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First name: Dr. Suzanne

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: RE: Public Comment on MVP going through the Jefferson National Forest.

Dear US Forest Service,

I am a licensed health care practitioner in WV and VA. I have always appreciated the great splendor and beauty of our local Appalachian mountains and the incredible biodiversity of the old forests. In college, I studied Environmental Biology which included studying all forest organisms, populations, plant taxonomy and stream health. Over the years, I have hiked the Appalachian Trail and appreciate the fact that it is a national treasure.

I am opposed to your idea to issue a permit for MVP to go through the national forest.

Sadly, we have reached a time on our home planet where we can no longer assault nature in protected areas. In the past year, West Virginia Governor Justice declared weather related states of emergency at least 5 times, including last Thursday, February 16, 2023. Our family has a farm in central WV, and we have seen catastrophic flooding on at least 3 occasions in the past 2 years. This past week, the flood of February 2023 caused significant water damage again for which I must file various environmental complaints with FERC, WVDEP and USACE. The complaints will be for erosion, washouts and MVP silt fences falling down in many places with a flood line markers showing at the headwaters of our farm.

I can speak from experience in dealing with MVP and the consequences of mountain deforestation and mountain removal. Here is the history of what my family has witnessed.

MVP came through our next door neighbor's property at the headwaters of Second Big Run, Lewis County, WV, in the back of the valley. They carved a 125 foot wide easement for at least a mile, either side of the headwaters where they want to bore into a wetland creek basin that is at least 75 feet wide, where 3 small creeks and many small springs meet. If they do that, given the history of flooding already, they will cause catastrophic damage to the creek, which is part of the Little Kanawha basin, flowing to the Ohio River. They took a 'temporary' road easement over our wetland access road and cross the creek about 5 times with timber mat or RR bridge crossings. They have been using this temporary easement for 5.5 years now. MVP went on winter curtailment last year and currently, the road looks like a mess and the first culvert bridge at the bottom of the valley is collapsing due to the floods and heavy weight of their trucks and gravel.

Because our farm is in the wetland valley, we have been able to document the severe impact to the entire creek for over 5,000 feet. The creek has doubled in many places, hillsides have become water slide curves during the torrential rain episodes. Embankments are scoured, and the sediment load has killed many of the invertebrates that lived in the creek. This has all been documented on the FERC and USACE dockets for MVP.

The deforestation and blowing up the buttes to put in the pipeline caused the mountains to crack and for water to seep down to the base of the mountain. Blasting destroyed the buttes where protected birds nested. I have personally seen at least 3 mountain slips that they had to fix. Currently, FERC reports there is one on the MVP 64 mile marker, visible from the back landing on our property, and there is no slip crew fixing it. In VA, many people have lost their clean well drinking water from the MVP corridor causing damage to the karst sands.

They have had a few catastrophic events happen with flooding that occurred on weekends where there were no

crews. Another factor is the remote location or that the main access road, Oil Creek Road, also floods out in either direction during flood events. Turn around don't drown means it is too dangerous to access these areas.

Whatever you decide, you should not give MVP any permission to put in any more pipe until you see the consequences of the unfinished work for 300 miles around your area. We have so much flooding now on this corridor. Ripping up over 400 creeks could create a catastrophic infrastructure collapse with inadequate mitigation response.

Take for example, this Friday, February 17 flood. Cabell county, WV declared that they were having a 100 year flood on Friday. A tv video showed the Ritter Park and a high school flooded out. In another county, students were forced to stay at the school overnight because the school buses could not go out in the storm. A child died from being stuck in a flooded car in Pax, WV. The Greenbrier river crested at Alderson above minor flood stage, and where I live, where MVP crosses Oil Creek Road with a huge open deforested corridor, Oil Creek was scoured so badly just downstream from there that we had to report a leaning electric pole in the creek where the scouring took out the pole footing along with two others ready to go. If that wasn't enough, the USGS recorded an earthquake near Point Pleasant, WV, probably due to the massive amount of rain on the surface of the Ohio River Basin. At that same time, the Ohio Governor was making announcements about the vinyl chloride spill in New Palestine, Ohio, the local WV American Water office that was monitoring the Ohio River for the spill, was in the flood zone of this 100 year Cabell County flood. This is a very real example of infrastructure collapse. From California, New Zealand or worldwide this winter we have seen multiple examples of infrastructure collapse. If you add any pipeline rupture to this scenario, the infrastructure collapses in these areas. Suffer the consequences of an environmental nightmare by destroying more forest for an unnecessary and ill-conceived MVP project.

There needs to be a new Environmental Impact Statement done for the MVP, to assess the damage it has already caused along this 300 mile corridor before you give any permission for them to go across the national forest.

Some might say, well, we are east of you and don't get so much rain. That is not true, plus you are in a seismic zone. After seeing the inundations to Buchanan county, VA, SW Kentucky and West Virginia last summer, anything is possible.

In this time of climate change, the recipe for any erosion and washout is to deforest the mountains, crack the buttes a little and move too much dirt. Humans cannot control nature and certainly, whatever permits you issue to greenlight MVP will cause more consequential environmental destruction and headaches for all your government agencies.

No one appears to have enough experience building a viable 42 inch gas pipeline. Obviously, whoever planned this project back in 2014 never took into account the steep mountainous terrain. The pipe has been sitting outside at hundreds of locations for over 5 years. Pipe that is in the ground is likely unstable. These lines don't leak, they rupture. And if they rupture in the summer when it is hot and dry, in an isolated area, a major wildfire could start.

Government agencies are not equipped to get into these isolated places to put out large fires. On the east coast there are so many dead trees from the blights. The climate change causes intense heat, evaporation of water and then the weather turns quickly to excessive rainfall events.

There is the governmental issue that this pipeline was forced on landowners through eminent domain. People say the gas is for exportation, for profit. In the news last summer, it said that so much fracked gas had been produced in the US Permian basin, that the cost of natural gas in that area, went to zero. If you already sacrificed that area, why not just get the gas from there.

Appalachian mountains cannot take any more fracking or methane cracks from fossil fuel extraction. As part of the bigger picture, giving a green light to MVP means that there will be more fracking, not less. If fires start where all these methane leaks are in Appalachia from dilapidated wells, they will be hard to put out. That pipeline is not likely to ever be functional.

There are articles in the news, climate.gov, that say the stratosphere is experiencing episodes of warming. We need stratospheric clouds to cool the planet, otherwise, we are headed for trapped greenhouse gases, from fossil fuel extraction, making the issue of climate collapse eminent.

Please think about the bigger picture of climate collapse. We don't need that pipeline and people are ready to change now before we can no longer deal with the consequences of our poor environmental choices.