

Hello. My name is Laura Neale. I live in Rockbridge County.

First I would like to read the FERC Mission Statement, and make a brief comment.

“FERC’s Mission - Reliable, Efficient and Sustainable Energy for Customers □ Assist consumers in obtaining reliable, efficient and sustainable energy services at a reasonable cost through appropriate regulatory and market means.”

I am concerned that our governmental agency is taking the easy path of following the lead of energy developers of fossil fuels rather than taking a leadership role.

If FERC was following its own guidelines, it would be looking at 1) applications that create infrastructure at the community level for **renewable energy**, and 2) creating **policy guidelines and investment recommendations** for **promoting energy conservation** through **regulatory and market means**.

My specific concerns about the negative impacts of the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline are extensive. Tonight, I address one concern only.

My concern is not a **potential** environmental impact but rather a 100% definite **negative** environmental impact. Construction and maintenance of a 125 foot wide corridor through the George Washington and Monongahela National Forests would create a permanent open slash across the forest. Number One---Forest is destroyed for the length and width of the corridor. Each and every acre of forest gone to the construction of a utility corridor is gone forever. Number 2---Forest fragmentation of the largest contiguous roadless areas of the forests of the Central Appalachians would cause **100% negative impacts to all wildlife dependent upon these large unfragmented forests**. A swath cut through the forest provides ideal habitat for forest edge predators who parasitize nests of threatened neotropical bird species such as the Cerulean Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, Acadian Flycatcher, and the much beloved Wood Thrush--- each of whom depend upon intact interior forest conditions for nesting success. Other wildlife species negatively impacted include amphibians like salamanders and frogs---- who may not be able to cross a 125 foot desert and exchange genetic material, macroinvertebrates unable to fly will suffer the same

fracture of habitat with loss of opportunity to exchange genetic material, and the soil biota will be **destroyed**. Creation of this corridor provides a vector for invasive plant species and further deleterious effects on native plants and animals. I oppose the construction of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline across the National Forests.

FERC is studying what I understand are **10 pipeline applications** across the Appalachian Trail Corridor, and

MISS NEALE, YOUR TIME IS UP.