

October 1, 2015

**Notebooks sent by US Mail**

Ms. Kimberly Bose, Secretary  
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
888 First Street NE, Room 1A  
Washington, D.C. 20426

**RE: Updated Individual Landowner Impact Reports from Monroe County, WV  
Docket No. PF15-3-000**

Enclosed are updated notebooks containing reports from Monroe County landowners. These were initially submitted electronically on June 16, 2015. As before, we ask that the contents of the notebooks be considered confidential information and not posted publicly. These reports reflect important features and concerns that cut across all of the NEPA requirements for an environmental impact statement, but the issues related to water are foremost.

**Our #1 concern is the Threat to the Drinking Water of Monroe County Families.**

Construction of the proposed Mountain Valley Pipeline through Monroe County will jeopardize the private wells and springs of landowners on and near the pipeline – and it threatens the safety of the county’s largest public water districts. This applies to both the original corridor and the “Alternate 110” route that was proposed in February 2015.

**Why MVP – and FERC’s Environmental Impact Statement – must look closely at protecting private drinking water sources as well as public.** In Monroe County, West Virginia – unlike Washington, DC or even our state capitol Charleston – the water we rely on to drink does not come out of our taps from some far-off protected reservoir or wide river. It comes from wells and springs that are directly affected by what happens locally on and below the surface of our lands.

- As reported by landowners who participated in the impact reports, **more than 80% of landowners on and near the pipeline rely on their private wells and springs for their drinking water;** fewer than 20% have access to public water. How can you “mitigate” a well or spring contaminated by diesel oil or other chemicals either spilled accidentally or leached into the soil?
- **Even our public water districts rely on the springs of Peters Mountain as their primary intake sources** to provide water to approximately 63% of county households. Both the Red Sulphur and Town of Union Public Service Districts as well as the Monroe County Commission have gone on record expressing concern about the safety of our drinking water resources, and have asked FERC to require a comprehensive hydrogeological study by an independent party before any pipeline construction approval.
- **Drinking water in Monroe County is especially vulnerable because of extensive karst terrain – and no pipeline over Peters Mountain can avoid crossing karst.** A band of limestone, marked by sinkholes, caves and disappearing streams runs nearly the length of Peters Mountain on the Monroe County side. Blasting and construction can cause new fractures and loss of water. In other areas of the county, the pipeline would run along ridgelines immediately above valleys with known karst features. Erosion, sedimentation and potential contamination will impact the groundwaters below.

**Why we don’t trust MVP to safeguard our drinking water in planning and constructing the proposed pipeline.** Comments to FERC from qualified professionals have pointed out inadequate and/or misleading information supplied by MVP in its Resource Reports. FERC staff have also noted inconsistencies and asked for clarification. The text and tables may look rosy, but the project impacts will be real. For example:

- **MVP Draft Resource Report 2 – Water Use and Quality – states: “The Project is not anticipated to have any impacts to groundwater resources or require additional mitigation measures”** [p. 2-6, emphasis added]. This is the kind of sentence that will be picked up and believed by everyone who doesn’t want to consider what negative impacts the pipeline might have.
- **The same Resource Report identifies only one (1) spring within a mile of the pipeline project along the nearly 200 miles it runs through West Virginia** [Draft RR2: Table 2.1-3, pp. 2-11]. In a preliminary count of springs on properties on or immediately adjacent to the pipeline along 15 miles of the original corridor in Monroe County, we have reports of more than 75 springs.
- **MVP Resource Report 6 – Geologic Resources – misrepresents how deep the soil is along the pipeline, implying that there will not be much blasting required for construction** [Draft RR6: Table 6-B-1, pp. 37-42]. For example, on the ridge of Peters Mountain, where Monroe Co. meets Giles Co., MVP reports the soil depth as more than 6.4 feet. This is in contrast to local landowners’ reports of shallow soil and significant rock outcropping. In fact, the Mountain Valley pipeline will likely require blasting for much of its pathway through Monroe County, including the Ellison Ridge area – blasting that will take place close to homes, farms, wells and springs.

**Interestingly, MVP itself has identified factors that should support the decision to avoid Monroe County as a potential interstate pipeline route.** In their “Alternative 200 Update” (August 26, 2015), they say that the Alt 200 route was identified “to avoid pipeline constructability issues” in Giles County that included “*areas of karst topography with known sinkholes and caves, construction near a number of residences, and construction near private water wells.*” They also note it would “eliminate potential impacts from blasting near residences [and] associated water wells” [*emphasis added*]. While those features are prevalent along the corridor in Monroe County, MVP appears to ignore them. Construction and blasting would be disastrous in our cave and karst terrain.

**Many landowners in Monroe County who have denied access to MVP for surveying have indicated they would be willing to consider having an environmental survey team under FERC’s direction come on their property.** This permission information is included at the front of every individual landowner report (as it was in the June 16 submission).

The landowners in Monroe County have first-hand information about their water resources. They are well aware of the fragility of both the quality and quantity of their well and spring water. As community-based groups we will continue to gather “facts on the ground” about the springs, water and other environmental features at risk in Monroe County. We invite the FERC team to contact us if you would like to get in touch with individual landowners.

Thank you.

Dr. Stephen Miller, President, and Nancy Bouldin, Project Coordinator  
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**\*Related Accession #s for “Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Report and EIS Scoping Recommendations” (PF15-3-0)**

- **Submittal 20150807-5034**— Part I: Summary and Scoping Recommendations [Submitted 6/16/2015; updated 8/5/2015]
- **Submittals 20150616-5320** (privileged) and Submittal 20150616-5321(public)— Part II-A: Individual Landowner Reports – Save Monroe [Submitted 6/16/2015]
- **Submittal 20150616-5278** (privileged) and Submittal 20150616-5279 (public)— Part II-B: Individual Landowner Reports – The Border Conservancy under [Submitted 6/16/2015]

# **Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Report and EIS Scoping Recommendations**

**RE: Mountain Valley Pipeline (Docket PF 15-3-000)**



## **Part I: Summary & EIS Recommendations**

**June 16, 2015\* (Updated August 5, 2015\*)**

- A. Introduction**
- B. EIS Scoping Recommendations**
- C. EIS Resource Issues**
- D. Cultural Attachment**

### **FROM:**

**Save Monroe, Inc. and The Border Conservancy of Monroe County, WV**

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(\*Submitted electronically in June and August;  
Submitted electronically and in hard copy binders with updated Parts II-A, II-B in October)

## **Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Report**

### **PART I: Summary & EIS Recommendations**

#### **A. Introduction**

The Mountain Valley Pipeline (MVP) affects landowners along two possible corridors across Monroe County—the Original Proposed Corridor announced in October 2014 and the Alternate Route 110 proposed in February 2015.

Many landowners denied access for surveying to MVP. There had (and has) not yet been an official determination of public need (and therefore of potential applicability of eminent domain)—and in fact, there has not yet been an official application by the company filed with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC).

Save Monroe and The Border Conservancy, two community organizations in Monroe County WV, are hereby submitting individual reports by landowners of possible impacts of the pipeline on their property and their lives. This information was gathered using a Landowner's Impact Form that was developed to help landowners identify features and issues relevant to the FERC's EIS assessment. While the priority in reporting property features is for landowners directly on the proposed routes, especially if they did not permit surveying by contractors of Mountain Valley Pipeline, other landowners living near the corridors and elsewhere in the county have also participated.

This Summary Report, which is available to the public, includes Key Findings and Scoping-Related Recommendations as well as Selected Charts and Graphs on EIS issues. The landowner reports are being submitted in a separate document to the FERC, with the request that they be treated as confidential information.

The collection, analysis and preparation of the information contained in these reports have been undertaken by volunteers from Save Monroe, Inc. and The Border Conservancy with the assistance of several other individuals including professional geologists, attorneys, cartographers, historians and evaluators.

The Monroe County landowners, however, are the true experts in knowledge of features of their property and culture. The strength of this project is that it gathers and begins to synthesize their information so that economic and community development decisions can be made in a responsible manner that considers both the individual landowner and the effects on neighboring lands, resources and culture.

