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Organization:

Title:

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To whom it may concern,

I urge the US Forest Service to take no action on Mountain Valley Pipeline's request to amend the Forest Plan to allow pipeline completion. I would also request that you extend the comment period as this opportunity was impeded by the announcement during the Christmas Holiday period. This last decision regarding pipeline construction has broad reaching implications.

There has been substantial damage already due to the construction activity. Amending the Forest Use Plan for the benefit of a corporate utility would be a seriously dangerous precedent with no end in sight. Not to mention that you would be contributing to fossil fuel development and extremely high methane emissions from compressor stations. There are just so many reasons to say no but I will try to name just a few more below.

The viewshed is scarred permanently already and the blatant disregard for our treasured national Appalachian Trail is shameful. Visitors from all over the world come to enjoy the continuous forest we have here in Appalachia. It was my understanding that your position is to protect this. I live near the Eastern Continental Divide on the AT and have had many hikers stay at my farm. They are all mortified to hear about the MVP project.

The unparalleled water quality in Sinking Creek valley is a resource that cannot be replaced. The karst topography makes everyone's water interconnected. What happens in one place will affect the drinking water miles away underground. Does it make sense to bury a pipeline and fill the ground back in, thus blocking miles of interconnected waterways that travel underground? Is underground water not protected?

Riparian zones are for sure protected and the stream crossings for the MVP will adversely affect over nine miles of riparian buffer zones collectively.

Our karst landscape provides every family in this valley with clean and reliable drinking water. Our "swiss cheese" cavernous rock really does not lend itself to stable soil at all especially on the near vertical slope at the top of my Sinking Creek Mountain. The many sinkholes and caves which have already been affected by the MVP construction activity will only get worse when the pipe is buried.

This water I speak about travels not on the surface, but all underground where it even pours up out of the top of this mountain like a drinking fountain on Jefferson National Forest land. One thinks water always flows downhill, but not so with underground water. My spring that has run continuously for 100 years or more is located at 3000 feet elevation when the valley floor is at 2300 feet. A large number of farms here use gravity fed water from springs located high on this mountain. There are at least 7 springs that I know of within 1000 feet of my home. This upward water pressure was exemplified by some large ice flows which were observed on the crest of the ridge in January, 2023 very close to the pipeline route. Even the name "Sinking Creek Mountain" should give one assurance that there is water everywhere in this mountain. With the water comes 3 things:

- 1) Very specialized ecological habitats supporting pockets of aquatic creatures and plants.
- 2) Unstable soils that shift regularly since we are in a seismically active zone

3) Ice formations which move soil and rock in a powerful way.

Let me reiterate comments about the ice and its power to move things. The underground water all around the pipe will accumulate and flow down along the pipe. With the gravity experienced on the nearly vertical slopes in many areas, there is no way in the world that the flow of water and sediment will be stopped. Seasonal freezing and thawing will slowly but surely move that large pipe and cause a rupture. That is the last thing any of us wants.

This is about you upholding the principles and guidelines of the USFS. Its about MVP being a bad idea which is becoming an even worse idea as we learn more about the damage it has caused even before the pipe is buried and the gas starts to flow. The remediation of the project will take many years to repair, and after a few short years of use, there will be a buried toxic waste dump along its entire length. Be really careful what you wish for.

Thank you for reading and considering my comments in your decision.

Marjorie M. Lewter