



**Federal Energy Regulatory Commission**  
 Office of Energy Projects  
 888 First Street, NE, Washington, DC 20426

**FERC/DEIS-D0272**

**September 2016**

# **Mountain Valley Project and Equitrans Expansion Project**

## *Draft Environmental Impact Statement*



**Mountain Valley Pipeline, LLC and Equitrans, LP**  
 FERC Docket Nos.: CP16-10-000 and CP16-13-000

**Cooperating Agencies:**



**U.S. Forest  
 Service**



**U.S. Army  
 Corps of  
 Engineers**



**U.S. Bureau of  
 Land  
 Management**



**U.S.  
 Environmental  
 Protection  
 Agency**



**Pipeline  
 Hazardous  
 Materials Safety  
 Administration**



**West Virginia  
 Department of  
 Environmental  
 Protection**



**West Virginia  
 Division of  
 Natural  
 Resources**

FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426

OFFICE OF ENERGY PROJECTS

In Reply Refer To:  
OEP/DG2E/Gas 3  
Mountain Valley Pipeline LLC  
Docket No. CP16-10-000  
Equitrans LP  
Docket No. CP16-13-000

TO THE PARTY ADDRESSED:

The staff of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) has prepared a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for the projects proposed by Mountain Valley Pipeline LLC (Mountain Valley) and Equitrans LP (Equitrans) in the above-referenced dockets. Mountain Valley requests authorization to construct and operate certain interstate natural gas facilities in West Virginia and Virginia, known as the Mountain Valley Project (MVP) in Docket Number CP16-10-000, designed to transport about 2 billion cubic feet per day (Bcf/d) of natural gas from production areas in the Appalachian Basin to markets in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States. Equitrans requests authorization to construct and operate certain natural gas facilities in Pennsylvania and West Virginia, known as the Equitrans Expansion Project (EEP) in Docket No. CP16-13-000, designed to transport about 0.4 Bcf/d of natural gas north-south on its system, to improve system flexibility and reliability, and serve markets in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Southeast, through interconnections with various other interstate systems, including the proposed MVP. Because the MVP and EEP are interrelated and connected actions, we are analyzing them both together in this single comprehensive EIS.

The draft EIS assesses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the MVP and EEP in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The FERC staff concludes that approval of the MVP and EEP would have some adverse environmental impacts; however, these impacts would be reduced with the implementation Mountain Valley's and Equitrans' proposed mitigation measures, and the additional measures recommended by the FERC staff in this EIS.

The United States (U.S.) Department of Agriculture Forest Service (FS), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (COE), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Department of Transportation, West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection; and West Virginia Division of Natural Resources participated as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EIS. Cooperating agencies have jurisdiction by law or special expertise with respect to resources potentially affected by the proposals and participate in the NEPA analysis. The BLM, COE, and FS may adopt and use the EIS when they consider the issuance of a Right-of-Way Grant to Mountain Valley for the portion of the MVP that would cross federal lands. Further, the FS may use the EIS when it considers amendments to its Land and Resource Management Plan for the Jefferson National Forest to allow the MVP to cross the Forest. Although the cooperating agencies provided input to the conclusions and recommendations presented in the draft EIS, the agencies will present their own

conclusions and recommendations in their respective permit authorizations and Records of Decision for the projects.

The draft EIS addresses the potential environmental effects of the construction and operation of the proposed facilities. For the MVP those facilities include:

- about 301 miles of new 42-inch-diameter pipeline extending from the new Mobley Interconnect in Wetzel County, West Virginia to the existing Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company LLC (Transco) Station 165 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia;
- 3 new compressor stations (Bradshaw, Harris, Stallworth) in West Virginia totaling about 171,600 horsepower (hp);
- 4 new meter and regulation stations and interconnections (Mobley, Sherwood, WB, and Transco);
- 2 new taps (Webster and Roanoke);
- 5 pig<sup>1</sup> launchers and receivers; and
- 36 mainline block valves.