No one report or set of data can present a full picture of the negative effects of the pipeline in Monroe County. It is our expectation that other organizations and individuals will be submitting information, and that Save Monroe, the Border Conservancy, Indian Creek Watershed Association and other organizations will continue to gather, evaluate, and submit data through the next several months.

## B. EIS Scoping Recommendations Based on Key Findings

- **Assess the impact of pipeline construction and operation on both public and private water sources.** In the county overall, it has been estimated that 63% of households are served by PSDs and 37% use private sources. As reported by participating landowners, however, 80% use a well or spring as their primary source of drinking water, whereas only 20% have access to public water. The difference can partly be explained by the fact that the pipeline route tries to avoid more heavily populated areas. Clearly, protecting both sources is critical. Given Monroe County's karst terrain, water protection takes on special meaning.
- **Place high priority on identifying and protecting potentially affected springs, with special attention to the hydrogeology of Peters Mountain.** You can't drill another spring, and once destroyed, there is no mitigation. A high percentage of landowners (45%) report springs as providing at least one source of drinking water. For the three public service districts that serve the county, as well as the Sweet Springs Water bottling company, the springs of Peters Mountain are cause for special concern. However, springs are also an important water resource along other stretches of the proposed routes, including the Knobs, Little Mountain, and Ellison Ridge.
- **Evaluate potential impacts on agricultural water uses, in addition to drinking water.** Irrigating crops and gardens was reported by 49% and watering livestock by 47% (with more than 60% of both activities reported in some areas); 37% reported fishing and 27% reported stocked fish ponds as a water use on their property. Nearly 70% reported relying on food that they raised to live within their means. Can MVP ensure uninterrupted access to sufficient clean water for these purposes?
- **Include project effects on agricultural businesses and activities in the scope of socio-economic environmental assessments.** Close to 60% rely on firewood from their property for heating; 39% have marketable timber. In addition to traditional farms and cattle-raising operations, several agriculturally based businesses would be affected. For example:
  - A mountain preserve operation, which features exotic game hunting, fishing, vacation cabins and availability for weddings, reunions, and special events, might have to close operations throughout the period of construction.
  - An apiary immediately adjacent to the original corridor currently has a healthy operation of 135 hives and 6 million bees. With bee die-offs across the country posing a threat to the country's food supply, this should signal special protection—not the prospect of eminent domain and “mitigation.”
  - Along the same pipeline corridor, 450 acres are under management as Organic Dairy Pastures. Near both routes, several landowners are producing and marketing organic farm products through the Monroe Farm Market, a local food initiative that serves customers in a 150-mile radius.

- **Document the presence of endangered species in both established and unexamined areas affected by the pipeline.** Landowners report James spinymussel in South Potts Fork; Indiana bats in a cave near Greenville; evidence of American Bale Eagles nesting; and rare and endangered plant species.
- **Investigate the evidence of significant prehistoric activity.** Native American artifacts found on the property were reported by 37% of landowners; several report burial mounds or ceremonial artifacts—and that might be the tip of the iceberg. Many if not most farmers in the county have stories about overturning numerous arrowheads and other artifacts when they plowed. On June 10, a significant find of prehistoric artifacts from two distinct periods was discovered in a preliminary study on one property where the landowner was not initially aware of any artifacts. The findings warrant avoiding that route or conducting a substantive archeological evaluation before pipeline construction. A careful examination of potential sites all along the pipeline route should be undertaken.
- **Include the visual impact of the MVP project in the scope of the EIS.** The importance of the unbroken visual presence of Peters Mountain for residents of Monroe County cannot be overstated. The response to this question, and to the importance of the unspoiled views of the county’s hills and farmland, prompted a near unanimous “strongly agree” rating by 98% and 99% of landowners respectively.
- **Recognize and address cultural attachment as a significant environmental and cultural issue in Monroe County.** The strength of cultural attachment in areas of Monroe County, WV was studied and established in the Record of Decision on a proposed American Electric Power 765 kV electric transmission line in 1995. The Draft EIS included a copy of the study of an area that closely matches that of the Alternate 110 pipeline route.

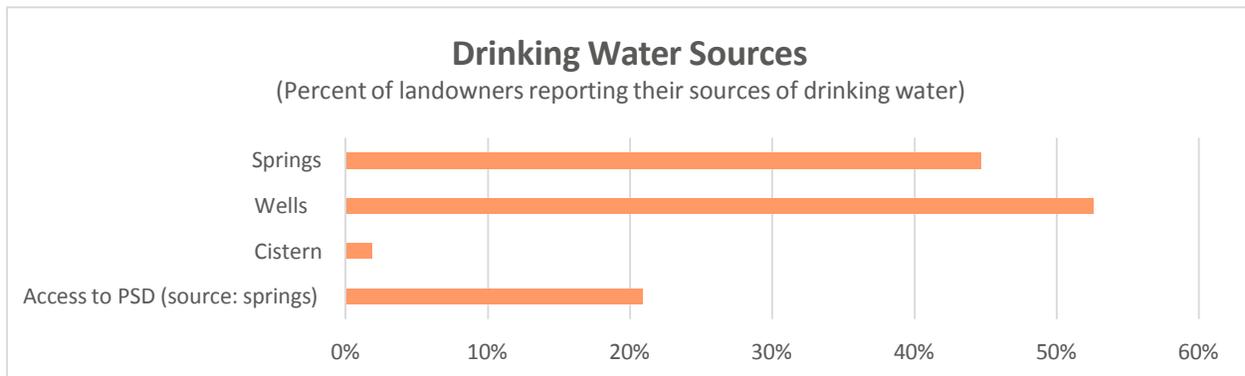
Questions related to cultural attachment in this survey elicited strong responses from landowners along both of the pipeline routes in Monroe County: 91% strongly agree or agree that their personal history and identity are closely tied to their land in Monroe County. Responses to several related questions, as well as the unprompted comments of landowners about the strength of their kinship ties to their property and the county, indicates that cultural attachment remains an important environmental and cultural factor—one that requires further investigation.

Open comments about what people value about their property in Monroe County prompted many answers of: Heritage, Family, Beauty, Abundant Water, Pristine Nature, Views, Peace, Mountains, Tranquility, and Diversity of Wildlife. There are clear concerns that these valued assets of Monroe County would be jeopardized by the MVP project.

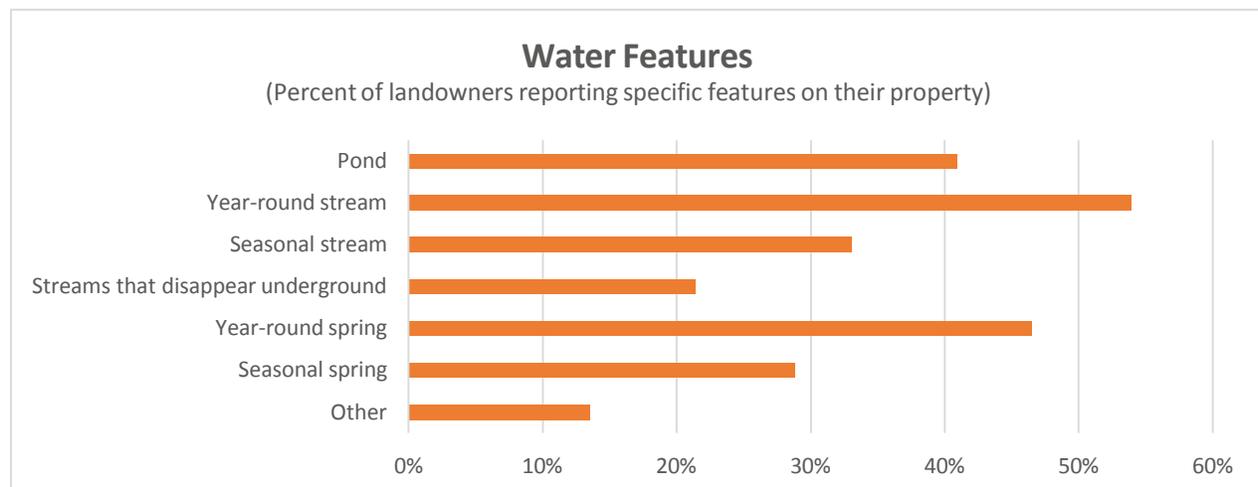
The Border Conservancy and Save Monroe will continue to collect and analyze data supporting the strong presence of Cultural Attachment and addressing other critical environmental issues for landowners on both routes.

