

The Recorder

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US Forest service seeks revised permit application

MONTEREY — The U.S. Forest Service has asked for a revised application for a special use permit for Dominion's proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline.

The project would cross about 20 miles of National Forest System lands in Monongahela National Forest and George Washington National Forest. The current permit application, dated June 16, 2016, reflects a 75-foot-wide right of way through the forests.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission requested Dominion agree to the right of way width allowed by the Mineral Leasing Act, which specifies a right of way on federal lands should be no more than 50 feet plus the diameter of the pipe. For the proposed pipeline, the maximum allowable width would be 50 feet plus 42 inches, or 53.5 feet.

In Dominion's response to FERC filed July 1, 2016, the company agreed to comply with a permanent easement of no more than 53.5 feet. In the draft environmental impact statement (EIS) issued by FERC Dec. 30, 2016, the description of the width is the maximum allowable width of 53.5 feet. Also in the draft EIS, FERC recommends a 50-foot-wide right of way on non-public lands and states a "50-foot-wide permanent right of way is sufficient to safely and efficiently operate large diameter natural gas pipelines."

The forest service clarified that if the proposed pipeline is approved, the easement would be 50 feet wide, consistent with the width recommended by FERC elsewhere along the proposed route. The forest service requested FERC revise the final EIS accordingly.

Domionion must submit to the Forest Service a revised permit application reflecting a 50-foot-wide easement.