For the EEP those facilities include:

- about 8 miles total of new various diameter pipelines in six segments;
- new Redhook Compressor Station, in Greene County, Pennsylvania, with 31,300 hp of compression;
- 4 new taps (Mobley, H-148, H-302, H-306) and 1 new interconnection (Webster);
- 4 pig launchers and receivers; and
- decommissioning and abandonment of the existing 4,800 hp Pratt Compressor Station in Greene County, Pennsylvania

The FERC staff mailed copies of the draft EIS to federal, state, and local government representatives and agencies; elected officials; regional environmental groups and non-governmental organizations; potentially interested Native Americans and Indian tribes; affected landowners; local newspapers and libraries; parties to this proceeding; and members of the public who submitted comments about the projects. Paper copy versions of this draft EIS were mailed to those specifically requesting them; all others received a compact-disc version. In addition, the draft EIS is available for public viewing on the FERC's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)).<sup>2</sup> A limited number of copies are available for distribution and public inspection at:

Federal Energy Regulatory Commission  
Public Reference Room  
888 First Street NE, Room 2A  
Washington, DC 20426  
(202) 502-8371

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<sup>1</sup> A "pig" is a device used to clean or inspect the interior of a pipeline.

<sup>2</sup> Go to "Documents & Filings," click on "eLibrary," use "General Search" and put in the Docket numbers (CP16-10 or CP16-13) and date of issuance (09/16/16).

Any person wishing to comment on the draft EIS may do so. To ensure consideration of your comments on the proposal in the final EIS, it is important that the Commission receive your comments on or before **December 22, 2016**.

For your convenience, there are four methods you can use to submit your comments to the Commission. The Commission will provide equal consideration to all comments received, whether filed in written form or provided verbally. The Commission encourages electronic filing of comments and has expert staff available to assist you at (202) 502-8258 or [efiling@ferc.gov](mailto:efiling@ferc.gov). Please carefully follow these instructions so that your comments are properly recorded.

- 1) You can file your comments electronically using the [eComment](#) feature on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). This is an easy method for submitting brief, text-only comments on a project;
- 2) You can file your comments electronically by using the [eFiling](#) feature on the Commission's website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) under the link to [Documents and Filings](#). With eFiling, you can provide comments in a variety of formats by attaching them as a file with your submission. New eFiling users must first create an account by clicking on "[eRegister](#)." If you are filing a comment on a particular project, please select "Comment on a Filing" as the filing type; or
- 3) You can file a paper copy of your comments by mailing them to the following address. Be sure to reference the project docket number (CP16-10-000 or CP16-13-000) with your submission::

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

- 4) In lieu of sending written or electronic comments, the Commission invites you to attend one of the public comment session its staff will conduct in the project area to receive oral comments on the draft EIS. The dates, time, and locations of the public comment sessions will be released with the Notice of Availability for the draft EIS to be issued by the FERC on September 16, 2016, and mailed to our environmental list.

Any person seeking to become a party to the proceeding must file a motion to intervene pursuant to Rule 214 of the Commission's Rules of Practice and Procedures (18 CFR Part 385.214).<sup>3</sup> Only intervenors have the right to seek rehearing of the Commission's decision. The Commission grants affected landowners and others with environmental concerns intervenor status upon showing good cause by stating that they have a clear and direct interest in this proceeding which no other party can adequately represent. **Simply filing environmental**

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<sup>3</sup> See the previous discussion on the methods for filing comments.

**comments will not give you intervenor status, but you do not need intervenor status to have your comments considered.**

### **Questions**

Additional information about the projects is available from the Commission's Office of External Affairs, at **(866) 208-FERC**, or on the FERC website ([www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov)) using the eLibrary link. For assistance, please contact FERC Online Support at [FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov](mailto:FercOnlineSupport@ferc.gov) or toll free at (866) 208-3676; for TTY, contact (202) 502-8659. The eLibrary link also provides access to the texts of formal documents issued by the Commission, such as orders, notices, and rulemakings.

In addition, the Commission offers a free service called eSubscription that allows you to keep track of all formal issuances and submittals in specific dockets. This can reduce the amount of time you spend researching proceedings by automatically providing you with notification of these filings, document summaries, and direct links to the documents. Go to [www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp](http://www.ferc.gov/docs-filing/esubscription.asp).

