



# WEST VIRGINIA RIVERS

Public Hearing on Mountain Valley Pipeline Water Quality Certification

June 22, 2021

Good evening and thank you for the opportunity to comment tonight. I'm Autumn Crowe, Staff Scientist for WV Rivers Coalition. I've been following the Mountain Valley Pipeline saga since it was first proposed in 2014 and it's been like a re-occurring nightmare that we can't wake up from. Back in 2016, we commented on this same permit and warned DEP that MVPs proposed erosion controls would be ineffective on our steep slopes and our rivers and streams would be damaged as a result of construction. Now five years later, I feel like a broken record and I hate to have to say we told you so. DEP inspectors have already cited MVP with 55 Violations for both violating water quality standards and not meeting the conditions of their erosion control permit. We did some detective work and mapped all the impacts to water quality along the route. (can I share my screen). We found over 50 instances where water quality was impacted. These aren't just blue lines on a map and they are more than unnamed tributaries. These are streams that we fish in, that our kids play in, that provide drinking water to nearby communities, that are home to all the special critters that need clear water to survive. And MVP has already clogged 50 of these streams with sediment. How many more streams are you going to let MVP muddy up before it's enough?

We know their erosion control measures aren't going to keep the sediment out of the water. We know that MVP fail to maintain them. It costs more for MVP to maintain their erosion controls than it does for them to pay a fine for a violation. And if we had a DEP inspector stationed at every stream crossing every time it rained I guarantee there would be way more than 50 violations.

What will be the cumulative impact of all this sediment entering our streams if you allow MVP construction to continue. According to them the impacts are temporary. It's just a little muddy water right? That muddy water causes water utilities to shut down because it overwhelms the filters and communities have to go on boil water advisories. That muddy water smothers the habitat of the little creek critters and buries the trout eggs, it clogs fish gills so the trout can't breathe and benthics are buried so they have nothing to eat. Candy Darters only have a life span of a few years and they can't tolerate excess sediment either. Are you really going to let MVP kill off some of our most valuable fish species? No, according to the Clean Water Act, you cannot approve a project that will violate water quality standards. You could put all the special conditions you want on this permit, but we all know that MVP will not be able to meet those conditions. They have tried for several years and 55 violations and a half a million dollars in fines, we see where that got us. DEP must deny this permit. I know we need economic development in our state but not at the expense of our water and fisheries. Clean water provides more economic development than this pipeline. Thank you.

*Conserving and Restoring West Virginia's Exceptional Rivers and Streams*

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