

THE NED PIPELINE CONTROVERSY

A LESSON IN RINDGE (2014-2016)



TOPICS

- **OVERVIEW**
- **PROJECT DETAILS**
- **PUBLIC OPPOSITION**
- **ACTIONS TAKEN**
- **OUTCOME**
- **LESSONS LEARNED**
- **CONCLUSION**

OVERVIEW

- **THE NORTHEAST ENERGY DIRECT (NED) PIPELINE WAS A PROPOSED NATURAL GAS PIPELINE PROJECT BY KINDER MORGAN AND ITS SUBSIDIARY, TENNESSEE GAS PIPELINE COMPANY.**
- **THE PROJECT AIMED TO TRANSPORT NATURAL GAS FROM PENNSYLVANIA'S MARCELLUS SHALE TO NEW ENGLAND MARKETS, RUNNING THROUGH SOUTHERN NEW HAMPSHIRE, INCLUDING RINDGE.**
- **THE PROPOSAL SPARKED SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC OPPOSITION IN RINDGE AND SURROUNDING TOWNS DUE TO CONCERNS OVER PROPERTY RIGHTS, ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, AND SAFETY RISKS.**

PROJECT DETAILS

- **PIPELINE ROUTE:**

- **THE PROPOSED PIPELINE WAS TO STRETCH APPROXIMATELY 430 MILES, WITH A SIGNIFICANT PORTION RUNNING THROUGH NEW YORK, MASSACHUSETTS, AND NEW HAMPSHIRE.**

- **CAPACITY:**

- **THE PIPELINE WAS DESIGNED TO TRANSPORT 1.3 BILLION CUBIC FEET OF NATURAL GAS PER DAY TO MEET ENERGY DEMANDS IN NEW ENGLAND.**

PROJECT DETAILS

- **INFRASTRUCTURE IN RINDGE:**

- **THE MAIN PIPELINE WOULD HAVE PASSED THROUGH THE TOWN.**
- **A LARGE COMPRESSOR STATION WAS INITIALLY PROPOSED FOR NEW IPSWICH, BUT ALTERNATIVE LOCATIONS, INCLUDING RINDGE, WERE CONSIDERED.**
- **THE ROUTE CROSSED PRIVATE PROPERTIES, CONSERVATION LANDS, AND SENSITIVE WETLANDS.**

PUBLIC OPPOSITION

- **RINDGE RESIDENTS AND OFFICIALS OVERWHELMINGLY OPPOSED THE PROJECT DUE TO SEVERAL CONCERNS:**
- **PROPERTY RIGHTS AND EMINENT DOMAIN:**
 - **THE PROJECT REQUIRED ACQUIRING EASEMENTS ON PRIVATE LAND, MEANING LANDOWNERS COULD BE FORCED TO GRANT ACCESS TO THE PIPELINE COMPANY.**
 - **THERE WERE FEARS THAT KINDER MORGAN WOULD INVOKE EMINENT DOMAIN TO SEIZE LAND FOR THE PROJECT IF PROPERTY OWNERS REFUSED.**

PUBLIC OPPOSITION

- **ENVIRONMENTAL AND SAFETY CONCERNS:**

- **THE PIPELINE ROUTE CROSSED PROTECTED CONSERVATION LANDS, INCLUDING WETLANDS, FORESTS, AND AQUIFERS.**
- **RISK OF LEAKS OR EXPLOSIONS COULD THREATEN WATER QUALITY AND WILDLIFE HABITATS.**
- **COMPRESSOR STATION EMISSIONS COULD NEGATIVELY IMPACT AIR QUALITY AND PUBLIC HEALTH.**

PUBLIC OPPOSITION

- **ECONOMIC AND TAXPAYER IMPACT:**

- **OPPONENTS ARGUED THAT NEW HAMPSHIRE WOULD BEAR THE RISKS WITHOUT SEEING DIRECT BENEFITS, AS MOST OF THE GAS WAS DESTINED FOR EXPORT MARKETS OR OTHER STATES.**
- **CONCERN THAT LOCAL TAXPAYERS MIGHT FACE INFRASTRUCTURE COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH EMERGENCY RESPONSE, ROAD MAINTENANCE, AND ENVIRONMENTAL MITIGATION.**