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Mountain Valley Project and Equitrans Expansion Project  
Draft Environmental Impact Statement**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS ..... i**

**LIST OF APPENDICES ..... vii**

**LIST OF TABLES ..... viii**

**LIST OF FIGURES ..... xiii**

**ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS ..... xiv**

  

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY ..... ES-1**

**PROPOSED ACTION ..... ES-1**

**PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ..... ES-2**

**PROJECT IMPACTS AND MITIGATION ..... ES-3**

        Geology and Soils ..... ES-3

        Cultural Resources ..... ES-10

        Air Quality and Noise ..... ES-11

        Reliability and Safety ..... ES-12

**MAJOR CONCLUSIONS ..... ES-15**

  

**1.0 INTRODUCTION ..... 1-1**

**1.1 BACKGROUND AND THE PRE-FILING REVIEW PROCESS ..... 1-2**

        1.1.1 Mountain Valley Project ..... 1-5

        1.1.2 Equitrans Expansion Project ..... 1-7

**1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED OF THE PROJECTS ..... 1-7**

        1.2.1 Mountain Valley Project ..... 1-8

        1.2.2 Equitrans Expansion Project ..... 1-8

        1.2.3 Project Need ..... 1-8

            1.2.3.1 Mountain Valley Project ..... 1-9

            1.2.3.2 Equitrans Expansion Project ..... 1-10

**1.3 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THIS EIS ..... 1-10**

        1.3.1 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ..... 1-11

        1.3.2 Cooperating Agencies ..... 1-12

            1.3.2.1 U.S. Department of Agriculture - Forest Service ..... 1-12

            1.3.2.2 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ..... 1-15

            1.3.2.3 U.S. Bureau of Land Management ..... 1-18

            1.3.2.4 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency ..... 1-19

            1.3.2.5 U.S. Department of Transportation – Pipeline and  
                    Hazardous Materials Safety Administration ..... 1-20

            1.3.2.6 West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection ..... 1-20

            1.3.2.7 West Virginia Division of Natural Resources ..... 1-21

        1.3.3 Out-of-Scope Issues ..... 1-22

**1.4 PUBLIC REVIEW ..... 1-24**

**1.5 PERMITS, APPROVALS, AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS ..... 1-30**

        1.5.1 Federal Laws Other than the National Environmental Policy Act ..... 1-30

            1.5.1.1 Bald Eagle and Golden Eagle Protection Act ..... 1-30

            1.5.1.2 Clean Air Act ..... 1-30

            1.5.1.3 Clean Water Act ..... 1-31

            1.5.1.4 Endangered Species Act ..... 1-31

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

	1.5.1.5 Migratory Bird Treaty Act .....	1-32
	1.5.1.6 National Historic Preservation Act .....	1-32
	1.5.1.7 National Trails System Act .....	1-33
	1.5.1.8 Rivers and Harbors Act .....	1-33
	1.5.1.9 Wilderness Act .....	1-33
	1.5.2 State and Local Laws .....	1-33
<b>2.0</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED ACTION .....</b>	<b>2-1</b>
2.1	PROPOSED FACILITIES .....	2-1
2.1.1	Pipeline Facilities .....	2-3
2.1.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-9
2.1.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-10
2.1.2	Aboveground Facilities .....	2-11
2.1.2.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-11
2.1.2.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-15
2.1.3	Cathodic Protection .....	2-18
2.1.3.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-18
2.1.3.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-20
2.2	NON-JURISDICTIONAL FACILITIES .....	2-20
2.2.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-20
2.2.1.1	Mobley Interconnect .....	2-21
2.2.1.2	Bradshaw Compressor Station and Mainline Valve 2 .....	2-21
2.2.1.3	Sherwood Interconnect .....	2-21
2.2.1.4	Harris Compressor Station, WB Interconnect, and Mainline Valve 9 .....	2-21
2.2.1.5	Stallworth Compressor Station and Mainline Valve 19 .....	2-21
2.2.1.6	Transco Interconnect and Mainline Valve 36 .....	2-22
2.2.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-22
2.3	LAND REQUIREMENTS .....	2-22
2.3.1	Pipelines .....	2-24
2.3.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-24
2.3.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-25
2.3.2	Aboveground Facilities .....	2-26
2.3.2.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-26
2.3.2.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-27
2.3.3	Additional Temporary Workspaces .....	2-28
2.3.3.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-28
2.3.3.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-28
2.3.4	Yards .....	2-28
2.3.4.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-29
2.3.4.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-30
2.3.5	Access Roads .....	2-30
2.3.5.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-30
2.3.5.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-31
2.3.6	Cathodic Protection .....	2-31
2.3.6.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	2-31
2.3.6.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	2-31
2.4	CONSTRUCTION PROCEDURES .....	2-31
2.4.1	Mitigation .....	2-32
2.4.1.1	General Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Mitigation Measures .....	2-32

