Quick Tips on Writing Letters to the Editor

Keep it short and on one subject (between 150-300 words)

Keeping your letter brief will help assure that your important points are not cut out by the newspaper.

Make sure to include your contact information

Many newspapers will only print a letter to the editor after calling the author to verify his or her identity and address.

Newspapers will not give out that information, and will usually only print your name and city should your letter be published.

Make references to the newspaper

While some papers print general commentary, many will only print letters that refer to a specific article – refer to example below:

Example Letter to the Editor

“Keystone pipeline an outdated solution”
RE 'KEYSTONE XL show goes on and on' (editorial, Nov. 24): I take issue with The Pilot editorial board’s stance on the Keystone XL pipeline. As with all these types of projects, a cost-benefit analysis is needed. In the case of this project, the potential costs vastly outweigh the benefits.

As the editorial states, in the short term, the pipeline will create construction jobs. However, the total job count after construction is just 35 people. The editorial mentions other detractions, such as the toxic nature of the so-called oil, which is more like a very viscous, oily sludge that needs additional solvents to make it flow. The pipeline must be heated, or the sludge will get stuck.

The editorial also mentions the huge amount of energy the extraction of the stuff requires. How does spending that much energy to gain a little headroom in a filthy paradigm make sense? Why are we continuing to pump funds into this backward idea, anyway? The only reason is to enrich the oil concerns, which are already flush. Our continued reliance on these pollutants is no excuse.

The issue really comes down to employment in Canada and at the refineries on the gulf. The 'oil' itself would be for the global market, which is already glutted, and would have no effect on the United States. And let’s remember that the alternative to the Keystone pipeline would be one that would go through Canada, to Vancouver, but the opposition to it among Canadians is so high that Canadians won't build it.

It is past time for the Keystone XL pipeline to move to the 'we dodged that bullet' file.

Nancy Pope
Norfolk
ACP in Northampton County

- A compressor station, used to pump highly pressurized gas down the pipeline, is being built in Pleasant Hill.
- The facility will routinely release toxic air pollutants into the air, putting the health of people living in Pleasant Hill and surrounding areas at risk.
- According to a report by the Southwest PA Environmental Health Project, every compressor station they studied routinely released large volumes of chemicals associated with a variety of diseases and disorders. Nearby residents experience higher respiratory, cardiovascular and neurological problems, and they report elevated stress levels due to 24/7 noise.

For more information on how the dangerous (nearly 1,000 foot “blast zone”), fracked gas Atlantic Coast Pipeline will impact your community and trap all North Carolinians in 20+ years of fossil fuel dependence, visit: 
https://frackfreenc.org/
ACP in Northampton and Halifax County

- The ACP is planning to cut under the Roanoke River at the Northampton/Halifax county line
- Known as “horizontal directional drilling”, this activity will devastate the river and surrounding ecosystems.
- Accounts from residents and landowners along the Tar River, where the ACP is currently drilling underneath, reveal that incredibly noisy construction occurs almost 24/7

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ACP in Nash County

- The ACP is currently drilling under the Tar River in a process known as “horizontal directional drilling”
- This technique poses serious risks, as highly pressurized drilling fluid is shot underneath the riverbed to lubricate the drill
- Should the integrity of the drilled hole underneath the Tar fail, toxic chemicals that make up the drilling fluid will be uncontrollably released into the river

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ACP in Wilson County

- The ACP will cut through 12 miles of the Neuse-Pamlico watershed in Wilson County, with plans to drill underneath the Contentnea River to continue SW to Johnston County
- Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) poses serious threats to the River, as unpredictable and unstoppable releases of toxic drilling fluids into the waterbody could occur (threat outlined in ACP’s own HDD engineering report)

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ACP in Johnston County

- The ACP will cut through 38 miles of the Neuse-Pamlico watershed in Johnston County, with plans to drill underneath Little River
- Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) poses serious threats to the River, as unpredictable and unstoppable releases of toxic drilling fluids into the waterbody could occur (threat outlined in ACP’s own HDD engineering report)
- ACP has already begun constructing a metering and regulation tower in Smithfield, which the company has acknowledged will emit harmful pollutants into the air, including volatile organic compounds, nitrogen oxides, and particulate matter.

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ACP in Sampson County

The ACP will cut through 8 miles of the Neuse-Pamlico and Cape Fear watersheds in Sampson County, with plans to drill underneath Cape Fear River in Cumberland county.

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ACP in Cumberland County

- The ACP will cut through 40 miles of the Cape Fear watershed in Cumberland County, with plans to drill underneath Cape Fear River – putting an important source of drinking water for thousands of North Carolinians at risk
- Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) poses serious threats to the River, as unpredictable and unstoppable releases of toxic drilling fluids into the waterbody could occur (threat outlined in ACP’s own HDD engineering report)

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ACP in Robeson County

- The ACP will cut through 22 miles of the county, impacting 5 acres of wetlands and the watershed of the Lumber River – a waterway of deep significance to the Lumbee People
- The pipeline also plans to drill underneath the Pee Dee River in a process known as Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD)
- Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) poses serious threats to the River, as unpredictable and unstoppable releases of toxic drilling fluids into the waterbody could occur (threat outlined in ACP’s own HDD engineering report)
- ACP is planning to build a 350 ft. tall communication tower at an existing Pembroke metering and regulation station – this tower will be lit 24/7 and will blink throughout the night
  - For Native Lumbee People, the open sky – both day and night – is a natural and cultural resource

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