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**FEDERAL ENERGY
REGULATORY COMMISSION**

August 11, 2016

Kimberley Bose, Secretary
Federal Energy Regulatory Commission
888 First Street, NE
Washington, DC 20426

Re: Docket CP15-558-000 – Proposed PennEast Pipeline Project

Dear Ms. Bose:

I am writing this letter on behalf of the Sourland Conservancy, an intervenor in this proceeding. The Sourland Conservancy's mission is to protect, promote and preserve the unique character of the Sourland Mountain region, through which the proposed PennEast Pipeline will cut a devastating path. The Conservancy is located in Hopewell, NJ in Mercer County. The Sourland Mountain region lies, within Somerset, Hunterdon and Mercer Counties.

PennEast has proposed an alternate route for the gas pipeline it would like to construct in our area, from Luzerne County in Pennsylvania, through the Sourland Mountain region in Hunterdon and Mercer Counties in NJ. PennEast's proposed alternate route for this pipeline is longer and impacts even more of the Sourland region, including Baldpate Mountain and the Ted Stiles preserve, than the originally proposed route. The alternate route has been touted by some as being a "better" alternative because parts of the route are co-located along existing right-of-ways for electrical transmission lines; some entities are even promoting this route. We strongly disagree.

Both routes carry devastating impacts to our important regional environment. The Sourland Conservancy will present details regarding these environmental impacts at the scoping meeting on January 27, 2015. Presently, we are submitting the enclosed electronic copy of the "Smart Growth Planning and Management Project for the Sourland Mountain." The purpose of this New Jersey state-funded project (NJ Department of Community Affairs) was to study the characteristics of the Sourland Mountain region and propose conservation strategies and a land use plan. The project contains a Conservation and Open Space Plan, a Natural Resources Inventory, and a Review of Land Use, Ordinances and Health Regulations for the Sourland Mountain region.

As is stated in this state-funded document: "The biodiversity of the Sourland Mountain region, and the limited water on which it depends, can only be protected if man-made

impacts are minimized and tailored to preserve, protect and enhance this unique environment." The Conservancy urges FERC to conclude that the following "man-made impacts" of the PennEast pipeline, and those that will be presented at the scoping meeting, necessitate the denial of FERC approval for the PennEast Pipeline project:

- The pipeline would likely require tree cutting and blasting, further fragmenting the Sourland forest and destroying habitat for native plants and animals;
- Fragile headwaters of Sourland streams that flow to the Delaware River, protected wetlands and other natural habitats would have to be crossed and disrupted;
- Publicly owned natural treasures on Baldpate Mountain would be disturbed, such as Howell Living History Farm and numerous popular trails throughout Baldpate and Washington Crossing State Park;
- Many tracts of preserved land and historic districts, such as the rural Pleasant Valley Historic District are in harm's way;
- The Delaware and Raritan Canal, which supplies more than half a million NJ residents with water and Lambertville's water supply reservoir will be impacted!

At the PennEast Open House in Lambertville, New Jersey, not one of the dozen or so PennEast representatives to whom I spoke had heard of the Sourland Mountain region. I left my card with many, hoping that the Sourland Conservancy's input would be sought out by PennEast with regards to the pipeline's impacts on the environmental and historic resources of a region that has been recognized by many municipalities and counties in central New Jersey as one of New Jersey's greatest treasures. The Sourland Conservancy has not been contacted by PennEast. From this, we can only conclude that PennEast has total disregard for any of the devastating impacts of this project on the Sourland Mountain region and is motivated solely by profit at the expense of New Jersey's citizens, wildlife and natural landscape.

Finally, It is clear from the DEIS that thousands of pages of comments already submitted are being ignored. I am expecting a written response to my comments.

Sincerely,



Caroline Katmann
Executive Director
Sourland Conservancy

Document Content(s)

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