

## **‘FERC Doesn’t Work’ Day of Action And March To Capitol Hill, Thursday, April 18th**

**Washington, D.C., April 18, 2013-** On Thursday, April 18<sup>th</sup>, at 10 a.m., representatives of citizens’ groups from numerous states will be attending the public monthly meeting of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) in Washington, D.C., to demonstrate their unified opposition to the agency’s process and track record of rubber-stamping natural gas infrastructure projects. In a silent and peaceful show of protest, individuals attending will wear t-shirts bearing their docket numbers, in a unified effort to give FERC Commissioners and staff a ‘human face’ to the growing and increasingly diverse populations of citizens concerned, threatened, and impacted by these proposals. Immediately following the meeting (between 11:15am and 12:00pm), there will be a march from FERC to Capitol Hill; a roughly 20 min walk. Community leaders and organizers will then branch off to meet with their respective Senators’ and Congress members’ offices to further press their points with elected officials.

This occasion marks the first time there has been an organized collaborative action involving multiple groups fighting pipeline infrastructure directly challenging FERC’s oversight. Among the grass-roots groups who will be represented at Thursday’s meeting are Stop the Minisink Compressor Station, Stop the (Constitution) Pipeline, The Sane Energy Project, Coalition Against the Rockaway Pipeline, and Catskill Citizens for Safe Energy, (NY); New Jersey Pipeline Walkers, Climate Mama (NJ); Stop the Tennessee Pipeline (PA); and Myersville Citizens for a Rural Community (MD). Additionally, several more established organizations are to join in the efforts, including the New Jersey and the Delaware Chapters of the Sierra Club, and the Delaware Riverkeeper Network.

As a lesser-known federal agency, FERC has remained relatively unchallenged by the public at large for decades, even largely unknown to most since its inception. However, FERC is increasingly in the public eye as natural gas plans have escalated and given many communities grave cause for concern. While FERC does not approve hydro-fracking projects, the agency does approve the infrastructure that supports it- such as pipelines, compressor stations, and LNG terminals. Moreover, the agency does so at an astonishingly high rate: it is estimated that over 90% of all plans that come before the FERC Commissioners are approved. Communities across the country have begun to question what due process exists in these often long, contentious battles which drain resident’s resources.

Most of the groups attending this week’s event have been fighting these proposals for years. “One of the big problems with FERC's decisions is that construction can proceed while their decision is being challenged, said Anne Marie Garti, a resident of East Meredith, NY, who has been fighting the Constitution Pipeline. “Since it can take so long to get into court, and since it's so hard to get an injunction, the whole thing can quickly become meaningless because a court isn't likely to stop something that's half done.” Additionally, many impacted communities feel they have no real voice or agency in the process. The groups attending will be indicating to their elected officials the need for public advocates to serve in defending and creating resources for communities and citizens confronted with energy companies and the FERC process.

Thursday’s Day of Action has been organized under the banner “We The People Matter,” a nascent organization serving to unite these grass-roots groups. More information about the event can be found at [www.wethepeoplematter.org](http://www.wethepeoplematter.org).

###

Press Coordinator: Asha Canalos / 917. 582. 8409 / [ac.minisink@gmail.com](mailto:ac.minisink@gmail.com) / [www.wethepeoplematter.org](http://www.wethepeoplematter.org)