

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 2/20/2023 9:01:38 PM

First name: Kimberley

Last name: Homer

Organization:

Title:

Comments: Dear Mr. Wilkes,

I am a person who suffers from depression and anxiety, and I support others through the New River Valley chapter of NAMI. I also practice earth-centered spirituality. Our earth, air, water, and all living beings who belong to them are sacred to me, and I daresay would be sacred to anyone who can spend time in the Jefferson National Forest. I've been climbing up and down the forested slopes for many years now, and though the rain intensity has increased dramatically, the streams run clear where the trees, shrubs, mosses and fungi have been protected. There will soon be a series of controlled burns there, and I know these take a lot of person power to do safely, and that forest people who care are our best hope. When your agency proposes allowing MVP to cut a one hundred twenty-five foot wide, three and a half mile long gash out of our forest and spray chemicals on it to prevent the trees and shrubs (and anything else) from growing back, fragmenting the ecosystem so that birds, deer, insects, and salamanders will no longer thrive, and then further allow boring under our streams and wetlands, knowing full well that MVP does not care about us, our drinking water which they have already harmed, our safety in the event of an earthquake or fire--it feels like you are giving permission to a nameless, faceless predator to rape my little sister and my grandmother just because he can. Appalachia has been a sacrifice zone for so long, and it may be our last place of refuge as the Arctic warms, the sea coasts flood, and the rivers dry up. You have the power to stop these predators. Please be brave. We need you. We need our forest, whole.