



For Immediate Release

U.S. Forest Service Authorizes ACP and Betrays the Public Interest

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Today, the U.S. Forest Service betrayed the public interest by issuing its final authorization for the Atlantic Coast Pipeline (ACP) to cross and degrade the Monongahela and George Washington National Forests. This approval comes through the final [Record of Decision](#) which was issued jointly by Regional Foresters for the Service's Southern and Eastern Regions. The move follows an earlier dismissal of formal administrative objections filed by Wild Virginia and many other citizens and conservation groups.

The National Forest ecosystems that would be crossed if ACP is built form the vital core of the largest remaining intact natural environments in the eastern U.S. They are globally-significant for extraordinarily rich biological diversity, shelter many rare and endangered species, and protect headwater streams that provide drinking water to millions of people who live downstream. Most of all they are national treasures that belong to all Americans.

"This pipeline would fragment forests, threaten many natural features, and damage legitimate and valuable human uses. They would also lessen the Forests' values as carbon sinks, one of the most effective mechanisms for slowing and reversing global warming, and at the same time make these environments more vulnerable to the changes already underway," said Ernie Reed, President of Wild Virginia. "The scientific evidence is abundant and clear and the leaders of the Trump administration have willfully ignored it," he stated.

David Sligh, Wild Virginia's Conservation Director, stated: "While we are disappointed by this irresponsible decision, the public must know that this fight to protect our natural heritage is not over. We are prepared to join our allies throughout the region to challenge this approval. Also, we will continue to insist that Virginia authorities and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers do the job of protecting communities and natural areas that the Forest Service has now brazenly refused to do and, without question the federal courts will have the last word on the matter."

"One of most egregious aspects of this action is that high-ranking officials in Atlanta and Milwaukee clearly yielded to pressure from industry and their bosses in Washington and disregarded the opinions of those who know these lands best, the Forest Service scientists who work every day to protect and preserve these precious areas," according to Misty Boos,

Director of Wild Virginia. “Throughout the last three years, those locally-based experts have raised alarms about the wide range of threats and the certain damages that would result - many of them long-term, some permanent and irreparable.”

Wild Virginia will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with our allies to insist that this action be reversed.

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