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Coalition Encourages South Carolinians to “Pipe Up” Against the Palmetto Pipeline in Social Media Campaign

May 28, 2015 - North Augusta, SC - After a Kinder Morgan-hosted public meeting last week in North Augusta, South Carolina, citizens including concerned landowners were left with unanswered questions about the company’s proposed Palmetto Pipeline.

The format of the gathering was different from any of the five public meetings and two official hearings that were held in neighboring Georgia. A circular room was filled with tables of maps and representatives spoke with citizens one-on-one, whereas prior meetings had been in presentation format, allowing a question-and-answer period or opportunity for citizens to make official comment on the public record.

At the meeting in North Augusta, however, the first of any held in South Carolina, Kinder Morgan declined to give the public an opportunity to speak out with comments or questions. When Savannah Riverkeeper Tonya Bonitatibus, an area local and a founding member of the Push Back the Pipeline coalition, learned of the switch in tactics, she was not satisfied. The coalition set up a booth outside the meeting and recorded public comments on video to submit to state officials.

“Kinder Morgan thinks that because there is no permitting process in place in South Carolina, public comments are unneeded,” Bonitatibus said. “But the people of this state want their voices to be heard. They have a right to their property, they need protection from eminent domain abuse and they need it now. We are asking legislators to listen and to pass a bill that would offer citizens those protections.”

The coalition is now urging citizens to record their own comments in response to the threat of the Palmetto Pipeline, and to share them with pushbackpalmetto@gmail.com and on social media using the hashtag #pipeupSC. A public meeting organized by Push Back The Pipeline will be held on **Thursday, June 4 at 5:30pm at the Historic Home of General Samuel McGowan, 305 North Main Street, Abbeville, SC 29620**. Video comments will be submitted to South Carolina legislators to ensure those voices are heard loud and clear.

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Push Back the Pipeline is a coalition of concerned citizens, landowners, more than 20 organizations and other groups across three states, who oppose the Palmetto Project. For more information, visit Push Back the Pipeline on Facebook or www.pushbackthepipeline.com.