

INTRODUCTION & CONCLUSION

The Proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline Jefferson National Forest Segment Cultural Attachment Report



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Prepared for:

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and

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission



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Segment Cultural Attachment Report**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.0	Introduction	1
1.1	Study Description and Purpose.....	1
1.2	Description of Study Area.....	2
1.3	Report Structure.....	4
2.0	Methods	4
2.1	Archival Records and Literature Research.....	4
2.2	Fieldwork.....	5
2.3	Content Analysis to Determine Key Themes.....	6
3.0	The People	7
4.0	Previous Studies Consulted	9
4.1	AEP 765 kV Transmission Line Project.....	10
4.2	Mountain Valley Pipeline.....	13
5.0	Cultural Attachment, Sense of Place, and the Genealogical Landscape	14
5.1	Definitions of Culture and Cultural Attachment.....	14
5.2	Origins of the Term “Cultural Attachment”: Social History and the Household Economy.....	15
5.3	Previous Studies of Cultural Attachment in the George Washington and Jefferson national Forest Region.....	16
5.4	Sense of Place, Relation to Place Attachment, and Community Attachment.....	22
5.5	Content Analysis of Cultural Attachment and Related Themes.....	24
5.6	NEPA, Cultural Attachment, Socioeconomic Effects, and Cultural Resources.....	29
6.0	Cultural Landscapes	29
6.1	Land Uses and Activities (Process).....	31
6.2	Patterns of Spatial Organization (Process).....	32
6.3	Response to the Natural Environment (Process).....	34
6.4	Cultural Traditions (Process).....	37
6.5	Circulation Networks (Physical Component).....	39
6.6	Boundary Demarcations (Physical Component).....	39
6.7	Vegetation Related to Land use (Physical Component).....	40
6.8	Buildings, Structures, and Objects (Physical Component).....	41
6.9	Clusters (Physical Component).....	41
6.10	Archaeological Sites (Physical Component).....	42
6.11	Small-scale Elements (Physical Component).....	42
7.0	Potential Effects: Perceptions of Local Community Members	42
8.0	Conclusions	44
9.0	References Cited	49

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Interviews, Meetings, and Field Tours during November 16-23, 2015	6
Table 6.1	Types of Cultural Landscapes	30

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1.1	Map showing location of proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline route in Peters Mountain area	3
Figure 5.1	Typical landscape in the Peters Mountain area	26
Figure 5.2	Craig County Historical Society map from Johnston and Givens (2010:8)	26
Figure 5.3	100 most frequently used words	28
Figure 6.1	Small family farm in West Virginia	32
Figure 6.2	Vacation rental cabin owned by the Cole Family	33
Figure 6.3	Amy Cole South shows a spring source on their property on Peter's Mountain	35
Figure 6.4	Historic spring box	36
Figure 6.5	Diagram of spring box	36
Figure 6.6	Pipe coming from gravity fed spring to homeplace	37
Figure 6.7	Stream running out of karst cave formation out of the mountain above Sinking Creek	37

APPENDICES

Appendix A	Consent Forms
Appendix B	Sign In Sheets from Field Meetings
Appendix C	Demographic Information

The Proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline Jefferson National Forest Segment Cultural Attachment Report

1.0 Introduction

Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC, (MVP) a joint venture between Equitrans Midstream Partners, LP (EQT) and affiliates of NextEra Energy, Inc.; WGL Holdings, Inc.; Vega Energy Partners, Ltd.; Con Edison Gas Midstream, LLC and RGC Midstream, LLC, is proposing to construct and operate an approximately 301-mile-long 42-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline spanning through 17 counties in West Virginia and Virginia. The purpose of the pipeline, referred to as the Mountain Valley Pipeline (also MVP), is to provide time-efficient and cost-effective access to the growing demand for natural gas for use by local distribution companies, industrial users and power generation in the Mid-Atlantic and southeastern markets, and potential markets in the Appalachian region. The proposed MVP will extend from the existing Equitrans, LP transmission system and other natural gas facilities in Wetzel County, West Virginia to Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC's Zone 5 Compressor Station 165 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. In addition to the pipeline, the MVP Project proposes to construct and operate three compressor stations along the route, as well as measurement, regulation, and other ancillary facilities required for the safe and reliable operation of the pipeline.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) is the lead federal agency for the MVP Project. On October 23, 2015, MVP filed an application pursuant to Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act and the FERC regulations seeking (1) a certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing MVP to construct, own, and operate the MVP Project; (2) a blanket certificate of public convenience and necessity authorizing MVP to provide open-access interstate transportation services, with pre-granted abandonment approval; (3) a blanket certificate of public convenience and necessity under Part 157, Subpart F of FERC's regulations for MVP to construct, operate, acquire, and abandon certain eligible facilities, and services related thereto; (4) approval for its proposed interim period rates and initial recourse rates for transportation service and for its pro forma tariff; and (5) such other authorizations or waivers as may be deemed necessary to allow for the construction to commence as proposed. FERC is responsible for reviewing and rendering a decision for the application, as well as produce an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended for the project.