## C. EIS Resource Issues

The following charts, graphs and comments reflect EIS-related resource features reported by 214 landowners in Monroe County from April 23 through June 13, 2015. Most properties are located on or near the two proposed MVP routes (the original Proposed Corridor and the Alternate 110 Route). Resource issues were selected according to categories required to be considered in the Environmental Impact Statement under the NEPA (National Environmental Policy Act).



Landowners report their sources of drinking water (several landowners report more than one source). Note: water for all PSDs originates from springs they own on Peters Mountain. PSD springs and private springs account for 66% of the reported sources of drinking water. These data and other preliminary studies of Peters Mountain springs require a full hydro-geological study of the aquifers on Peters Mountain before a pipeline can be sited. The Border Conservancy, Save Monroe and Indian Creek Watershed Association will continue to gather information from landowners about their water sources and springs.

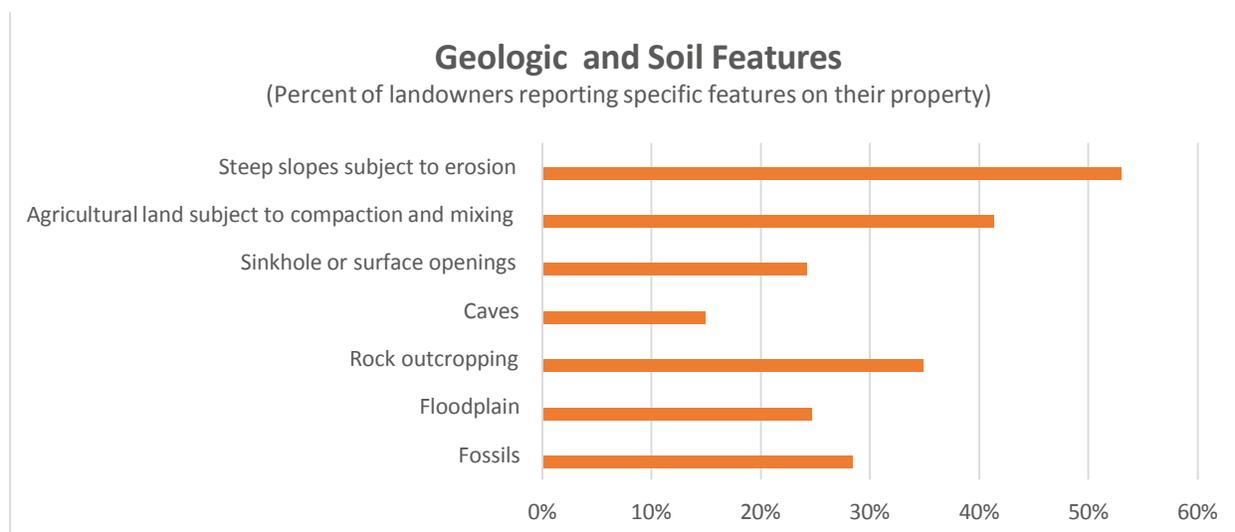


Landowners report a high incidence of water features on properties, and reliance on both public and private water sources. One of the most widely expressed concerns is that project impacts could affect domestic drinking water, agricultural uses and businesses.

## Water Resources (cont.)

### *Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:*

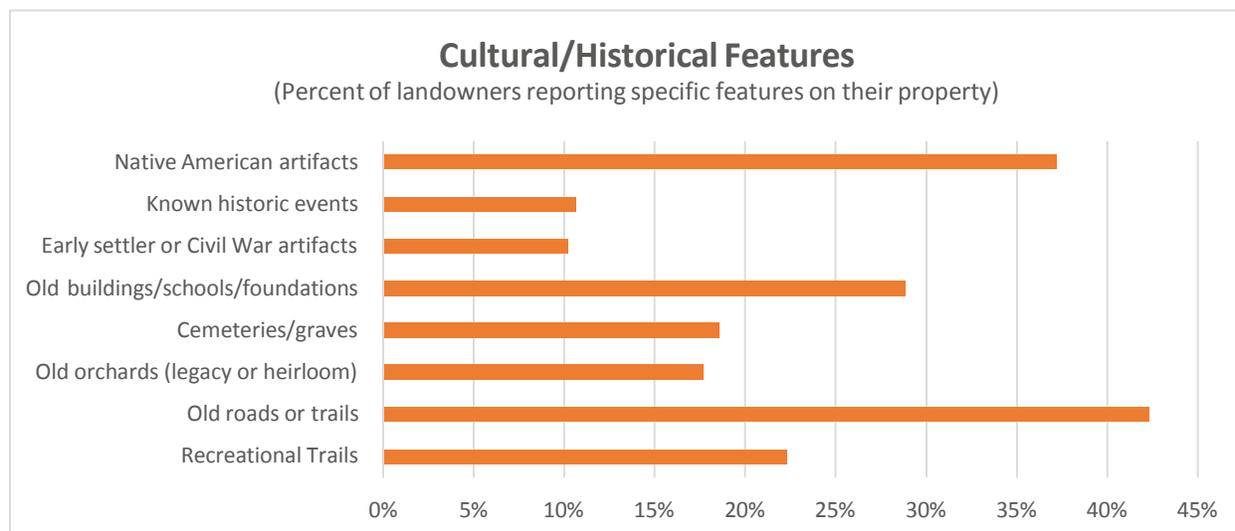
- " Water, **good clean spring water is the lifeblood of this community.** The risk of losing it is not a chance I am willing to take." *Lindside*
- " Peters Mountain has the **purest water in all of WV** and has won **national and world recognition** for its purity and taste." *Zenith*
- " We have a **fragile balance** and **nearly everyone lives either on or near karst.** Whether you are on public water or private, it is a real and constant concern." *Greenville*
- " The pipeline corridor would ... pass through a wetland area; and **likely cut off access for my cows to their only drinking water** ... a seasonal stream that has 3 or 4 springs in it that stay wet year-round." *Greenville*
- " **5 trout ponds and a creek** that runs in the middle of the property that has trout in it." *Zenith*
- " Proposed MVP route through this area **crosses through 1 seasonal spring and very near 8 other springs and one swamp.** 5 of these springs run year-round and supply water for many uses." *Ellison Ridge area*
- " Concerned that **any pipeline construction on Ellison Ridge could have a negative effect on my springs.** They are our only source of drinking and domestic water. They are used for feeding our fish and livestock ponds." *Ellison Ridge area*
- " Am **concerned about the impact on the water table.** A lot of my friends and people around the mountain get their water from springs which are of great quality. Because it starts here it hasn't had time to get polluted." *Zenith*
- " We have **gravity fed spring water, a native trout stream** that runs through the property." *Waiteville*
- " **If the pipeline further damages my well, I will not have water.** The system can barely control what I have now due to the sediment." *Lindside*
- " The proposed pipeline **runs about 300 yards from our home and well. Smaller pipelines have proven to be destructive to the habitat, water and have killed people.** The proposed line runs through our neighbor's land where they have three (3) ponds, a well and also raise many cattle and crops as a living." *Lindside*
- " We have an **artesian well,** and the water is spectacularly clear and fresh. We have **many many springs that crop from the shale** in and around our property, one of which the former owners used as a water source in the years before there was a well." *Near Narrows of Hans Creek*
- " **Save our water supply from Peter's Mountain!**" *Gap Mills*



Pipeline construction would impact the county's steeply wooded ridges and working farmlands. Along much of the route, construction traffic and operations would take place on or near karst topography, potentially polluting ground and surface water. The pipeline would cross terrain that is steep and vulnerable to erosion, potentially causing pipeline slippage and fracture.

*Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:*

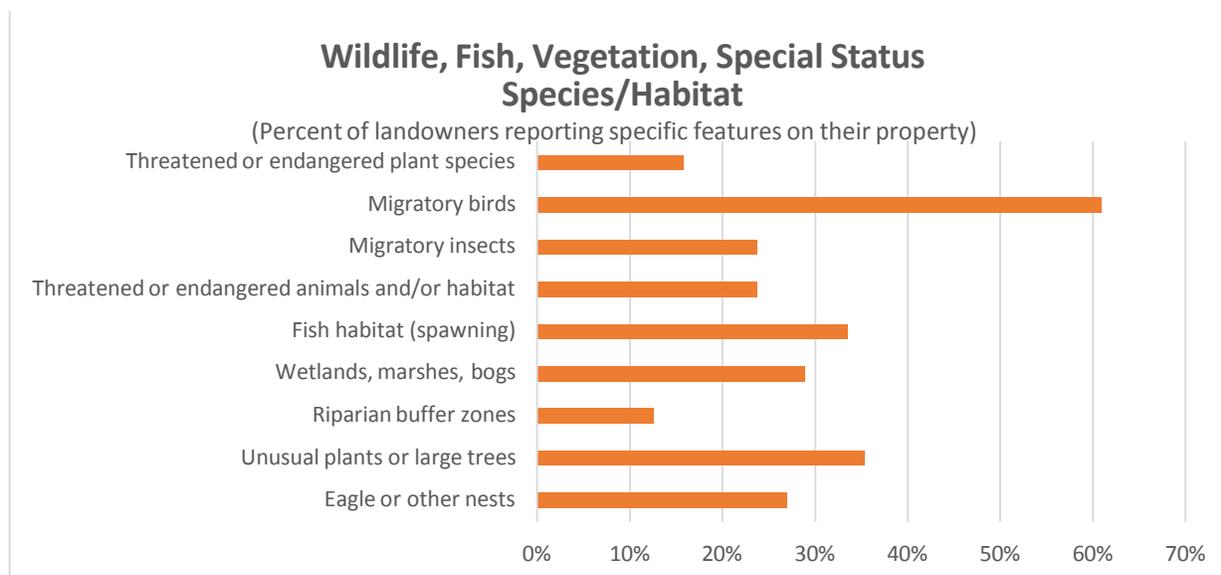
- " There are **two earthquake faults** in Monroe County which have created damages over the years and could have devastating effects on a pipeline." *Salt Sulphur Springs*
- " Because of all the **underground streams, caves, sinkholes**, our water table could easily be destroyed by a pipeline." *Salt Sulphur Springs*
- " FSA soil samples state **highly erodible** land." *Willow Bend area*
- " We are on the **St. Clair Fault Line!**" *Zenith*
- " Pipeline runs **near shale quarry where blasting occurs.**" *Ellison Ridge*
- " Extremely **unusual combination** of red clay soil embedded with large, fossil-bearing limestone boulders in 8-acre pasture. Additionally, **various construction projects here over the last 23 years have shown how highly erodible the land is.**" *Ellison Ridge*
- " We have several outcrops of shale, and there are a wide variety of fossils in the banks of shale. The **soil is unconsolidated**, and would be **highly subjectable to erosion and instability.**" *Cooks Run side below Ellison Ridge*
- " **Thin soils, lots of rocks.**" *Hans Creek side of Ellison Ridge*
- " **Three sinkholes.**" *Lindside area at base of Peters Mountain*
- " The **erosion of the clay and shale will cause damage to the surrounding area.** My road was built 14 years ago. The banks cut into the hillside are just beginning to hold vegetation, although we have planted and worked on them continuously. The terrain the pipeline proposes to follow is of the same composition." *Lindside*



Given widespread reports of Native American artifacts, the scope should include further investigation of all potential corridor locations. Moreover, the presence of old buildings, schools, and agricultural activity indicates the need for protection of potential, but as yet unregistered historic landmarks and districts.

*Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:*

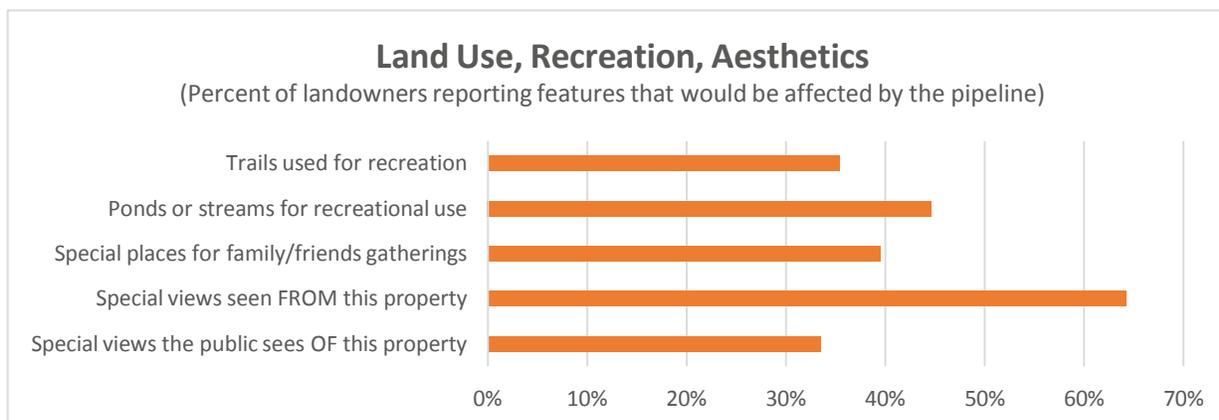
- " A preliminary test for Native American artifacts on 6-10-15 ... [indicated] **a well used location by prehistoric craftsmen over a period of 5,500 years** ... within or close to the pipeline corridor in a location that could not avoid being disturbed by construction access." *Greenville*
- " **Evidence of Indians** in slate banks." *Waiteville*
- " The Furrow Family Farm is believed to be the only property in the valley to still belong to the **original family-owners**. Never Sold." *Waiteville*
- " **Farm is very historic**. Includes old buildings, school, church, foundations and homesites. *Hans Creek Valley*
- " This place also has a long history before us. The property was used as a family farm for many years, running cattle at times. The **home is over 100 years old**. And a generation ago, this was the starter home for a local family with 13 kids." *Waiteville*
- " There is an old cemetery ... with **an 1851 headstone and other graves**." *Ellison Ridge*
- " [We] see the **Appalachian Trail** on Peters Mountain. Many hikers stop from the Appalachian Trail." *Lindside area near base of Peters Mountain*



Not surprisingly, landowners affirmed the presence of endangered and threatened species and noted threats that the pipeline could cause to animal and plant habitat.

*Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:*

- " Environmentalists have told me the largest concentration of the **James Spiny Mussel** in the Valley is on this property." *Waiteville*
- " **Endangered Indiana bats** have been documented in a cave system nearby." *Greenville*
- " Eagles present. **Nest [seen] in 2014.** *Hans Creek Valley [Note: Presence of eagles noted by many landowners along the pipeline corridors.]*
- " Exterminator informed us **purplish salamanders** in basement are endangered species." *Willow Bend*
- " Nesting areas for **Whippoorwills** and **American Woodcock**". *Ellison Ridge*
- " **250 year old white oak and ash** fenceline trees." *Ellison Ridge*
- " **Yellow & Pink Lady Slippers, Showy Orchis.**" *Narrows of Hans Creek*
- " **Eagle nearby** at headwaters." *Turkey Creek*
- " **Rainbow trout** spawn at spring." *Willow Bend*
- " **Lady slippers, American Bald Eagle, native trout** spawn." *Zenith*
- " Every fall we hike up to the fire tower to see the **hawk, eagle, and osprey migration** along Peters Mountain. Sitting on the big rocks, I feel like I'm almost flying with them." *Zenith*
- " We are adjacent to the **Narrows of Hans Creek.** The Hans Creek Drainage and its associated springs are overwhelmingly what made us buy this property. It is **spectacular.** There are bear nesting dens, caves filled with bats, myriad species including foxes, possum, coyote, bears, white tail deer, martens, and the largest variety of birds that we have ever seen in one place." *Near Narrows of Hans Creek*



