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## **Wild Virginia and Allies Challenge FERC's ACP Approval**

On January 29, 2018, attorneys representing Wild Virginia and ten other citizen groups filed suit in the United States Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit, asking the court to review the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission's approval of the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. Members of the public have revealed gross deficiencies in the evidence and analysis supposedly justifying FERC's issuance of a certificate of public convenience and necessity but the Commission has failed to acknowledge or correct those deficiencies.

"The pipeline companies have never justified the need for this project and FERC refused to require a valid needs analysis," stated Misty Boos, Director of Wild Virginia. Boos continued, "the evidence shows that this ill-conceived project will cause severe environmental damages, including those to our National Forests. Loss of valuable interior forest stands, fragmentation of habitats, and degradation of water quality are inevitable. The corporations proposing ACP will reap huge profits at the expense of communities and landowners who will be hurt economically and suffer permanent losses."

FERC Commissioner Cheryl LaFleur echoed criticisms of the Commission's analyses that have been presented by independent experts and citizens over the last three years, when she voted to deny approval for ACP. She judged that the purported benefits of the pipeline were not proven to outweigh the costs, the standard by which FERC is required to review such projects.

David Sligh, Wild Virginia's Conservation Director said, "we and our neighbors have worked hard and constantly to try to make the governmental review processes conducted by FERC and other agencies work fairly. Our efforts have been met with arrogant disregard of people's concerns and the large body of evidence submitted to those officials. We will not rest until every possible effort has been made to set this right."

Wild Virginia is represented in this action by Appalachian Mountain Advocates, along with Appalachian Voices, Chesapeake Climate Action Network, and Sierra Club. The Southern Environmental Law Center represents the Cowpasture River Preservation Association, Friends of Buckingham, Highlanders for Responsible Development, Shenandoah Valley Battlefields Foundation, Shenandoah Valley Network, Virginia Wilderness Committee, and Winyah Rivers Foundation in the joint petition.