ACTIONS TAKEN

- **THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN, CONSERVATION COMMISSION, AND RESIDENTS TOOK MULTIPLE STEPS TO OPPOSE THE PROJECT:**
- **OFFICIAL RESOLUTIONS AND STATEMENTS:**
 - **THE BOARD OF SELECTMEN PASSED A RESOLUTION OPPOSING THE PIPELINE, JOINING OTHER NH TOWNS IN FORMAL OPPOSITION.**
 - **THE CONSERVATION COMMISSION VOICED STRONG CONCERNS OVER POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE**

ACTIONS TAKEN

- **COMMUNITY ACTIVISM:**
 - **GRASSROOTS OPPOSITION GROUPS LIKE NEW HAMPSHIRE PIPELINE AWARENESS NETWORK AND NH PLAN (PIPELINE RESISTANCE) ORGANIZED PROTESTS, PETITION DRIVES, AND LEGAL CHALLENGES.**
 - **PUBLIC MEETINGS AND RALLIES WERE HELD IN RINDGE, DRAWING HUNDREDS OF RESIDENTS WHO OPPOSED THE PROJECT.**

ACTIONS TAKEN

- **LEGAL CHALLENGES:**

- **RINDGE OFFICIALS SUBMITTED FORMAL OBJECTIONS TO THE FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION (FERC).**
- **THE TOWN WORKED WITH OTHER AFFECTED MUNICIPALITIES TO PRESSURE STATE AND FEDERAL OFFICIALS TO REJECT THE PIPELINE.**

OUTCOME

- **PROJECT CANCELLATION (2016):**
 - **AFTER TWO YEARS OF INTENSE PUBLIC OPPOSITION AND LEGAL BATTLES, KINDER MORGAN OFFICIALLY CANCELLED THE NED PIPELINE PROJECT IN APRIL 2016.**

OUTCOME

- **REASONS FOR CANCELLATION:**

- **MASSIVE PUBLIC OPPOSITION: RESISTANCE FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE TOWNS, CONSERVATION GROUPS, AND PROPERTY OWNERS MADE THE PROJECT POLITICALLY AND LEGALLY DIFFICULT.**
- **ECONOMIC FEASIBILITY ISSUES: KINDER MORGAN CITED A LACK OF FIRM COMMITMENTS FROM NATURAL GAS UTILITIES IN NEW ENGLAND, MAKING THE PROJECT FINANCIALLY UNVIABLE.**
- **REGULATORY CHALLENGES: FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATORY PERMITTING HURDLES MADE IT HARDER FOR THE PROJECT TO MOVE FORWARD.**

LESSONS LEARNED

- **LOCAL ACTIVISM MATTERS!**
 - **THE SUCCESS OF RINDGE AND NEIGHBORING TOWNS IN DEFEATING THE PIPELINE DEMONSTRATED THE POWER OF GRASSROOTS ADVOCACY.**

LESSONS LEARNED

- **IMPORTANCE OF LAND USE PLANNING**
 - **THE CONTROVERSY EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR STRONG LOCAL LAND USE PROTECTIONS TO SAFEGUARD CONSERVATION LANDS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

LESSONS LEARNED

- **ONGOING VIGILANCE REQUIRED**
 - **WHILE THE NED PIPELINE WAS CANCELLED, SIMILAR PROJECTS COULD RESURFACE, REQUIRING CONTINUED PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PROACTIVE PLANNING.**

CONCLUSION

- **THE NORTHEAST ENERGY DIRECT PIPELINE CONTROVERSY WAS A DEFINING MOMENT FOR RINDGE'S LOCAL GOVERNANCE, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION EFFORTS, AND COMMUNITY ACTIVISM.**
- **THE TOWN SUCCESSFULLY PROTECTED ITS LAND, RESIDENTS, AND RESOURCES FROM A PROJECT THAT MANY FELT WAS UNNECESSARY AND HARMFUL.**
- **THE EPISODE SERVES AS AN EXAMPLE OF EFFECTIVE CIVIC ENGAGEMENT, MUNICIPAL LEADERSHIP, AND REGIONAL COOPERATION IN CONFRONTING LARGE-SCALE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS.**