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GREAT RIVERS URGES THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION TO TAKE A HARDER LOOK AT THE ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS OF SPIRE'S STL PIPELINE

Great Rivers is taking action to ensure that climate change is considered in decisions to approve pipelines. On behalf of Juli Viel, a resident of St. Louis County, Great Rivers filed Comments on the Environmental Assessment in the federal approval process for Spire's proposed natural gas pipeline slated to run 65 miles through Scott, Greene and Jersey Counties in Illinois and across the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers through St. Charles and St. Louis Counties in Missouri. The Spire STL Pipeline would pass within 0.25 mile of a minority and low-income community in Spanish Lake, St. Louis County.



The proposed pipeline will cross the Missouri River near this location in Florissant.

Spire (formerly Laclede Gas Co.) proposes to build the Spire STL Pipeline to access gas from the shale fields of the northeast. This gas is produced by the harmful process of hydraulic fracturing, or "fracking," which pollutes water, releases methane (a potent greenhouse gas and the main component of natural gas), and even causes earthquakes. Great Rivers argues that the pipeline is not necessary, as even Spire acknowledges it has no need for additional gas, and that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) conducted an inadequate review of the environmental and social justice effects of the pipeline.

On Monday, Great Rivers also filed a motion to intervene at FERC, which gives it the option to request a new hearing by FERC and appeal the decision to the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Ms. Viel is calling on FERC to do a full Environmental Impact Statement rather than relying on its incomplete Environmental Assessment.

Ms. Viel, who is a nearby resident, staunchly opposes Spire's pipeline. It would tunnel under the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers and go through the Spanish Lake neighborhood, which is 75% African American.

"There is no need for this pipeline," said Henry Robertson, Climate and Energy Program Director at Great Rivers. "FERC has a habit of rubber-stamping pipelines. This is completely out of step with a time when it should be facing the reality of climate change."

Great Rivers is the only nonprofit public interest environmental law firm in Missouri, and provides free and reduced-fee legal services to those working to protect the environment and public health. For more information, visit: www.greatriverslaw.org.