



June 23, 2017

Contact: Dave Sligh david@wildvirginia.org 434-964-7455

## **FERC's Fails to Acknowledge Serious Damage MVP Would Cause The Forest Service and BLM Must Step Up to Protect the Public**

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) has released its Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP). As it did in the draft EIS, FERC has again failed to adequately address many of the most important issues that should guide federal agencies in making final decisions about the fate of the MVP.

“Most importantly, FERC fails to clearly address the basic need for the pipeline or for the gas it would transport,” said David Sligh of Wild Virginia. “This makes obvious what we have known since the beginning, that this project, and its potential impacts are unnecessary and the proposal is fatally flawed.”

Other deficiencies in the FEIS include the failure to do an adequate alternatives analysis or a cumulative impacts assessment. FERC's conclusions that most environmental impacts will be insignificant are not scientifically credible and defy common sense. “Some wounds on our forests can never be healed once they are inflicted, including forest fragmentation, loss of valuable core forest areas, and loss of watershed integrity,” said Wild Virginia President Ernie Reed. “Damage to the Jefferson National Forest and the Appalachian Trail will sacrifice the public’s ability to use these national treasures in the interest of profit-making corporations and no one else.”

What Wild Virginia is particularly concerned about is how the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM) will act in response to the deficiencies in FERC's National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. These agencies' duties under NEPA are just as important as FERC's and they must refuse to adopt this EIS. The DEIS had deficiencies that could not be fixed in this final version, but even many of the gaps that could have, and should have, been filled in this document were not.

One very basic requirement that neither MVP nor FERC even tried to meet is to ensure that no alternative that avoids all National Forest lands is practicable before recommending a Forest crossing. The Forest Service has repeatedly stressed that such an alternative must be thoroughly examined and the public expects the agency to hold fast to that demand. If it fails to do so, the Forest Service will betray our interests.

Among the shocking facts the FEIS reveals but which FERC fails to acknowledge as significant:

**Protecting Your Favorite Wild Places**

*Printed on 100% Post Consumer Recycled Paper*

- The MVP would affect over 1,000 waterbodies and slice through the headwaters of the Roanoke River watershed, crossing through 20 surface water protection areas.
- The MVP would cause irreparable damage to 41 core forest areas in Virginia and West Virginia
- The MVP would impact the habitat for 23 federally recognized sensitive and rare species.
- Permanent visual impacts to the Appalachian Trail would be significant and irreparable
- 2/3 of the MVP would cross mountains, ridges and slopes that are susceptible to landslides and major erosion.

“Our people and our communities deserve better than this,” said Wild Virginia Director Misty Boos “and we will insist that the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management fulfill their promises to protect our resources, our health, and our safety.”

##

P.O. Box 1065  
Charlottesville, VA 22902  
(434) 971-1553  
[www.wildvirginia.org](http://www.wildvirginia.org)

