



January 2, 2015

USDA Forest Service  
Atlantic Coast Pipeline Survey Comments  
5162 Valleypointe Parkway  
Roanoke, VA 24019

Dear Forest Service:

I am writing on behalf of Friends of Shenandoah Mountain in response to the scoping notice regarding Dominion's request to survey a route through the George Washington National Forest for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline. We request that you deny this special use permit for the following reasons:

- The proposed route passes through the southern corner of our proposed Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area, which the GWNF has recommended for Congressional designation. The Scenic Area proposal has been endorsed by over 220 businesses and organizations and supported by the GWNF Stakeholder Collaborative. The proximity of the pipeline to the NSA will harm the scenic quality of the area, degrade the ecology, and threaten recreational resources.
- The pipeline would harm the recreational value of the Shenandoah Mountain area, which is popular for hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, hunting, fishing, camping, and scenic driving. The Shenandoah Mountain area has close to 200 miles of popular trails.
- The proposed route bisects the largest, mostly unfragmented tract of national forest land east of the Mississippi.
- The route passes directly through known Cow Knob Salamander habitat, which the Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife have a signed agreement to protect. The new forest plan indicates that habitat will be protected wherever Cow Knob Salamanders are found.
- The proposed route crosses Rt, 250, a scenic gateway to the George Washington National Forest . Rt. 250 is the primary access point to Ramseys Draft Wilderness, the scenic Braley Pond area, Mountain House Picnic Area, Confederate Breastworks, Georgia Camp area, Dowells Draft, Elkhorn Lake, Staunton Dam, Camp Todd, Todd Lake Campground, hunting sites in the Schaffer Plantation, Leading Ridge and Hankey Mountain areas, and fishing sites on the upper North River, Calfpasture River, and Ramseys Draft.

- The proposed pipeline would pass close to Georgia Camp, which is of Civil War significance, and may pass through historic sites that have not yet been inventoried.
- The pipeline would plow a wide corridor through the access road to Braley Pond Recreation Area, one of the most scenic and popular recreation areas in the whole GWNF.
- The pipeline would pass through the Ramseys Draft Addition Potential Wilderness Area, inventoried by the GWNF.
- When outdoor recreationists visit the Shenandoah Mountain area to ride in mountain bike events, hike, camp, hunt, and fish, they spend money at local restaurants, gas stations and other small businesses. Maintaining the natural characteristics and scenic beauty of this area supports the local tourism-based economy.
- The pipeline would pass through our original Shenandoah Mountain National Scenic Area Proposal submitted to the GWNF on Oct. 30, 2008. It would bisect the Chestnut Oak Knob Grouse Habitat Improvement project, on Hankey Mountain, which VDGIF and Ruffed Grouse Society have supported for decades. As a part of the GWNF Stakeholder compromise, Friends of Shenandoah Mountain agreed to drop this area from the National Scenic Area proposal and pledged to support continued grouse management there. A permanently maintained 150' wide pipeline corridor would be incompatible with management for young forest habitat that benefits grouse and other species. See attached map of Proposed Pipeline Route over Shenandoah Mountain for boundaries of our original and current proposals in relation to the pipeline.

Given this long list of concerns, we see no point in surveying this route. There is no way a 42" pipeline can be constructed on the steep slopes and forested areas of Shenandoah Mountain and through a scenic corridor and popular recreation area without doing unacceptable harm. Please deny the special use permit.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Lynn Cameron  
Co-Chair  
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