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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CONSERVATION GROUPS REACT TO GAS PIPELINE PROPOSAL

Conservation groups across West Virginia are deeply concerned about Dominion's proposed 42 inch high pressure gas pipeline through the heart of the Monongahela and George Washington National Forests. It would cut through our highest mountains (over 4,000 feet), through caves, native trout streams, tourism railroads, endangered species habitat and historic Civil War battlefields.

Many local residents facing eminent domain proceedings are outraged. Dominion is applying for a federal permit that will allow the taking of their private property. The blasting needed to get through this very steep, rocky terrain could impact individuals and community water supplies. If the pipeline is built, safety issues could reduce property values and overwhelm local emergency responders.

Citizens across the Allegheny Highlands are organizing to fight the pipeline route. Twenty groups so far have joined the Allegheny Blue Ridge Alliance and more are signing up.

Judy Rodd of the Friends of Blackwater said, "Our public lands must be protected against this industrial development. Other routes are available." Leslee McCarty of Greenbrier River Watershed Association said, "These are some of the highest quality streams in our state. To target them for such a big industrial endeavor makes no sense."

Beth Little, of West Virginia Highlands Conservancy brings up the heart of the matter when she says, "Natural gas is a fossil fuel. Massive investment in a pipeline that locks us in to using a fossil fuel for many years is not the right answer to our energy problems."

According to Jim Sconyers, Chair of the West Virginia Sierra Club, "The immediate damage this pipeline will cause to our mountains, forests, rivers, and streams is staggering. But we are also deeply concerned about the indirect but disastrous repercussions. As Dominion gleefully touts, this pipeline alone would induce vast expansion of gas drilling and fracking in West Virginia. We know very well the destruction, disruption, and health impacts that this will cause. And just as frightening, at one end of the pipeline we have leaking methane at compressors and wellheads, while at the other end we have massive releases of

CO2 as the gas is burned - and these gases are driving the impending climate catastrophe. The best place for the gas is in the ground. A morally responsible alternative is to do everything possible to conserve energy and to replace dirty fossil fuels like natural gas with clean renewables."

Tourism dollars are an important economic driver to the entire region, especially the area just southwest of the Spruce Knob-Seneca Rocks National Recreation Area created in the 1960's by Senator Robert C Byrd. They come from hunting, fishing, hiking, camping, mountain biking, lodging, restaurants and tourism railroads. None of these visitors wants to see this iconic landscape scarred by a massive, destructive pipeline project. This industrial corridor will degrade West Virginia's world famous mountain scenery and undermine local economies.

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