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

2.4.1.2	General Forest Service Mitigation .....	2-35
2.4.2	General Upland Overland Pipeline Construction Methods .....	2-36
2.4.2.1	Survey and Staking .....	2-38
2.4.2.2	Clearing and Grading .....	2-38
2.4.2.3	Trenching .....	2-39
2.4.2.4	Pipe Stringing, Bending, Welding, and Coating .....	2-40
2.4.2.5	Lowering-in and Backfilling .....	2-41
2.4.2.6	Hydrostatic Testing .....	2-41
2.4.2.7	Commissioning .....	2-42
2.4.2.8	Cleanup and Restoration .....	2-42
2.4.2.9	Special Pipeline Construction Procedures .....	2-43
2.4.2.10	Waterbody Crossings .....	2-43
2.4.2.11	Wetland Crossings .....	2-45
2.4.2.12	Road and Railroad Crossings .....	2-46
2.4.2.13	Residential Areas .....	2-47
2.4.2.14	Foreign Utilities .....	2-48
2.4.2.15	Agricultural Lands .....	2-48
2.4.2.16	Rugged Topography .....	2-49
2.4.2.17	Karst Terrain .....	2-50
2.4.2.18	Winter Construction .....	2-50
2.4.3	Aboveground Facility Construction .....	2-51
2.4.4	Monitoring .....	2-51
2.4.4.1	Construction Monitoring and Quality Control .....	2-51
2.4.4.2	Post-Approval Variance Process .....	2-52
2.4.4.3	Post-Construction Monitoring .....	2-53
2.4.4.4	Monitoring of the Right-of-Way Grant for Federal Lands .....	2-53
2.5	CONSTRUCTION SCHEDULE AND WORKFORCE .....	2-55
2.6	OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE .....	2-56
2.6.1	Pipelines .....	2-56
2.6.2	Aboveground Facilities .....	2-57
2.7	FUTURE PLANS AND ABANDONMENT .....	2-57
<b>3.0</b>	<b>ALTERNATIVES .....</b>	<b>3-1</b>
3.1	NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE .....	3-3
3.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	3-4
3.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	3-4
3.2	ALTERNATIVE MODES OF NATURAL GAS TRANSPORTATION .....	3-5
3.2.1	LNG Vessels .....	3-5
3.2.2	Truck Delivery .....	3-6
3.2.3	Railroad Delivery .....	3-6
3.3	SYSTEM ALTERNATIVES .....	3-7
3.3.1	Existing Natural Gas Pipeline Systems .....	3-7
3.3.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	3-7
3.3.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	3-12
3.3.2	Proposed Natural Gas Pipeline Systems .....	3-13
3.3.2.1	Proposed Projects in the Vicinity of the Mountain Valley Project .....	3-13
3.3.2.2	Proposed Projects in the Vicinity of the Equitrans Expansion Project .....	3-16
3.4	ROUTE ALTERNATIVES .....	3-16
3.4.1	Major Alternative Route Concepts Not Evaluated in Detail .....	3-17



**TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)**

3.4.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	3-17
3.4.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	3-20
3.4.2	Major Route Alternatives .....	3-20
3.4.2.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	3-20
3.4.2.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	3-28
3.5	ROUTE VARIATIONS .....	3-28
3.5.1	Mountain Valley Project Route Variations .....	3-28
3.5.1.1	Supply Header Collocation Alternative .....	3-30
3.5.1.2	Burnsville Lake Wildlife Management Area Variation .....	3-33
3.5.1.3	Elk River Wildlife Management Area Variation .....	3-36
3.5.1.4	Variations 110, 110R, and 110J .....	3-39
3.5.1.5	Columbia Gas of Virginia Pipelines Peters Mountain Variation .....	3-43
3.5.1.6	Alternatives for Crossing the Appalachian National Scenic Trail .....	3-46
3.5.1.7	Mount Tabor Variation .....	3-52
3.5.1.8	Blake Preserve Variation .....	3-55
3.5.1.9	Blue Ridge Parkway Variation .....	3-58
3.5.1.10	Variation 35 .....	3-61
3.5.2	Equitrans Expansion Project Variations .....	3-64
3.5.2.1	H-316 Route Variations .....	3-64
3.5.2.2	H-318 Variation .....	3-67
3.5.2.3	M-80 and H-158 Variations .....	3-70
3.5.3	Minor Route Variations .....	3-73
3.5.3.1	Mountain Valley Project Minor Route Variations .....	3-73
3.5.3.2	Equitrans Expansion Project Minor Route Variations .....	3-84
3.6	ABOVEGROUND FACILITY ALTERNATIVES .....	3-89
3.6.1.1	Electric-driven Compression Alternatives .....	3-89
<b>4.0</b>	<b>ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS .....</b>	<b>4-1</b>
4.1	GEOLOGY .....	4-3
4.1.1	Affected Environment .....	4-3
4.1.1.1	Geologic Setting .....	4-3
4.1.1.2	Bedrock Geology .....	4-5
4.1.1.3	Surficial Geology .....	4-10
4.1.1.4	Mineral Resources .....	4-13
4.1.1.5	Geologic Hazards .....	4-21
4.1.1.6	Paleontological Resources .....	4-39
4.1.1.7	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-40
4.1.2	Environmental Consequences .....	4-41
4.1.2.1	Mines .....	4-41
4.1.2.2	Oil and Gas Wells .....	4-44
4.1.2.3	Seismicity and Potential for Soil Liquefaction .....	4-44
4.1.2.4	Slopes and Landslide Potential .....	4-46
4.1.2.5	Karst Terrain .....	4-48
4.1.2.6	Shallow Bedrock .....	4-50
4.1.2.7	Blasting .....	4-50
4.1.2.8	Paleontology .....	4-51
4.1.2.9	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-52
4.2	SOILS .....	4-55
4.2.1	Affected Environment .....	4-55

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)**

- 4.2.1.1 Soil Limitations.....4-55
- 4.2.1.2 Contaminated Soils .....4-62
- 4.2.1.3 Ground Heaving.....4-62
- 4.2.1.4 Slip-Prone Soils .....4-63
- 4.2.1.5 Jefferson National Forest .....4-63
- 4.2.2 Environmental Consequences .....4-64
  - 4.2.2.1 Soil Limitations.....4-65
  - 4.2.2.2 Contaminated Soils .....4-67
  - 4.2.2.3 Ground Heaving.....4-67
  - 4.2.2.4 Slip-Prone Soils .....4-68
  - 4.2.2.5 Jefferson National Forest .....4-68
- 4.3 WATER RESOURCES .....4-69
  - 4.3.1 Groundwater.....4-69
    - 4.3.1.1 Affected Environment.....4-69
    - 4.3.1.2 Environmental Consequences .....4-77
    - 4.3.1.3 Conclusion .....4-84
  - 4.3.2 Surface Water Resources .....4-85
    - 4.3.2.1 Affected Environment.....4-85
    - 4.3.2.2 Environmental Consequences .....4-108
  - 4.3.3 Wetlands.....4-116
    - 4.3.3.1 Affected Environment.....4-116
    - 4.3.3.2 Environmental Consequences .....4-120
    - 4.3.3.3 Alternative Measures .....4-128
    - 4.3.3.4 Compensatory Mitigation .....4-129
    - 4.3.3.5 Conclusion .....4-129
- 4.4 VEGETATION .....4-131
  - 4.4.1 Affected Environment.....4-131
    - 4.4.1.1 Vegetation Cover Types.....4-131
    - 4.4.1.2 Interior Forest.....4-131
    - 4.4.1.3 Fire Regimes .....4-136
    - 4.4.1.4 Vegetation Communities of Special Concern or Management .....4-136
    - 4.4.1.5 Noxious Weeds and Invasive Plants .....4-138
  - 4.4.2 Environmental Consequences .....4-140
    - 4.4.2.1 General Impacts on Vegetation Communities .....4-140
    - 4.4.2.2 Restoration of Vegetation .....4-144
    - 4.4.2.3 Interior Forest Fragmentation and Edge Effects .....4-144
    - 4.4.2.4 Special Areas .....4-147
    - 4.4.2.5 Non-Native Invasive Plants and Weeds.....4-149
    - 4.4.2.6 Fire Regimes .....4-150
  - 4.4.3 Conclusions.....4-150
- 4.5 WILDLIFE.....4-152
  - 4.5.1 Affected Environment.....4-152
    - 4.5.1.1 Migratory Birds.....4-154
    - 4.5.1.2 Game Species.....4-157
    - 4.5.1.3 Sensitive and Managed Wildlife Habitats.....4-157
  - 4.5.2 Environmental Consequences .....4-160
    - 4.5.2.1 General Impacts on Wildlife.....4-160
    - 4.5.2.2 Forest Fragmentation and Edge Effects on Wildlife.....4-161
    - 4.5.2.3 Noise Impacts on Wildlife .....4-163
    - 4.5.2.4 Light Impacts on Wildlife .....4-164

