



Protecting the heritage, resources and economy of the
Allegheny-Blue Ridge region

For Immediate Release: Thursday, January 21, 2016

Contact:

Lewis Freeman, Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance, lewfreeman@gmail.com, 703-298-8107
Greg Buppert, Southern Environmental Law Center, gbuppert@seleva.org, 434-977-4090

Groups Applaud U.S. Forest Service Decision to Reject Atlantic Coast Pipeline Route through National Forests

The **Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance** issues the following statement in response to the [U.S. Forest Service's January 19, 2016, letter](#) rejecting the proposed route of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline:

The Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance (ABRA) strongly supports the decision of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) to reject the proposed route of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline through the Monongahela and George Washington National Forests and protect the sensitive resources and endangered species found on Cheat Mountain, Back Allegheny Mountain, and Shenandoah Mountain.

Since 2014 when Dominion announced its intention to build a major gas transmission line through one of the most intact wild areas on the East Coast, the Alliance and its members have repeatedly raised concerns about the significant harm to the region's natural resources that the project would cause. The Alliance applauds USFS for recognizing the problems of this flawed plan and listening to the concerns of numerous citizens and other government agencies.

Dominion has persistently tried to force its pipeline through two national forests while ignoring calls to fully analyze less destructive options. The rejection of the preferred route by the Forest Service underscores how shallow Dominion's analysis has been. Any further consideration of alternative routes in this region must be carefully and independently scrutinized.

"Today's letter is welcome news for the 44 organizations in West Virginia and Virginia who have stood together to oppose this pipeline. Our organization has said from the beginning that building a pipeline through the Allegheny-Blue Ridge region presents serious, long-term devastation to this special area of the country," says **Lew Freeman, Chair of the Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance**. "It is commendable that the Forest Service is taking seriously its permitting role."



“Dominion stubbornly persisted on a route that was identified as severely destructive from the start,” said **Greg Buppert, Senior Attorney at Southern Environmental Law Center**. “It is time for them to step back and truly reconsider the need for this pipeline at all.”

“This is very good news for the best of the remaining wild land in the central Appalachians. The Forest Service deserves real credit for meeting its stewardship responsibilities. There is reason to hope that our system may work yet,” said **Rick Webb, Coordinator of Dominion Pipeline Monitoring Coalition**.

"These public lands are worth protecting from pipeline development. In addition to habitat for rare species, these public lands provide important water supply to citizens throughout our region, as well as hunting, fishing, recreation and tourism opportunities critical to local communities," said **Nancy Sorrells, co-chair of Augusta County Alliance**.

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About Allegheny-Blue Ridge Alliance: ABRA is a 44-member coalition of citizen organizations in Virginia and West Virginia concerned about the proposed 564-mile natural gas pipeline that Dominion Resources and its partners have proposed to build from West Virginia to North Carolina. www.abralliance.org