Tetra Tech Inc. (Tetra Tech), as the prime environmental and permitting contractor for the Project, subcontracted Applied Cultural Ecology, LLC (ACE), Sun Valley, Nevada to conduct the current study and produce a report regarding cultural attachment as it relates to lands managed by the USDA Forest Service, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests (Forest Service).

1.1 Study Description and Purpose

The current study is in response to a FERC request to investigate the previously reported cultural attachment of local communities to the segments of the proposed MVP Project corridor, as represented in the FERC filing, that are within the boundaries of Jefferson National Forest (JNF). The overall goal of the study was to provide FERC with a discussion of concept of cultural attachment as it pertains to local residents with respect to the MVP segment within the JNF. The primary objectives of this study were to:

- Investigate the concept of cultural attachment within the field of cultural anthropology and identify resource studies that focus on cultural attachment;
- Provide a discussion of the concept of cultural attachment, particularly as it pertains to NEPA-based anthropological studies;
- Identify and document previously recorded traditional values of identified cultural groups, as well as places of cultural and religious importance within the JNF Study Area (defined in Section 1.2 below);
- Identify and interview long-term residents from the cultural groups that may have cultural attachment to the JNF Study Area and Peters Mountain and surrounding vicinity; resource managers; and others who have knowledge of the nature of the cultural attachment and previous studies about cultural attachment;

The current study constitutes an investigation of the concept of cultural attachment for the portion of JNF lands as described in Section 1.2 that includes the MVP Project's crossing of 3.4 miles, and not the entire MVP Project corridor or its alternatives. It is not a complete ethnographic assessment of the JNF Study Area or Peters Mountain and the surrounding vicinity.

1.2 Description of Study Area

Although the entire MVP Project corridor spans over 300 miles across 17 counties in Virginia and West Virginia, ACE was asked to focus on those proposed segments that are on JNF lands managed by the Forest Service (Figure 1.1). This area is referred to as JNF Study Area within this report. No known human inhabitants live on these JNF lands; however, local residents stated to ACE researchers that they still practice subsistence methods used over many decades on JNF lands as their ancestors did for centuries prior to the establishment of JNF. Cultural attachment as described in this report and in prior studies in the MVP Project area is not limited to geographic boundaries. Therefore, to provide context for the current study, ACE determined that it would be more beneficial to conduct background research for the entirety of the Peters Mountain vicinity.

Peters Mountain is relatively narrow and long, lies in a southwest to northeast direction, and crosses Alleghany, Craig, and Giles counties in Virginia and Monroe County in West Virginia. It stretches a distance of about 52 miles from the confluence of Ogle Creek into Dunlap Creek near Callaghan, Virginia in Alleghany County to the New River near Narrows, Virginia in Giles County. Elevations vary from around 2,300 feet (ft) above mean sea level (AMSL) to its highest point Hanging Rock at 4,073 ft AMSL. The 4,531-acre Peters Mountain Wilderness Area, managed by the Forest Service, George Washington and Jefferson National Forests, was established in 1984 on the east slope in Giles County (Forest Service 2015; Wilderness.net 2015). Additionally, a portion of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail travels along the crest of Peters Mountain. The proposed Project corridor, as represented in the October 2015 FERC filing, crosses JNF in Giles County outside of the southwestern edge of the Peters Mountain Wilderness.

