

# GLEN ROCK ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

Municipal Building, Harding Plaza, Glen Rock, NJ 07452

January 31, 2016

To the Mayor and the members of the Glen Rock Council,

The GR Environmental Commission urges the members of the Council to consider and pass a Resolution against the Pilgrim Pipelines proposal.

The two parallel pipelines have the objective to contribute to expand the capacity for transport of unrefined, highly volatile Bakken oil derived from hydraulic fracturing and horizontal drilling (“fracking”) from the bedrock in the North Dakota Bakken formation to Linden, NJ. Specifically, the Pilgrim pipelines would bring unrefined oil from Albany, NY to Linden, NJ and then refined oil back to Albany, NY.

Even if the current proposal does not directly involve our town, we have numerous reasons for concern, including:

- Pipeline failures resulting in spills, fires or explosions, are unfortunately not uncommon, with 29 reported throughout the US only in 2016, and 40 in 2015, according to wikipedia! ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_pipeline\\_accidents\\_in\\_the\\_United\\_States\\_in\\_the\\_21st\\_century](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_pipeline_accidents_in_the_United_States_in_the_21st_century)).
- Risks for water source contamination: The proposed route of the pipeline runs through the New Jersey and New York Highlands, including the Buried Valley Aquifer. These are important sources of drinking water for our region; a pipeline spill in this region would result in the contamination of soil and even, possibly, in the contamination of water source for 5.4 million NJ residents living downstream. It is important to be noted that, NJ Water Supply Management Act NJSA 58:1A-1 mandates that water is a public asset and the state can redistribute it to serve the needs of communities with inadequate supplies. In case of water contamination in other towns Glen Rock would be negatively affected by the legal responsibility of sharing our water, if it remains uncontaminated following a spill elsewhere. This would most likely lead to water shortage to our residents. You are encouraged to consult with Ridgewood Water on this topic, since Rich Calbi has been directly involved in drafting the water supply section of the resolution recently passed in the village of Ridgewood, NJ (*here attached*).
- Risks for residents: a spill of the very flammable Bakken oil can also result in fires or explosions. The risk of pipeline leaks in one of the most densely populated areas of the country does not appear to be a safe proposition.
- Risks for loss of natural resources: by traversing the Ramapo Mountain state forest (see map below), the proposed pipelines introduce a threat to our beautiful pristine park areas, where many of us spend time with their families to reconnect with nature and exercise. A spill would have disastrous consequences.

- The current pipeline proposal appears to include no provision of adequate insurance or indemnity against any of the risks. Potential environmental damage could be severe, requiring an extremely high expense to remediate, even assuming that the damage can be remediated at all. The public needs to have a full disclosure of all terms and conditions and contractual documents associated with the pipeline proposal. Full public disclosure and dialog needs to take place so that the risks can be fully understood and evaluated by the geographic areas involved in the proposal.
- From a wider and long term prospective, investing/installing new pipelines at a time when renewable energy technologies are becoming mainstream and will likely result in a drastic reduction of fossil fuel use in the years to come seems highly contradictory. This suggests that the pipeline may be intended to mostly provide a short-term financial advantage to the involved companies, with the risk that we will be left with old, decrepit and unused pipelines buried underground, with heightened risks of leak as they age. The companies that build the structure now may not be existing or willing to help remediation of spills down the road, reminding us of the liability that an old oil tank buried in the yard represents when purchasing/selling a home.

In conclusion, passing a resolution in opposition to the Pilgrim Pipelines in Glen Rock would:

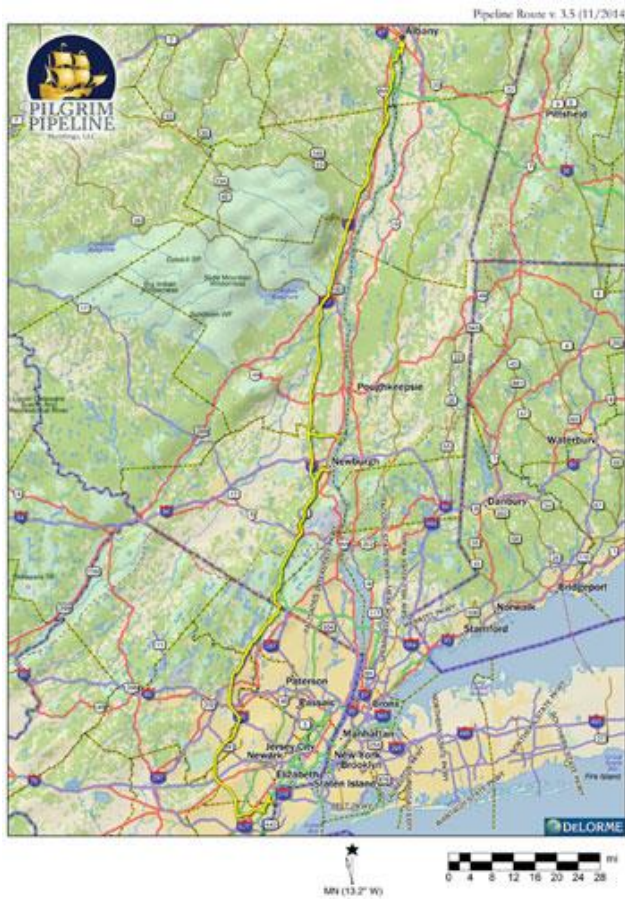
1. Help protect the water supply from Ridgewood Water for our “own” use by preventing contamination of the water supply in the Highland region potentially caused by a pipeline accident/spill (*SEE MAPS of the route of the proposed pipelines in NEXT PAGE*)
2. Protect and preserve the natural environment of our pristine parks, that we use for recreation and that host large part of our natural resources (flora and fauna)
3. Send a message of solidarity to the 42 (and growing..) towns in NJ that have already passed a resolution and/or ordinance opposing the Pilgrim pipelines (*list attached to the email*)

Thank you for your consideration,

Sylvia Rabacchi and Ben Meyer  
Co-chairs Glen Rock Environmental Commission (GREC)

**MAPS:**

Albany, NY - Linden, NJ (yellow line=pipelines)



**DETAIL: Ramapo Mountain State Forest, NJ**