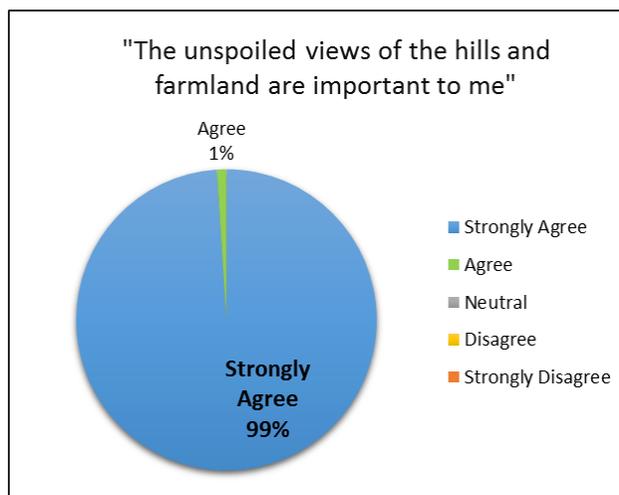
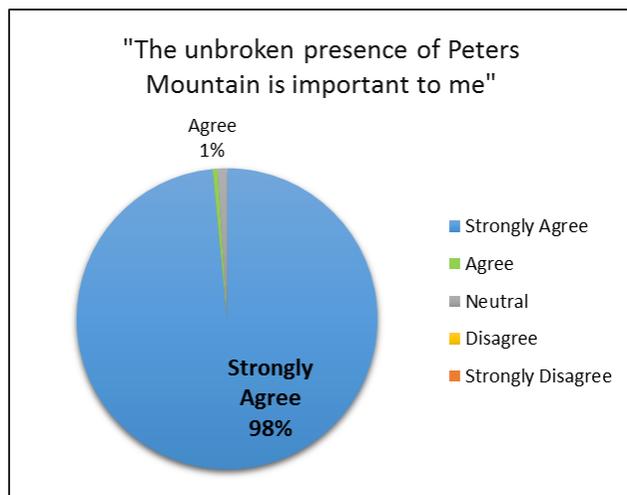
The pipeline could threaten or destroy landowners' ability to use their land for recreation. Monroe County landowners do not have access to entertainment or cultural venues except for their own private land (e.g. no movies, theaters, malls, or other socializing places).

*Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:*

- " **People travel hundreds of miles to come to Monroe County to enjoy all the beauty it has to offer ... they come to walk the top of Peters Mountain to the fire tower, walk the Allegheny and Appalachian trails ... a lot of them have come back to Monroe County and bought property.** They made this their home." *Zenith*
- " This is where the residents of WV come to **get away from technology and enjoy peace and nature.**" *Lindside*
- " **Gathering of my children, relatives for vacations and reunions.**" *Zenith*
- " **Gathering place for families and Church Retreats.**" *Narrows of Hans Creek*
- " Some land leased for **hunting. Family reunions** held here on numerous occasions. Creek used for **floating and tubing.**" *Greenville*
- " The **trails to the Hanging Rock Fire Tower/Hawk View, camping** on the top of Peter's Mountain." *Zenith*
- " **4-H camping and 4 wheeler riding.**" *Zenith*
- " A number of times during the summer, groups of us go **4-wheeling on farm roads, mountain roads, and through wooded areas of each other's properties.** We stop and picnic, enjoying the views of the land and fellowship of the folks." *Waiteville*
- " Why I moved here from busy south Florida! It is **a very special place, filled with everything perfect Mother Nature has to offer.** Wildlife, undisturbed land, a step back in time! *Lindside*
- " Kayaking/fishing ... hiking ... Access to Peters and Potts mountain areas. Viewing the hawk migration ... vistas along Peters Mt from Sweet Springs to Union, Back Valley Rd from Gap Mills to Zenith. This **a pristine area that remains relatively unspoiled.** I believe that the potential damage to these aesthetics and watershed issues outweigh any consideration for building this Pipeline. I also believe that **these considerations should be viewed with an eye to the arc of time. Why are we taking the chance of destroying something that is irreplaceable to build infrastructure of questionable necessity?**" *Hans Creek Valley*

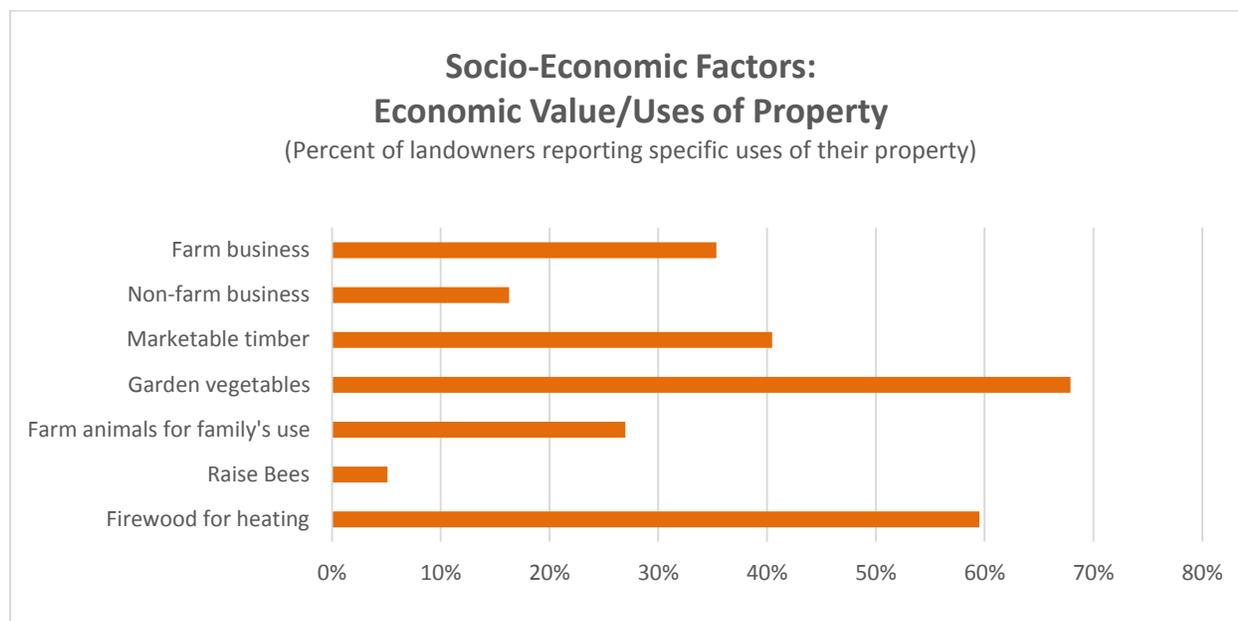
## Land Use, Recreation, Aesthetics (cont.): Visual Impact

The potential visual impact of the pipeline would be felt by almost all landowners—either from their own property or in their travel through the county as demonstrated by the following data collected in response to the statements: **“The unbroken presence of Peters Mountain is important to me”** and **“The unspoiled views of the hills and farmland are important to me.”**



### Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:

- " **Peters Mountain** is breath-taking. It always cheers me up. **Beauty in the first degree.**" *Zenith*
- " **Nothing can compare** to the spectacular view of **unbroken Peter's Mountain.**" *Gap Mills*
- " **Panoramic view** of Waiteville valley and Peter's Mountain." *Waiteville*
- " **Multiple mountain ranges** from Raines Rd across Johnson Crossroads to Patricks Peak." *The Knobs*
- " We look east toward Peter's Mountain, a great **source of comfort and enjoyment and spiritual support.**" *The Knobs*
- " As part of Creekside Resort **we have mowed trails to spectacular views** of Peters Mountain." *Greenville*
- " It is **so gorgeous** through the narrows of Hans Creek, many people have commented that it looks like it **could be a National or State Park.**" *Narrows of Hans Creek*
- " My view of Little Mountain and Peters Mountain is **beautiful and priceless.** The proposed route passes directly in front of my house and will alter that view forever." *Lindside*
- " Top of hill above our house has a **panoramic view** of the Town of Greenville and beyond (i.e., Sarton Mtn, Peters Mtn). **Our son wants to build a home there** upon his retirement." *Greenville*
- " **We enjoy looking at our valley from our home, which would likely be changed by cutting trees and flattening the ridge across from our house** if the pipeline goes where it was proposed." *Ellison Ridge*
- " **Rolling hills, Peters Mountain—pristine views.**" *Lindside*



The current (2013) US census reported the median household income in Monroe County at \$41,234, which is nearly 25% lower than the national average of \$53,046. The landowner data reveals the potential for the pipeline to disrupt the economic livelihood of many who depend on the county's rich agricultural resources for primary and supplemental income, as well as a means of self-sufficiency.