There are numerous sandstone outcroppings along the crest of Peters Mountain, as well as several high mountain bogs in the vicinity of Pine Swamp Ridge (Wilderness.net 2015). The geology of the mountain consists primarily of limestone, shale, and sandstone. Because of the presence of limestone, several areas exist that have the potential for karst terrain between Mileposts (MP) 172 and 234. Some of this part of the proposed corridor crosses Peters Mountain (MVP 2015). During the field research for the study, local residents said that most of the Peters Mountain area consisted of karst formations as was evidenced by the numbers of sinkholes, caves, springs, and sinking near

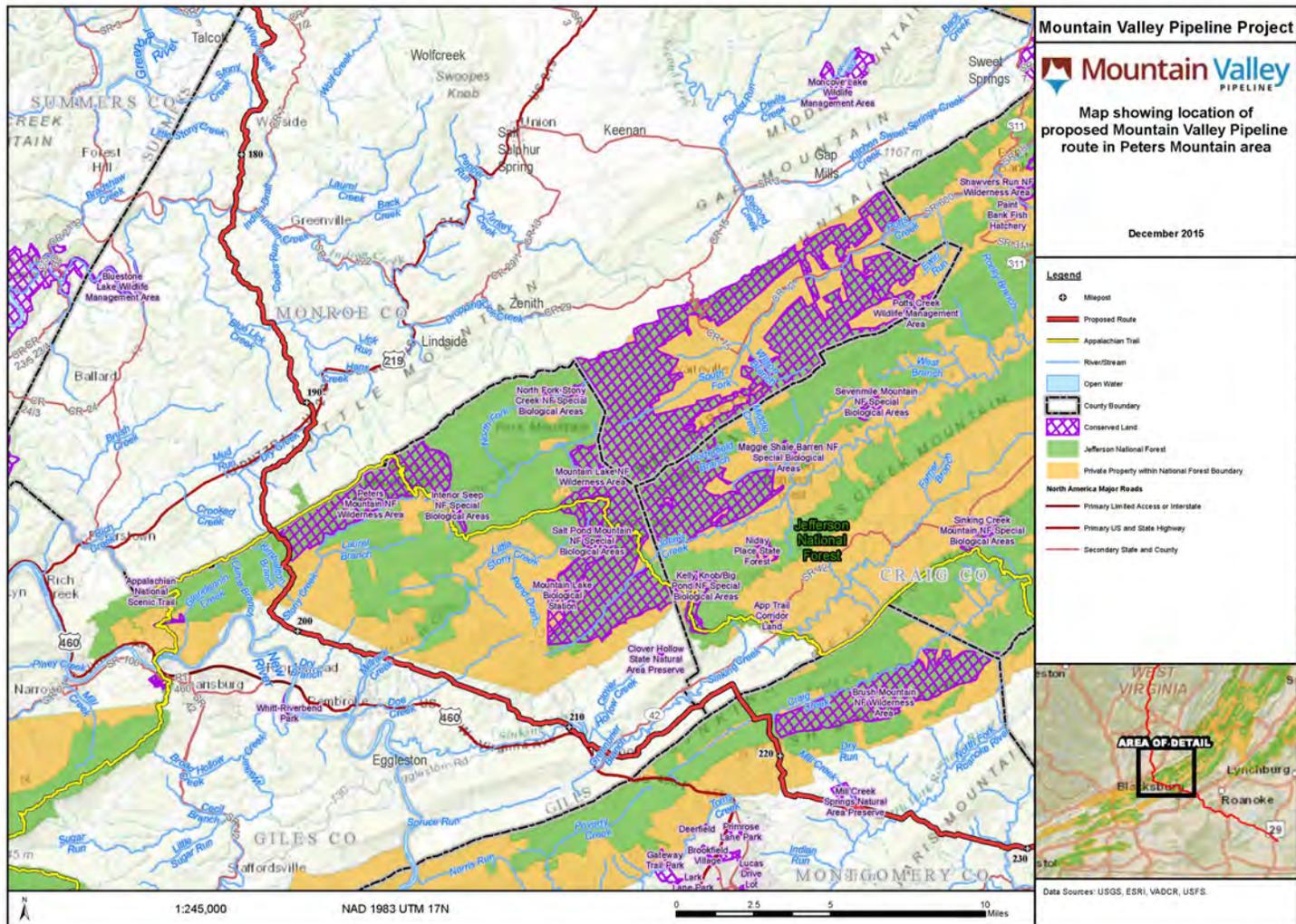


Figure 1.1. Map showing location of proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline route in Peters Mountain area

creeks throughout the mountain terrain. They also said that the mountain contains many freshwater springs that supply most of the water for the local residences.

