

# Stop the Potomac Pipeline

## The Potomac Pipeline Threatens Drinking Water Source of Millions

After Big Oil's rush for dangerous fracking across the country, the industry is now threatening our communities yet again — with pipelines.

In Maryland, our communities are now threatened by a proposed fracked-gas pipeline from TransCanada, the same company behind the climate disaster Keystone XL Pipeline. This new pipeline is known as the "Eastern Panhandle Expansion Project." It would cross Western Maryland and Governor Larry Hogan has the ability to stop it. And stop it he should, because notorious oil company TransCanada would need to drill horizontally under the Potomac River, the C&O Canal, and its tributaries to build it.



The Potomac Pipeline would carry fracked gas from Bedford County, PA through Hancock, Maryland and into Berkeley County, West Virginia. It would threaten the health of the millions of people who source their drinking water from the Potomac in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia.

**To protect our communities and climate, CCAN is fighting to stop the Potomac Pipeline and protect the Potomac River from fracked gas.**

### Pipeline Would Run Through Dangerous Karst Geology



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The Potomac Pipeline would run through very sensitive topography known as "karst." Karst is characterized by underground drainage systems with sinkholes and caves and is easily susceptible to the transmission of pollutants through connected underground aquifers. This would allow for the easy migration of pollutants into aquifers that run into the Potomac River.

The pipeline could degrade pristine streams and further threaten public and private water supplies. Using hydraulic directional drilling under streams in karst geology will create pathways for water to drain down the bore holes and dissolve the limestone around the piping. This activity can create sinkholes that could impact the integrity of the pipeline, causing subterranean ruptures and even explosions.

### The Potomac Pipeline Puts the Drinking Water of Millions of Residents at Risk

Six million people source their water from the Potomac River. This pipeline would threaten the drinking water of the millions who live downstream from the proposed construction area. During construction, the pipeline would also put hundreds of wells in the local area at risk.

We know that spills happen. Last year, TransCanada spewed nearly 17,000 gallons of oil on rural land. In May of 2017, the federal government suspended horizontal drilling on a pipeline in Ohio after crews discharged about two million gallons of drilling fluid into a wetland. A spill from the Potomac Pipeline during construction or operation would be a disaster.

## Pipeline Would Deepen Dependence on Fossil Fuels, Contributing to Climate Change

The tremendous growth of Marcellus shale drilling operations in Pennsylvania and beyond has led to a rapid rise in the production of natural gas, which is often “flared off” on-site – so much so that it can be seen from space. Another area of concentrated flaring is in the Bakken shale oil fields in North Dakota, where the gas industry flared the equivalent of [4.5 million metric tons](#) of CO<sub>2</sub> in 2012 alone, roughly the equivalent of adding one million new cars to U.S. highways.

Fracking wells leak gases into groundwater and into the air. One of the gases, methane, is approximately 86 times as potent a greenhouse gas pollutant as carbon dioxide over a 20-year timeframe. The combination of flaring and methane leakage during Bakken oil extraction contributes to cumulative heat-trapping

## TransCanada Is Threatening Landowners’ Property Rights

The pipeline means farmers and landowners will have to fight to protect their property rights. In fact, they already are: TransCanada’s land-men are using the same scare tactics that have been used for decades: “Sell your rights or we’ll take them for free through eminent domain.” It’s a dirty trick that divides neighbors and hurts communities. The only winners are pipeline owners.

The pipeline does nothing for Maryland — yet it puts Maryland’s natural resources, and the drinking water of millions downstream, at risk.

***We must protect our climate, our communities, and our water, and STOP the Potomac Pipeline.***

emissions that are potentially much higher than other sources of oil.

## Pipeline Would Bring More Harm than Good

This pipeline would benefit only TransCanada -- a foreign oil company -- and create only temporary jobs for out-of-town workers, putting our health at risk for their bottom line. Furthermore, the pipeline is unnecessary, as our region makes bounding leaps to a clean energy future. And there is already a [growing movement of opposition](#) among citizens that live along the route.

The TransCanada application has no justification or evidence that substantiates a “need” for natural gas in the Eastern Panhandle. Yet, TransCanada is already moving in, trying to bully and intimidate landowners that would be affected by the pipelines into signing contracts with eminent domain.



## Take Action:

### Governor Hogan Has the Authority to Stop the Eastern Panhandle Expansion.

Governor Hogan can direct the Maryland Department of the Environment to reject the 401 Water Quality Certificate for this project under the Clean Water Act. Together, we can urge him to deny this permit and reject the Eastern Panhandle Expansion Project today.

Banning fracking in Maryland was the first step. Now we need to protect our rivers from fracked gas pipelines. [Speak up today!](#)



**GET INVOLVED!** To stop this pipeline, we need all hands on deck! To get involved, contact: Brooke Harper, Maryland & DC Policy Director, at [brooke@chesapeakeclimate.org](mailto:brooke@chesapeakeclimate.org) or 240-396-2140. Learn more at [chesapeakeclimate.org/no-potomac-pipeline](http://chesapeakeclimate.org/no-potomac-pipeline)