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First name: Maury

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: To: Dr. Homer Wilkes, Under Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture.
George Washington & Jefferson National Forests

February 20, 2023

Dear Mr. Wilkes and Others Whom It May Concern:

I am a former teacher with a background in history and science. I am a farmer who has been engaged in farming my entire life. I am also a resident, citizen scientist that has undergone training by Trout Unlimited and the WV Rivers Coalition to document water contamination and other problems across WV and VA, I was born in Giles County VA and have lived nearby in Monroe County WV on my families multi-generation farm my entire life. I am a member of the Appalachian Trail Conservancy and an avid outdoorsman. The Mountain Valley Pipeline crosses my farm and neighborhood. I can see the Appalachian Trail and the Jefferson National Forest from the hilltops on my farm. Therefore I believe that I have expertise on several issues regarding the permit request by MVP to cross the JNF. These would be from on the ground observances and other pertinent information that may not be available from any other source..

America's National Forests are held in the public trust as special lands. They are the headwaters for our rivers and streams as well as springs and wetlands which are critical for our drinking water and other uses. They provide habitat for animals and plants including threatened and endangered species. They provide us with scenic beauty and recreational spots where we go to rest, relax and recreate.

As I have stated in the attached letter, this is not in a statement of support or opposition of the permit in question, but rather a letter to raise questions and to supply the USFS with information it may not have. With that said the USFS must make a precedent setting decision in whether to make the changes to the Forest Management Plan to accommodate MVP and by default any other project that comes along in the future wanting similar concessions. It must decide whether it is in the public interest to approve or to deny the MVP Permit Request to cross the Jefferson National Forest and the AT in the JNF. This is not my decision but is a decision that the US Forest Service must considered very carefully.

Sincerely,

Maury W. Johnson

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Greenville, WV 24945

Attachments

#1 My Letter to the USFS

#2 ATC Vice President Tom Campbell report to the 17th Triennial Conference of the ATC (1967)