A deciduous forest covers most of the Peters Mountain Wilderness and includes white ash, basswood, cucumber tree, hickory, red maple, chestnut oak, northern red oak, red oak, scarlet oak, upland oak, white oak, white pine, Table Mountain pine, Virginia pine, yellow poplar, and tulip tree (Wilderness.net 2015). Local residents told ACE researchers that they collect plants from Peters Mountain including ramps (wild leeks), morels and other mushrooms, and other various nuts. Additionally, some of the local residents maintain nut-bearing and fruit-bearing trees on their private lands amidst the native species, like hazelnut, walnut, apple, pear, and cherry trees. People also prefer the wood of the American Chestnut (*Castanea dentata* [Marshall] Borkh.) to make furniture and for house construction. Although almost obliterated during the chestnut blight of 1904-1950, small stands of the American Chestnut are reported to survive in the JNF and on private property nearby.

ACE researchers observed numerous deer, as well as squirrels, opossums, and badgers on the mountain, and a wide variety of birds. Local residents mentioned other animals, in addition to their livestock, known to inhabit Peters Mountain, including coyotes, raccoons, wolves (recently reintroduced to the area), mountain lions, and bears.

1.3 Report Structure

Since there is no standard format for this type of report, it is structured to best fit a typical cultural resources technical report and the requirements of the scope of work. Section 1.0 contains a brief introduction and description of the JNF Study Area, as well as the Peters Mountain and surrounding vicinity. Section 2.0 details the study methodology. Sections 3.0 through 6.0 contain the results of the study's research, as well as a discussion of cultural attachment as a concept (in Section 5.0) and how, for the purposes of NEPA, it is more suitably associated with a discussion of cultural landscape rather than as a stand-alone concept (in Section 6.0). Section 7.0 contains a synthesis and summary of the data gathered during the archival records and literature review and fieldwork. Section 8.0 lists a few potential effects as perceived by local residents. Finally, Section 9.0 provides a summary based on questions initially raised by FERC and other conclusions based on the available data.

2.0 Methods

Several different methods were used for this research. Normally, a data adequacy project would entail the review of secondary sources exclusively; however, at the request of the client, ACE included a week of field research consisting of an eight-day visit to talk with local residents within the Peters Mountain vicinity. Both archival records and available literature review and fieldwork were used for the current study.

2.1 Archival Records and Literature Research

The literature and archival records research consisted of a review of documents provided to ACE by Tetra Tech and FERC, such as previous cultural attachment reports for the AEP 765 kV Transmission Line EIS, research on other existing documentation, including, but not limited to,

We're afraid the pipeline could blow up, then everybody's dead. So where do you run away from it? We're concerned for our children and their children. We could be like those people from Syria; where could we run to?

8.0 Conclusions

ACE was tasked with investigating the concept of cultural attachment as it relates to the JNF Study Area. A major finding of this research is that, in the JNF project area, cultural attachment includes intangible aspects, such as emotional and spiritual feelings about the land; as well as, tangible or material aspects, such as the overall cultural landscape in which they live. Within this cultural landscape, residents perceive little distinction between human-created cultural resources and natural resources. To summarize other findings of the current study, it is useful to refer back to questions initially raised by Paul Friedman, FERC Environmental Project Manager.

Is “cultural attachment” a legitimate term used in the cultural anthropological literature? If so, when was it first used, by whom, and what is its meaning?

As discussed in Section 5.0, the term cultural attachment has likely long been used by social scientists and particularly by cultural anthropologists, but more as a descriptor, rather than as primary concept. It is unknown who actually first used the term and none tried to precisely define it prior to JKA’s 1996 report, most likely because it approximates the more common term, “sense of place.” Wagner (1997, 1999, 2002) generally used the term “cultural attachment to land” in much of her work. In 1996, JKA was the first, and to the best of ACE’s knowledge, the last to provide a definition for cultural attachment as a noun (Kent et al. 1996; see Section 5.3.2).

Besides the power line study, what other cultural anthropological research has been done on “cultural attachment” and where?

