

June 7, 2010

Maria Munoz
Agreement Administrator
U.S. Department of Transportation
Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
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Sam Hall
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Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration
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Dear Ms. Munoz and Mr. Hall,

This letter is intended to serve as a report for:
Northern Plains Resource Council
Grant Agreement Number: DTPH56-09-G-PHPT11
Technical Assistance Grants Program
US DOT Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration

Project Goals, Objectives

The objectives of this project, as stated in the proposal, were:

- To bring 5 Montanans and 5 South Dakotans affected by planned pipeline construction to North Dakota at the site of the construction of the Keystone Pipeline. These visitors will meet with individuals currently dealing with a pipeline very similar in purpose and size and being constructed in similar terrain. These contacts will include county commissioners, fire fighters, weed control officers, legislators, landowners affected by pipeline construction, and pipeline company officials.
- To provide staff support in the logistics of arranging a field tour, meetings and reporting for these 10 landowners.
- To produce a written report that summarizes the information gained and recommendations for safety practices and procedures from this field tour, including photos and video, and making it available to the general public.

- To disseminate this information directly to affected landowners and county officials such as commissioners, fire districts, weed control officers, and legislators in Montana and South Dakota through a series of meetings, by posting it on our website, and by announcing it in local media.

Planning / Logistics

Planning for the field tour took several weeks, as it involved many components that had to be brought together and scheduled for numerous participants. The number of citizens participating was six, less than the ten we had proposed, due largely to the difficulty of scheduling dates that worked for so many individuals. Most of the participants traveled from Montana. Two Northern Plains staff accompanied the citizens and handled logistics during the trip. The Dakota Resource Council in North Dakota coordinated the on-site portion of the trip, including meetings and local travel.

We are pleased to report that we found alternative transportation at substantially less cost than had been approved, and were able to obtain an overflight of the pipeline route at no cost.

Field Tour

Northern Plains held the field tour on October 29-31, 2009. We collaborated with other member groups of the Western Organization of Resource Councils in North Dakota and South Dakota in planning the tour. The group traveled to Valley City, North Dakota, near the path of the Keystone 1 Pipeline, an “older sister” of the planned Keystone XL Pipeline.

The Dakota Resource Council in North Dakota provided logistical support at the site, arranging meetings between the group and five landowners who live along the route of Keystone 1, county officials (including Highway, Fire, Emergency, Weed, and Sheriff Departments), and with TransCanada’s liaison working with landowners and contractors in South Dakota. These meetings included four visits to points along the Keystone 1 route. Those who took flights saw the route from the air from just north of Valley City down to the South Dakota border. Additionally, a few landowners from South Dakota along the Keystone 1 route drove up to meet us for a meal, information, and to show us pictures.

The field tour group was able to gain information about various pipeline-related issues, including:

- Damage to roads during construction, and the potential tax impacts to counties;
- County strategies for preventing road damage or paying for repairs;
- Whether an emergency plan is in place before construction, and the adequacy of local emergency services;
- How effectively the safety of the pipeline construction is enforced;
- Electricity supply and noise concerns for pumping stations;
- Reclamation and weed concerns for disturbed ground;
- How landowners can protect their rights when being crossed by a pipeline (e.g., physical damage to property or machinery, discrepancies between contracts and accompanying correspondence, lack of access to property due to impassable roads, litter, etc);

- The value of having a company liaison so that landowners know who to contact for information or to solve problems.

Outreach

In November 2009, we assembled a PowerPoint presentation to convey the findings of the field tour.

Also in November 2009, one Northern Plains staffer and one landowner traveled to the Pipeline Safety Trust conference in New Orleans to make a presentation on pipeline activity in Montana and on lessons learned from the North Dakota field tour.

Also in November 2009, two landowners presented a slide program, augmented with lessons the group learned, to a crowd at a meeting in Lindsay, Montana. The meeting was publicized with mailed invitations to area landowners and an advertisement in local newspapers.

In January 2010, we held a two-day workshop in Circle, Montana, for member-landowners and staff to discuss a strategy for incorporating the lessons learned on the trip.

In March 2010, we published and mailed a booklet (copy enclosed) titled *Keystone XL Tar Sands Pipeline: Lessons and Recommendations to Improve Safety*. We mailed the booklet to landowners along the route, county commissioners along the route, and other officials, and kept additional copies available in our office for future programs and to respond to inquiries. We handed it out to people in attendance at the Glasgow, Terry, Circle, and Glendive hearings on the draft Environmental Impact Statement hearings. We also posted the report on our website.

We recorded video during the trip (scenes from the airplane flight and of conversations with local officials), but have not edited the video yet.

Summary

This field tour helped Montana and South Dakota landowners learn a great deal about the issues related to pipeline construction and some of the practical measures that can address those issues. To the extent that our recommendations are implemented, they may save money for county taxpayers and considerable aggravation and expense for affected landowners.

We appreciate the help of the Pipeline and Hazardous Materials Safety Administration in making this field tour possible. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Teresa Erickson
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