

Delegate Chris Hurst:

I am writing to express my concerns of a major environmental threat to Southwest Virginia, the Mountain Valley Pipeline.

As an environmental biologist and a resident of Radford, Virginia the installation of this over 300-mile pipeline is extremely concerning for a variety of reasons. Like most people who live in this area as well as yourself you know about the Mountain Valley Pipeline and the threat it is to some of Virginia's most precious natural resources.

This pipeline is plowing its way right through a big portion of Southwest Virginia the very district you swore to uphold and protect. Citizens of Southwest Virginia are seeing direct ramifications of the pipeline being installed. Perhaps one of the biggest problems with the pipeline that is occurring is the loss of property that many individuals are experiencing. Here in Southwest Virginia many individuals live in highly rural areas. They rely on their farms and properties to provide them with food, water and other resources.

The pipeline is a natural gas pipeline set to run right through the heart of Southwest Virginia. Construction has already started in many areas but is on hold due to a variety of issues. As a result of the start of construction negative environmental impacts can be seen such as erosion and runoff. As a scientist, the pipeline is having damaging effects far beyond what the eye can see. The pipeline is set to run through hundreds of streams and bodies of water. Currently one of the reasons the pipeline is on hold is due to approval issues with streams and issues with endangered species. When construction of the pipeline occurs sediment will increase in the stream causing important microorganisms to lose a habitat. These microorganisms are vital to the health of streams. Without the microorganisms in the stream wildlife further up the food chain will lose valuable food sources.

Studies on other major pipelines have shown that "construction in and around water courses can disturb aquatic systems and cause changes to the physical and biological components of aquatic ecosystems." The construction of the pipeline is damaging many natural ecosystems. Science has proven that the installation and use of these pipelines is negatively affecting the world around us. If the pipeline were to explode it would vaporize anything surrounding it. Just think about that impact. This pipeline is heading right through many people's backyards. That is a place where I would not want to live, and it is causing people to leave their homes, some of which families have lived for hundreds of years.

As a resident and delegate of Southwest Virginia I hope you will take into consideration the vital points that I have outlined in this letter. It is important that you act to protect Virginia's farmlands, wetlands and other natural environments that are in harm's way. I hope that you will consider taking a conservation minded approach towards the pipeline because the land affected by the pipeline is not only important for our current generation but for future generations.

Reid, Scott & Stoklosar, Scott & METIKOSH, SERGE & EVANS, JIM. (2002). Effectiveness of Isolated Pipeline Crossing Techniques to Mitigate Sediment Impacts on Brook Trout Streams. Water Quality Research Journal of Canada. 37. 10.2166/wqrj.2002.031.