- Sixty-six percent (66%) of the landowners report that they rely on the food they raise to live within their means.
- Sixty percent (60%) report using timber on their land to provide firewood for heating.
- Five percent (5%) of landowners report raising bees.

#### Other Socio-Economic Effects:

- **Property has a greater value to the landowners than its monetary value.** Ninety-nine percent (99%) of responding landowners reported that they value their property as "A place I want to live" more than as "A real estate investment." This value cannot be mitigated by monetary compensation. There is additional concern, however, that the presence of such a large pipeline will have a negative impact on property values and ability to sell.
- **Property owners are concerned about the impact of traffic, air and noise pollution—** both in terms of health and safety issues and for their potential negative economic impact. Ninety-four percent (94%) of responding landowners reported that they were "concerned that someone in my household will be harmed by air pollution or noise associated with pipeline construction and maintenance."

## Socio-Economic Factors (cont.)

### *Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:*

- " We derive **100% of our family income from an Organic Grazing Dairy** spanning 450 acres in Hans Creek Valley. **Water is essential to our livelihood.**" *Hans Creek Valley*
- " **Our farm provides the primary source of income** for our family." *Gap Mills*
- " **Timber and farming.** *Lindside*
- " We have had a **honeybee preserve and apiary** on the property ... and our honeybees are among the healthiest bees on the Eastern Seaboard. We currently maintain over 100 beehives, and have a successful bee breeding operation." *Narrows of Hans Creek area*
- " We have **sheep, donkeys, alpaca, goats, & chickens. Planting apple & cherry trees** this week. **Hazelnuts** established." *Lindside*
- " Most of our property is **hayfields** used to feed local farm animals." *Waiteville*
- " **Beef Cattle** Farm." *Zenith*
- " Our **farm** is supplemental income, the **timber** is supplemental income, and the **vegetables** raised help sustain my family." *Zenith*
- " Continue 102 year history of **cow/calf farming operation.**" *Willow Bend*
- " **Sheep will not prosper in constant noise.**" *Lindside*
- " High noise volume, **huge impact on poultry.**" *Gap Mills*
- " **The amount of drilling and/or blasting that will be needed to cut through the hills around here will be substantial.** The noise and dust produced from that, as well as from **heavy truck traffic over our one-lane roads and any overland access roads** will cause **problems for people, pets and livestock.** This will not be easy terrain, so those conditions are likely to last a long time. **What kind of mitigation, protection, or compensation will be made to people who are affected** (including many of us who are not on the pipeline but live near to it)? *Greenville*
- " Air quality will be affected - **fumes from big trucks, dust on dirt roads** - If explosions, chemicals released." *Ellison Ridge*
- " My organic homestead dairy goat operation has been transitioning to a commercial microdairy. **The construction and presence of a 42" pipeline 1/4 mile down the road will essentially cripple this business.** The **road will be blocked for customer access** for farm tours ... and for daily delivery of dairy products to customers... Additionally, **noise, air pollution, water contamination** will damage or destroy the health, peace and comfort of my dairy animals, who cannot give milk under anxiety and stress. The **herbicides and potential diesel spills** from mowing equipment are a nail in the coffin to my "organic" certification. The property value will plummet with installation of MVP, so **EQT/NextEra is stealing my life savings, which are all invested in the farm.**" *Ellison Ridge*

## D. Cultural Attachment: A Significant Issue for Monroe County, WV

*Cultural attachment is the cumulative effect over time of a collection of traditions, attitudes, practices, and stories that tie a person to the land, to physical place, and to kinship patterns.*

—James Kent Associates<sup>1</sup>

**“Cultural attachment” is a significant environmental/cultural factor in Monroe County, WV—one whose project impact cannot be mitigated.** The data included in this report show that the threat to community impact presented by the MVP project cannot be ignored in the NEPA process, nor should consideration of cultural attachment be limited to the National Forest.

**Background:** In 1991, American Electric Power proposed a 765kV power line that would cut through both Monroe County, WV and Craig County, VA. Because the power line would cross the adjacent land in the Jefferson National Forest, the National Forest Service was required to prepare a Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS).

In the summer of 1995, James Kent Associates (JKA) conducted a study of “cultural attachment” of areas adjacent to the federal lands including Peters Mountain in West Virginia and the Sinking Creek Valley in Virginia. Using a Discovery Process methodology, the researchers defined indicators to measure the strength of cultural attachment of the residents who lived in those areas. Through their study of *relationship to land, sense of place, and kinship*, JKA identified areas of varying degrees of cultural attachment along the power line routes. Their report was incorporated into the DEIS and adopted as one of the reasons given in the Record of Decision (ROD) for the National Forest Service’s choice of a “No Action Alternative” for the siting of the power line in the areas of high cultural attachment.

**Cultural Attachment in Monroe County:** Starting in 1991, Monroe County residents had become very concerned about the proposed location of the power line, and they had educated themselves about the National Forest Service and NEPA processes. Well before the Cultural Attachment study of 1995, individual residents knew and expressed how **they felt** about their relationship to their land and their commitment to place and kinship, but they were unaware that “cultural attachment” was the term used to describe feelings like theirs. Once the cultural attachment study was released and cited in the DEIS and ROD as a reason why the Forest Service chose the No Action Alternative, residents were proud that **other people understood and respected their feelings**.

In the years that followed, the strength of residents’ cultural attachment continued to express itself in their day-to-day behavior and in the choices that they made in their work and family lives—and they continued to wear cultural attachment as a badge of honor. When the MVP pipeline route was proposed to come through Monroe County, several residents were heard to object: “*They can’t do that. We have cultural attachment.*”

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<sup>1</sup> James Kent Associates (James A Kent; John Ryan; Carolyn Hunka and Robert Schultz). “Culture Attachment: Assessment of Impacts to Living Culture.” Prepared for George Washington and Thomas Jefferson National Forest and Woodward-Clyde Consultants. In APCo 765kV Transmission Line Environmental Impact Statement, 1995: Appendix M, p. 4. Accessed at [http://www.jkagroup.com/Docs/JKent\\_CulturalAttachment.pdf](http://www.jkagroup.com/Docs/JKent_CulturalAttachment.pdf)

**Methodology:** The academic literature on responsible federal decision-making emphasizes the necessity of involving community members. In this case, organizations in Monroe County recognized that: 1) Monroe County landowners are the true experts in knowing how their external resources (features of their land) could be positively or negatively affected by proposed changes to their environment, and 2) Monroe County landowners are the true experts in knowing how their internal resources (such as relationship to land, sense of place and kinship bonds) affect their decisions and well-being in their day-to-day lives and how changes could support or irreparably disrupt their culture.

In response to the MVP pipeline threat, landowners in Monroe County developed the Landowner's Impact Form through a participatory process that was prompted by the categories within NEPA and the academic literature on cultural attachment. They designed the inquiry to be site specific to the issues in Monroe County and other regions of rural Appalachia.

The Landowner's Impact Form includes questions with standardized and open-ended answers, as well as opportunities for free comments. Members of the Border Conservancy and Save Monroe met with individual landowners living on or near either the Original or Alternate 110 corridors. Landowners submitted their information through face-to-face interviews, paper and pencil booklets, or on-line formats. The creation of the form, together with the gathering and synthesis of the data, was limited to a short window due to MVP's amendments to the routes and the FERC's short scoping period. Nevertheless, a total of 210 people reported their information.

**Findings:** Information was submitted to the FERC on June 16, 2015 as separate individual landowner reports and a preliminary summary. This portion of the *updated* summary includes:

- Sample comments that landowners offered freely in the spaces for unguided comments.
- Pie chart depictions of frequency of landowners' answers to specific questions.

