concerns shared with representatives of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) at the first of four public hearings for the pipeline's Draft Environmental Impact Statement.

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement, or DEIS, is meant to inform government officials and the public about the significant environmental impacts of the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline. However, FERC's draft fails to reflect that this massive, \$3 billion industrial project will fundamentally change the way of life in Lancaster and the other nine counties this pipeline will cut through.

In Pennsylvania alone, this nearly 200-mile, 42-inch natural gas pipeline would affect 4,100 acres of land during construction and will cross 327 streams and waterbodies, including multiple public drinking water supplies, watersheds, acres of wetlands, and designated high quality streams, exceptional value streams, and trout streams.

Moreover, many of us, including myself, are in the blast zone of this pipeline and, if built, will be forced to live with the constant fear of another horrible explosion, like the one that happened last month in Western Pennsylvania.

This environmental review is only one part of FERC's decision, the other part resting on economic need. The Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline, which aims to export Marcellus Shale gas through the Cove Point facility in Maryland, is not needed and by design aims to increase domestic gas prices. Therefore, I urge FERC to ultimately deny the project, given that the costs far outweigh the questionable need.

To those who must bear the true cost of the project, it is a slap in the face to read Transco-Williams' proposal and FERC's assessment as though this were merely a series of inconveniences that can be mitigated, controlled, or dismissed. As a community member living close to the pipeline route, I know firsthand that this project is at odds with my neighbors, our wishes, and a liveable planet.

Kate Ruof is the Conservation Chair of the Sierra Club Lancaster Group and lives in Conestoga with her husband and the world's cutest beagle. Comments to the Atlantic Sunrise Pipeline (docket CP15-138) can be submitted online at <https://ferconline.ferc.gov/QuickComment.aspx> or mailed directly to Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426.