In 1999 as part of an ethnographic study for the Thirty Meter Telescope Project in Maunakea, Hawai’i Island, Kepa Maly (Maly 1999), a cultural historian and resource specialist, borrowed the term from JKA’s 1996 report (Kent et al. 1996), but used it as a descriptor, rather than a noun. He used the term to describe the Native Hawai’ian cultural attachment to the environment.

“Cultural attachment” embodies the tangible and intangible values of a culture. It is how a people identify with and personify the environment (both natural and manmade) around them. Cultural attachment is demonstrated in the intimate relationship (developed over generations of experiences) that people of a particular culture share with their landscape—for example, the geographic features, natural phenomena and resources, and traditional sites etc., that make up their surroundings. This attachment to environment bears direct relationship to the beliefs, practices, cultural evolution, and identity of a people. In Hawai’i, cultural attachment is manifest in the very core of Hawaiian spirituality and attachment to landscape. [Maly 1999]

Does this term only apply to Appalachia? Do not people all over the world have cultural attachment to their homelands?

Based on the information gathered by ACE researchers for the current study and by others for previous studies, it is apparent that cultural attachment is not specific to the Appalachian people. It may be that other cultural groups in other parts of the world have a cultural attachment to the land that is as deep as it is in Appalachia; however, not all cultural groups have a deep and ingrained emotional and cultural attachment to the place where they live and its natural environment. According to Maly (1999), Native Hawai'ians do because of the intimate relationship to their land and natural environment. It is widely recognized that peoples throughout the world often have a deep sense of place, as described in Section 5.0. Cultural attachment, as described in this report, is similar to indigenous peoples' attachment to place and worldviews that do not separate the natural, cultural, and spiritual environment. The local people who live in the vicinity of Peters Mountain exhibit a deep sense of place that is evident in their intimate attachment to their lands.

Do the people who reside in the vicinity of the pipeline route across JNF have a special kind of "cultural attachment" that is different from other areas?

Yes, the people who reside in the Peters Mountain area have a cultural attachment to the Study Area that is different from other areas here in the United States. ACE researchers were told by many local residents about how they knew every inch of their land and that they held those lands in a special kind of reverence. Many of these people still live on land that was granted to their ancestors over 200 years ago. To them, the land is a living entity that deserves their care and respect. They consider themselves to be the stewards of the land. Some residents stated that Mother Earth takes care of them, so they need to take care of her.

One of the key issues that ACE researchers discovered during the archival record and literature research, and that became clearer once they began meeting and speaking with local residents, was that the entire Peters Mountain area, including the JNF Study Area, was a cultural landscape. Although people still use JNF lands for things like plant gathering, hunting, and wood collecting, much of the cultural attachment that they feel towards the Peters Mountain vicinity is associated with private property. As discussed in Section 6.0, the best way to analyze the tangible aspects of cultural attachment specific to the JNF Study Area would be to assess the Peters Mountain and surrounding vicinity, including private lands and other government-managed lands besides those of JNF. It should be noted that several of the individuals ACE researchers met with also had concerns about the usefulness and validity of the current study because of its focus on the JNF lands.

McClelland and others (1989) developed a set of guidelines that includes criteria necessary to evaluate a cultural landscape. These include, but are not limited to, identification of tangible features related to land uses by type, general location, dates of use, condition, and related vegetation; description of patterns characterizing the landscape as a whole; and descriptions of land use practices, patterns of land division, institutions, building forms, workmanship, stylistic preferences, vernacular characteristics, use of materials, and methods of construction that have been influenced by cultural tradition.

Some of this information may be gleaned from a deeper review of archival records, such as recorded oral histories of people from the Peters Mountain area conducted by researchers from Radford University and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Another useful source may be the document titled "Parts II-A and II-B: Individual Landowner Reports" produced by Save

Monroe, Inc. and The Border Conservancy of Monroe County, WV that potentially contains detailed information about land use and other information about cultural attachment to land.¹⁴ The data presented here from a variety of sources, including academic literature, technical reports, public meeting transcripts, scoping letters, in-person interviews, and meetings with local residents indicates that cultural attachment to land in the JNF Study Area is a major concern with regard to the proposed MVP Project.

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¹⁴ This document was submitted to FERC with a request that it be marked as "Privileged" and, therefore, was not accessible to ACE researchers for the current study.