**These data establish that an analysis of cultural attachment in the Peters Mountain areas of Monroe County must be included in the EIS for the MVP pipeline corridors.** To be clear, the data collected by Save Monroe and the Border Conservancy and this consolidated report is *not* such an analysis. It was *not designed* to substitute for a rigorous cultural attachment analysis that includes in-depth interviews, observations and studies of behavior such as those performed by JKA in 1995, as well as methods of community inquiry included and elaborated on in *Understanding Community—Forest Relations*.<sup>2</sup>

However, these 2015 data are not to be ignored. They *do* show that landowners' answers to direct questions and their free comments are consistent with findings in the original JKA report. **Taken together with the 2002 federal NFS Record of Decision, and the James Kent warning that "there is no mitigation for cultural attachment," there is no leeway to ignore the need for cultural attachment to be considered a significant issue that would require a No Action Alternative in a gas pipeline crossing the Peters Mountain regions of Monroe County.**

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<sup>2</sup> Sturtevant, Victoria E., "Methods of Community Inquiry." Chapter in Kruger, Linda E., ed. *Understanding Community—Forest Relations*, USDA Forest Service, February 2003. General Technical Report PNW-GTR-566. Accessed at [http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw\\_gtr566.pdf](http://www.fs.fed.us/pnw/pubs/pnw_gtr566.pdf)

## Relationship to Land

**Relationship to land**—A person who is culturally attached has a relationship to land, which is primarily based in non-economic values. Land is recognized as having intrinsic value, which is more important than its economic value. A person who is not culturally attached has a relationship to land, which is primarily based on its extrinsic or economic value. (p. 10)

In cultural attachment, land is not seen as a commodity but as a part of the family system that has a sacred quality. Production on the land is geared to family use, sharing and other culturally appropriate activities. (p. 7)

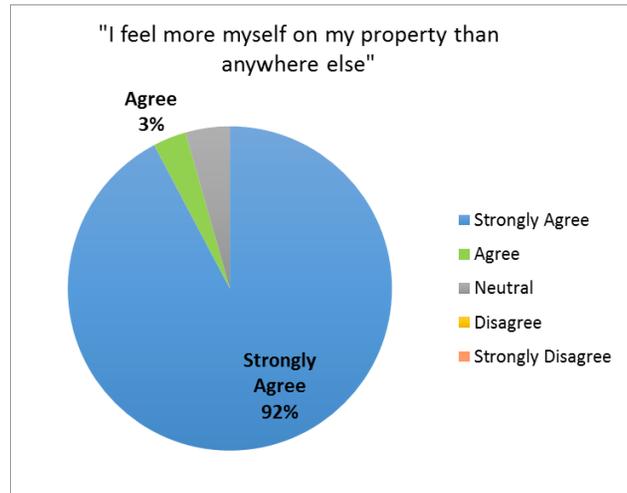
James Kent Associates

### Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:

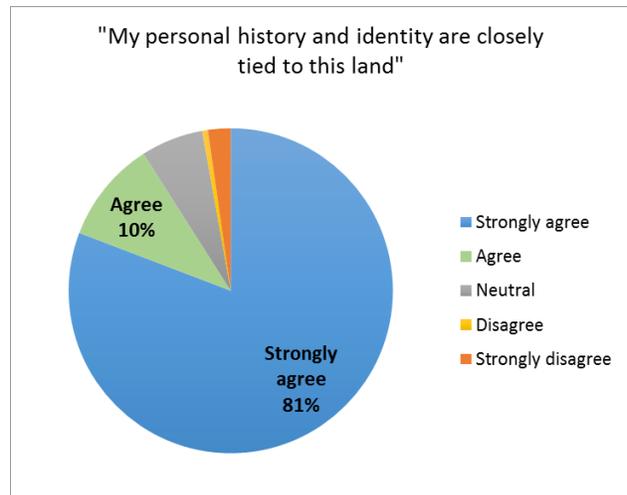
- " This gas line would destroy our spring water, destroy our Peters Mountain that we love like a family member. Our beauty, our wildlife, life as we know it now would be destroyed." *Zenith*
- " For those of us who call Peters Mountain home, it is a very rare and special place where the mountain watches over us. It is sacred. It provides both peace and protection. Its power is not to be disrupted casually." *Waiteville*
- " It is a piece of heaven loaned to ME from God, NOT loaned to a corporation!" *Zenith*
- " I love my precious lands. I care for the soil with my very soul, and all creations. Indian Burial grounds, ancient oaks in direct path of gas pipeline, spring fed pond—we use every inch of our lands in all aspects of life—pristine views. Water is our life. We have the best water in the world." *Salt Sulphur Springs*
- " My farm is my family, alive, living, breathing. We take care of each other." *Salt Sulphur Springs*
- " It chose us." *Greenville*
- " This property has been in my family for 3 generations. My ancestors settled in this area in the 1700s. Some of them had Native American blood. My roots go deep here on this land & the surrounding land. I am part of this land & the land is part of me. It is my home. It is a clean, quiet place to relax, live my life and enjoy the beautiful hills, valleys and mountains. We use our land for hiking, hunting, and other family activities." *Ellison Ridge above Hans Creek Valley*
- " Roots and ties to this land go back to the first settlers of this area." *Peters Mountain, near Lindside*

**Responses to Relationship to Land questions:**

Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions feel an exceptionally strong **relationship** with their land. Ninety-five percent (95%) of those responding reported that they felt more themselves on their property than anywhere else. (n=181)



Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions feel an exceptionally strong **connection** to their land. Ninety-one percent (91%) of those responding reported that their personal history and identity are closely tied to their land. (n=177)



Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions **overwhelmingly value their land for its intrinsic value** as opposed to its economic value. Ninety-nine percent (99%) of those responding reported that they value their property as a place they want to live more than as a real estate investment. (n=179)



## Place/Work Orientation

**Place/Work Orientation**—A person who is culturally attached has a primary commitment to place. The choice of employment is secondary and is often a method of supporting the primary commitment to place. In contrast people who are not culturally attached place primary emphasis on the choice of work and then select a place to live. (p. 10)

[People] talk about physical place related to geographic space, special areas with names such as Peters Mountain or Sinking Creek. (p. 8, brackets added)

Place was also defined as intimate knowledge of the landscape, what happens in the landscape, what the landscape provides. In culturally attached areas, place was spoken of as having a living interactive quality that preserved the relationship between people and their landscape. (p. 8)

James Kent Associates

### Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:

" People chose to live in Monroe County because it's kind of like stepping back into time, when life was much simpler and much more pleasant. If we wanted development and industrial growth we would have never chosen Monroe County to settle in and call home." *Zenith*

" My wife's family has lived in Monroe County for five generations. While I was employed in Virginia, I traveled 152 miles round trip to and from work. My wife and I made the decision not to seek a home closer to work because we love living in Monroe County." *Lillydale*

" I grew up here and always wanted to come back to it. Now that we're back we want to protect what we missed for so long." *Lindsay*

" Traveled 81 miles one-way to work for 16 years so I could enjoy Monroe County." *Hans Creek Valley*

" We are here because we want to be here. We have lived other places, other states. We came home to enjoy a place that IS as it WAS! No stoplights, no 4-lane highways, no smokestack industry. Life can be hard here, but life is good here—great scenery, very quiet, no hustle & bustle of urban life. We sincerely prefer it. I was born here some 75 years ago and think it is my duty as custodian of these acres to keep it as it IS, as it WAS, and hopefully WILL BE for generations to come, to enjoy as we have and do—as generations who have gone before did. We thank them for their efforts to keep it as it IS and as it WAS." *Greenville*

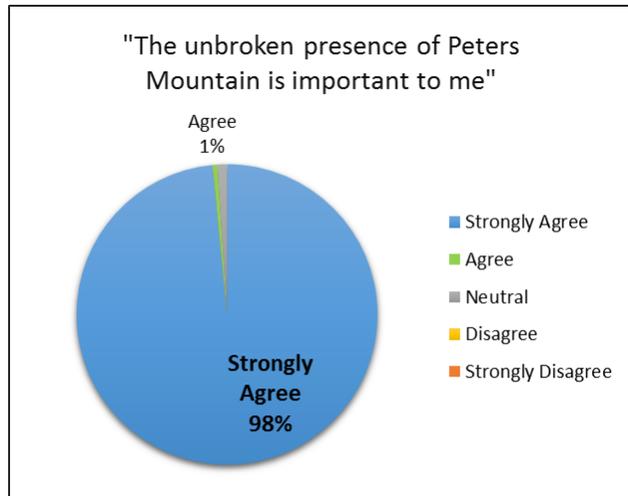
**Responses to Place/Work Orientation and Attachment to Place questions:**

**Many landowners make the choice to live in Monroe County despite the lack of well-paying jobs in the county.** For some this means taking a lesser-paying job nearby or traveling long distances (up to more than 160 miles daily round trip) to get to work. Others live and work elsewhere, but travel hundreds of miles every week or two to get “home” to Monroe County.

