

Filing an Objection with the Forest Service

(36 CFR Part 218 - Forest Service Pre-decisional Process Summary)



Deadline for Objections:
Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP): August 7
Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP): September 4

Who can object to the Forest Service?

In order to submit objections against the the Draft Record of Decision for either MVP or ACP, a person or organization must meet criteria specified in the US Forest Service Pre-decisional process for Administrative review.

This criteria includes:

- A person or organization must have submitted timely, specific written comments to the Forest Service or FERC during previous public comment period submittals, and/or
- If an issue arose after the formal public comment period closed, then a person or organization may submit an objection on that specific issue. Comments must include supporting reasons and documentation for the objection.
- For group objections, a “lead” objector must be specified for communication.

Who am I filing an objection with?

- It is the objector’s responsibility to ensure timely filing of a written objection with the reviewing officer.
 - Reviewing Officer: **for ACP**
Glen Casamassa, Associate Deputy Chief.
USDA Forest Service, Attn: Administrative
Reviews, 1400 Independence Ave SW, Mailstop
#1104 Washington, DC 20250.
Email: objections-chief@fs.fed.us
 - Reviewing Officer: **for MVP**
Tony Tooke, Regional Forester
1720 Peachtree Road, NW, Atlanta, GA, 30309
Fax: 404-347-1781
Phone: 404-347-4177
Email: objections-southern-regional-office@fs.fed.us

Format: email message, plain text (.txt), rich text format (.rtf), or Word (.doc, .docx)

State either:

“MVP GWJNFs Plan Amendment Objection” or
“Atlantic Coast Pipeline Decision Objection” in subject line

Wild Virginia
PO Box 1065 Charlottesville, VA 22902
434-971-1553 info@wildvirginia.org
www.wildvirginia.org

How do I file an objection?

- If you wish to object to a proposed project you must do so in writing during the objection filing period, which is 45 following the publication date of the legal notice in the Newspaper of Record.

What should the objection contain?

- The objector's name, address, and telephone number (if available)
- Signature or other verification of authorship upon request (a scanned signature for electronic mail may be filed with the objection)
- Identification of the lead objector when multiple names are listed on an objection
- Name of project being objected to, the name and title of the responsible officer, and the name of the National Forest(s) and/or Ranger District on which the project is located
- A statement of the issues and/or parts of project to which the objection applies
- A statement explaining the objection and suggesting how the plan may be improved
 - If applicable, the objector should identify how the objector believes that the plan revision is inconsistent with law, regulation, or policy
- A statement that demonstrates the link between your comment and the content of the objection, unless the objection concerns an issue that arose after the comment period
- The incorporation of documents by reference is not allowed except for the following:
 - All or any part of a Federal law or regulation
 - Forest service directives and land management plans
 - Documents referenced by the Forest Service in the proposed project EA or EIS subject to objection

Is there a chance my objection will be rejected?

- Exception for issues that arose after opportunities for comment were over
 - You must be able to link your issues with the new information
 - Be sure the other issues in your objection are based on previously submitted written comment along with a statement demonstrating the connection between your comments and your objection
- Please make sure you provide a legible objection, that your identity is provided, and you supply enough information for the reviewing officer to understand the issues.

What happens to my objection, once I send it in?

- The reviewing officer will confirm receipt of the objection, and accept, partially accept, or set aside the objection in writing
- After the 45-day objection filing period ends, a 45-day objection review period will begin
 - May be extended up to 30 days at the discretion of the reviewing officer
- Prior to a written response by the reviewing officer, the reviewing officer or objector may request to meet to discuss issues raised in your objection and any potential resolution
 - The responsible official will also attend resolution meetings (open to the public)
 - The reviewing officer will determine if people other than objectors can participate
- If there is more than one objection, the reviewing officer may decide to hold a joint meeting with all objectors.

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- At the end of the reviewing period, the reviewing officer may consolidate objections and issue one response or may issue a written response to each objection.
 - The written response will be the final decision by the USDA on the objections.
- Once the reviewing officer has issued the response to the objections, the responsible official may sign the final ROD or Decision Notice and implement the project.

Additional Information – Contact

- Karen Overcash, Forest Planner
Forest Supervisor's Office- 5162 Valleypointe Parkway, Roanoke, Virginia
(540) 265-5100 kovercash@fs.fed.us

****Filing Comments with the BLM on MVP****

- The BLM is *also* soliciting comments specific to MVP impacts on federal lands for consideration in its Record of Decision.
- If you wish to submit written comments to the BLM, they must be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days from the date that the EPA publishes the [Notice of Availability of the Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Mountain Valley Project and Equitrans Expansion Project](#) in the Federal Register.
 - **Deadline for Comments July 31st**
 - Submit comments to the BLM by mail:
 - Mail: Vicki Craft, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, Southeastern State District Office,
273 Market Street, Flowood, MS 39232.

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