**Simonini, Dhyani “Blue Star”– History/Cultural**

My name is Dhyani Simonini. I have with me, which I have just presented to the judges, a letter of authorization to represent the interests of the Turtle Island Chautauqua and the eastern Lenape nation of Pennsylvania. My own Turtle Island Chautauqua now has a center at Yogaville in Buckingham County on the James River where the Atlantic Coast pipeline is seeking to make its unwelcome intrusion. It will be only eleven hundred feet from our established sacred medicine qheel and our cultural and historical artifacts. These include a two hundred and fifty year old medicine rattle and the Lenape drum which is about a hundred and fifty years old. It is used in healing and in ceremony and the voice of our people. These cultural sacred objects are located in Virginia not in Pennsylvania where my clan mother lived because they were supposed to be in a safe environment at a spiritual center which gives equal respect to all faiths.

You know they say, what is the cultural inheritance and historical compared to the economic, but this is not the truth of people. The truth of people is that the culture and the inheritance ranks equally if not more with the economic and the prosperity and the money grabbing in the empty hearts and the brutal fists.

So here we are on the James River with all these sacred objects and here comes a pipeline. The James River is not even the James River. It is though Wallowa, she was our grandmother, yes they claimed her for their King, John Smith and his crew. It's always been a site of native cultural activity as well as colonial historical settlements. Underneath those banks of the James River there are six buried native cities. This is not a supposition it is even on the map you have in your records that Captain John Smith drew. Also there has been underneath the James River the whole buried canal system, the first canal system ever in this nation by the

James River company whose staunch supporter and president was George Washington. Now you can't get more American than that. If you're going to balance one thing against the other let's throw in a few presidents.

This area is absolutely filled with historical artifacts as were documented by the Smithsonian Museum by the famous work collection and by three major Virginia universities, yours being one of them. The work collection alone produced two thousand artifacts dug in only an acre and a half of riverbank territory. It's been a major artery for both Native American and colonial settlement and beneath the riverbed all of those wonderful canal systems.

The most important thing is that this is not what our country nor our legislature intended to happen in 1988 while Abbott and Wilkins were designating this area, a hundred and forty eight miles of it from Lynchburg from the water dam to the foot of the Richmond falls. This is where the James River batteau festival is designated to bring the James River back to life as a historical and recreational asset for the benefit of the river cities towns and counties and for the Commonwealth and the nation. The proclamation reads, in part:

Whereas designation of the Lynchburg to Richmond portion will enhance the cultural heritage of the cities towns and counties and serve as an example to other regions and states therefore let it be resolved by the House of Delegates the Senate concurring that the

148 miles of the James River be henceforth recognized and preserved as a cultural Treasure.

This was voted on unanimously and approved by the House of Delegates and the state Senate. This was prior to the seizure of our political system by the great power people like the Dominion Company. We can see that this was not what Virginia meant to be. We are not tearing up the country to have the veins be pipelines instead of pristine clear water. Thank you.