

I am Kathryn Parker. For many years I, my family and friends have been privileged to enjoy the beauty, seclusion, recreational activities and extraordinary splendor of the Monongahela National Forest first as guests at the historic Cheat Mountain Club and more recently as homeowners within the Hatchery Run Homeowners Association community on Cheat Mountain.

Over the years, our appreciation for the unique and fragile high Alleghenies spruce ecosystem has grown as we have had the opportunity to learn from and collaborate with the Forest Service and The Nature Conservancy, in support of the restoration of the spruce forest on Cheat Mountain.

We are deeply concerned that the Atlantic Coast Pipeline's preferred route crosses 17 miles of the Monongahela National Forest (MNF) through some of the most intact, late successional forest, critical habitat and the largest and one of the most biologically diverse high elevation ecosystems in the eastern US.

It is quite obvious that Dominion directed its engineers to find the the most direct route from the Marcellus Shale fields to the port cities of Hampton Roads and Lumberton, SC. without regard to the fact that this route transverses two National Forests and crosses 140 perennial waterbodies. It is incredulous to me that a company that prides itself in being a good corporate citizen, would even consider such a route when alternate routes are either already in place or can be developed.

Just today I heard a statement from Dominion's Jim Norvelle saying that the pipeline would be invisible!! REALLY!? Obviously, he has not driven US 250 West, over the high ridges of 7 mountains. Does he really believe a 75 foot swath through the High Allegheny Mountains can be "invisible".

The pipeline construction and maintenance will have a profound and irreversible impact on the unique and fragile ecosystem, on Cheat Mountain, a biodiversity hot spot in the Central Appalachians.

- It will compromise years of restoration work of the spruce ecosystem in the Monongahela National Forest.
- It has the potential to cause widespread environmental damage to streams, rivers, wildlife, and plant life in the path of its construction and operation over time.
- It will increase forest fragmentation impacting wildlife and affecting resilience to climate change.
- It will impact outdoor recreation and tourism.
- It will cross numerous streams, rivers and wetlands affecting fisheries resources, threatening drinking water sources, disturbing complex hydrology systems and increase the risk of sedimentation in streams and rivers.

While I appreciate the impetus to move gas from the Marcellus and Utica Shale fields to customers in the east and the importance of reducing carbon emissions, I believe it is FERC's responsibility to take a broader, longitudinal view, considering not just the short-term implications of pipeline proliferation but the longer-term impacts on the public lands that are not

owned by utilities but by the American people. As our population grows, the importance of our National Forests as places of refuge, recreation and restoration gain even more importance and value.

I believe it is imperative for FERC to:

- conduct a REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE, COMPARATIVE REVIEW of proposed pipelines, alternate routes, existing pipeline infrastructure and existing corridors. This assessment should evaluate consolidation of these pipelines into a corridor that is the LEAST IMPACTFUL
- strongly promote use of existing infrastructure.
- evaluate whether it is a public necessity to build additional pipeline when there are existing pipelines and corridors already in place that are not being operated at full capacity.
- undertake the most exhaustive, rigorous and comprehensive EIS of all possible routes so a reliable comparison can be made of the environmental, historical, cultural and economic impacts related to each route.

I question Dominion's assertion that it is not feasible to avoid crossing the Monongahela and the GW National Forest. This assertion is undercut by routes proposed by other companies that avoid the National Forests. Simply having a customer ready at the other end should not be justification for allowing a private enterprise to route a pipeline through our National Forests when alternative routes can be used.

I urge you to look to the future, and consider a recent US Department of Energy study that predicts the need for additional natural gas infrastructure will decline over the next fifteen years and that better use of existing natural gas infrastructure would reduce the need for new pipelines.

If our generation does not steadfastly and courageously defend our forests, Who Will? and what is the legacy we leave to future generations?.. forests that are no longer places of refuge, instead little more than superhighways for gas pipelines, eventually abandoned in place, and relics to remind our great-grandchildren and their children about what was lost and how poorly our generation valued and protected these precious resources?

In the words of former US President James Madison "***Man, has to find a place within the symmetry of nature without destroying it***"...words that are as profound today as when he spoke them in 1818.

Respectfully submitted,

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