**With its thirty-five mile unbroken span, Peters Mountain is a dominant geographic marker throughout Monroe County.**

Its importance can be seen by the sheer number of individual landowner comments that refer to “The Mountain” *by name*.

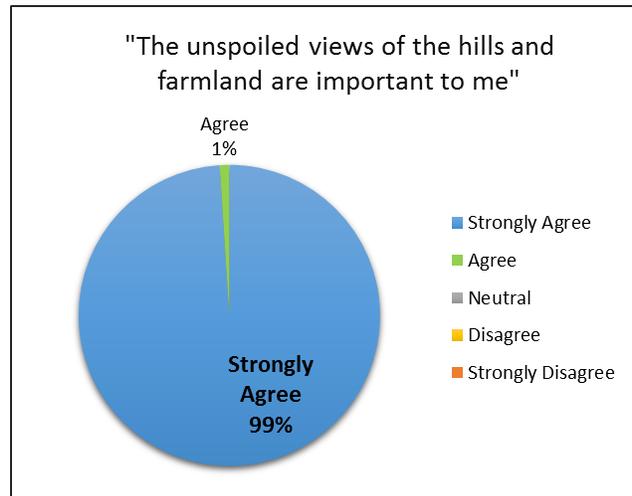
Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions feel an exceptionally strong relationship with Peters Mountain, with ninety-nine percent (99%) of those responding reporting that the unbroken presence of Peters Mountain is important to them. (n=195)



**Through the strength of their family farms and their respect for their land, Monroe County landowners have worked hard to preserve their landscape.**

Numerous individual landowner comments spoke of the importance of preserving their land for future generations.

Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions believe in protecting their hills and farmlands, with all of those responding (100%) agreeing that the unspoiled views are important to them personally. (n=195)



## Kinship

**Kinship**—A person who is culturally attached has a primary commitment to his/her kin. This expresses itself through mutual support to provide needed services such as child care, agricultural support, and entertainment/recreation. This occurs within the context of a commitment to place. A person who is not culturally attached is more likely to purchase services and seek entertainment/recreation outside of their place. They are also likely to define their family as those with whom they share a residence. (p. 10)

In culturally attached areas, the household was the basic unit of production. Families had decided physical place and land were their dominant values and the family and kin work to support those values. Mutual cooperation, kinship gatherings, discussions of the genealogy of family and place were prominent. (p. 8)

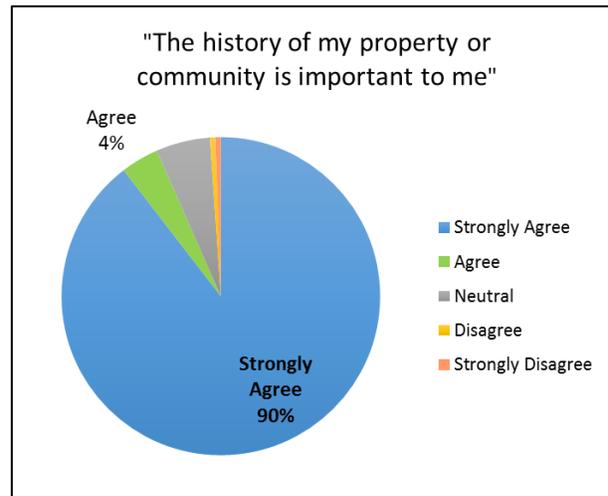
James Kent Associates

### Sample Comments from Monroe County, WV Landowner Impact Reports:

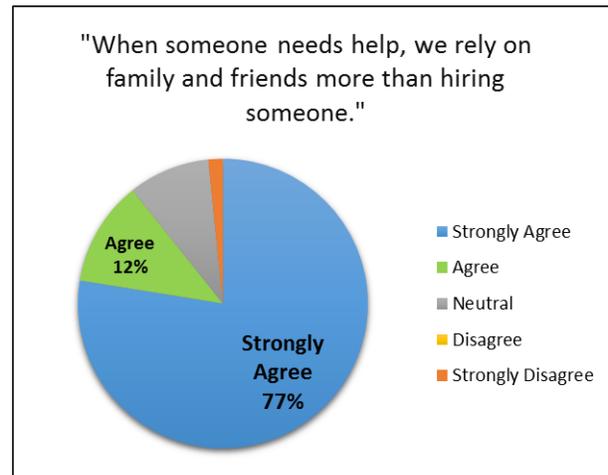
- " My mom and dad owned this property all my life. It was left to me and my sister when they died. It's going to be passed down to our children and grandchildren. A lot of hard work has gone into this land with a lot of love and caring. We don't want it destroyed by a pipeline." *Waiteville*
  
- " I love Peter's Mt and ALL it stands for. My deceased husband acquired this property from his siblings as it has been in their family for years. We have farmed it, gardened it, timbered it, built homes on it, raised children, grandchildren and great-great grandchildren on it. We have raised bees, played, shared and loved on this land. It is in our HEARTS to stay." *Zenith*
  
- " This is a Bicentennial Farm, in the ... family since the 1700's. There are 4 generations of the family living here now." *Hans Creek Valley*
  
- " As a youth I worked the corn fields, hay fields and any other chore such as harvesting our crops, shucking the corn, putting away the vegetables for winter storage, bringing home our cows from wherever as they had free range, gathering wood for our cooking and heating, carrying water from the spring approximately half a mile. Some of the more pleasant chores were making open kettle apple butter from our own apple orchard, making cane molasses—the ancient mill to squeeze out the juice and we cooked it down open kettle style. Also made maple syrup from trees on our property. I went to school in a one room school close by. This is my home I have buried my father, mother and sister on this property, along with them I want to rest here." *Zenith*
  
- " Family history, memories, and old stories are very important in connection with this property." *Lindside*

## Responses to Kinship-related questions:

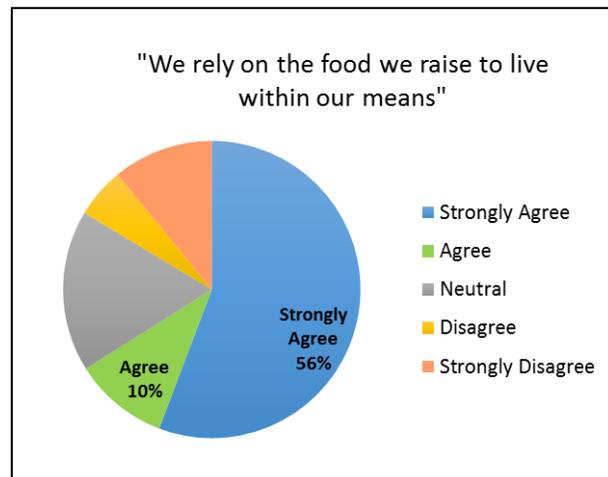
Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions have learned about and have an understanding of the **history** of their homeplace. Ninety-four percent (94%) of those responding reported that the history of their property or community is important to them. (n=182)



Landowners in the Monroe County pipeline regions **help each other** rather than pay for services. Eighty-nine percent (89%) of those responding reported that they rely on family and friends more than hiring someone when they needed help. (n=187)



Families in the Monroe County pipeline regions **rely on their agricultural resources** as part of their family economy. Sixty-six percent (66%) of those responding said that they relied on the food they raised to live within their means (n=165), **more than three times higher than the U.S. average**. Based on information from the National Gardening Association, only nineteen percent (19%) of U.S. households participate in food gardening to "save money on food bills."



Document Content(s)

Landowner Impact Report - Cover letter.PDF.....1-2

Monroe Co. Landowner Impact Report - Part I\_ 10-1-15.PDF.....3-23