



Highlanders for Responsible Development
P.O. Box 685 Monterey, VA 24465 www.protecthighland.org

February 13, 2015

H. Thomas Speaks, Jr., Supervisor
George Washington and Jefferson National Forests
5162 Valleypointe Parkway
Roanoke, VA 24019-3050

Re: Comments on Mountain Valley Pipeline application for Special Use Authorization

Dear Mr. Speaks:

Highlanders for Responsible Development submits these comments on the Special Use Authorization application submitted to the Jefferson National Forest (JNF) by EQT Corp. and NextEra Energy, Inc. to survey a route for the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP). Our organization is a citizens group that promotes stewardship of the unspoiled landscape, natural resources and exceptional quality of life of Highland County, VA. We are primarily concerned with the proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline that would transverse the George Washington National Forest in our county, but we offer the following comments on the MVP because of our deep and abiding concern over the long-term integrity of the National Forest system.

1. The application to survey for the MVP is inextricably linked to a subsequent application that MVP would make to the JNF to build the pipeline should it receive permission to do so from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The various factors that the JNF would weigh if it were considering an application to build the MVP must also be incorporated into its consideration of the application to survey.
2. The MVP survey request should be considered in conjunction with other proposed pipeline projects that would transverse the Monongahela (MNF) and George Washington (GWNF) National Forests so that the potential impact on the National Forest system can be properly assessed. The proposed Atlantic Coast Pipeline would bisect the GWNF and the Monongahela National Forest. The proposed Appalachian Connector Pipeline, though the proposed route has not yet been announced, would also bisect the JNF based on preliminary maps that have been made available. The overall integrity of the National Forest system is too vital to the nation for such monumental projects to be considered in a patchwork quilt fashion.

For the aforementioned reasons, Highlanders for Responsible Development urges that the George Washington National Forest reject at this time the MVP application to survey JNF lands. It would be premature to do so.

Thank you for considering our views.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lewis Freeman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent 'L' and 'F'.

Lewis Freeman
President, Highlanders for Responsible Development