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)**

4.5.2.5	Noxious and Invasive Species.....	4-165
4.5.2.6	Migratory Birds.....	4-165
4.5.2.7	Game Harvesting.....	4-168
4.5.2.8	Sensitive and Managed Wildlife Areas.....	4-169
4.5.3	Conclusion .....	4-170
4.6	<b>FISHERIES AND AQUATIC RESOURCES .....</b>	<b>4-171</b>
4.6.1	Affected Environment.....	4-171
4.6.1.1	Fisheries of Special Concern.....	4-171
4.6.1.2	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-175
4.6.2	Environmental Consequences .....	4-176
4.6.2.1	Sedimentation and Turbidity.....	4-176
4.6.2.2	Loss of Stream Bank Cover .....	4-177
4.6.2.3	Fuel and Chemical Spills .....	4-178
4.6.2.4	Hydrostatic Testing and Water Withdrawals .....	4-178
4.6.2.5	Blasting .....	4-178
4.6.2.6	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-179
4.6.2.7	Fisheries of Special Concern.....	4-180
4.6.2.8	Conclusion .....	4-180
4.7	<b>THREATENED, ENDANGERED, AND OTHER SPECIAL STATUS SPECIES.....</b>	<b>4-182</b>
4.7.1	Federally Listed Threatened, Endangered, and Other Species of Concern.....	4-183
4.7.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-183
4.7.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-189
4.7.1.3	Conclusion for Federally Listed Threatened, Endangered, and Other Species of Concern .....	4-191
4.7.2	State-Listed and Special Concern Species .....	4-191
4.7.2.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-195
4.7.2.2	Equitrans Expansion Project.....	4-196
4.7.2.3	Conclusion for State-Listed and Other Sensitive Species .....	4-196
4.7.3	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-197
4.7.3.1	Federally Listed Species within the Jefferson National Forest .....	4-197
4.7.3.2	Regional Forester’s Sensitive Species .....	4-198
4.7.3.3	Forest Service Locally Rare Species.....	4-200
4.7.3.4	Management Indicator Species .....	4-201
4.7.3.5	Conclusion for the Jefferson National Forest.....	4-201
4.8	<b>LAND USE, SPECIAL INTEREST AREAS, AND VISUAL RESOURCES.....</b>	<b>4-203</b>
4.8.1	Affected Environment.....	4-203
4.8.1.1	Counties Crossed By Pipelines .....	4-203
4.8.1.2	Land Use Types .....	4-203
4.8.1.3	Agricultural Land Conservation Programs .....	4-215
4.8.1.4	Orchards, Specialty Crops, and Organic Farms .....	4-215
4.8.1.5	Existing Residences, Businesses, and Planned Developments .....	4-216
4.8.1.6	Recreational and Special Interest Areas.....	4-217
4.8.1.7	Scenic Byways .....	4-226
4.8.1.8	Coastal Zone Management Act.....	4-227
4.8.1.9	Hazardous Waste and Contaminated Sites.....	4-228
4.8.1.10	Visual Resources.....	4-228

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

4.8.1.11	Land Use on Federal Lands .....	4-235
4.8.2	Environmental Consequences .....	4-238
4.8.2.1	Land Use .....	4-238
4.8.2.2	Residences and Commercial Lands .....	4-243
4.8.2.3	Hazardous Waste Sites.....	4-247
4.8.2.4	Recreation and Special Interest Areas.....	4-247
4.8.2.5	Visual Resources.....	4-256
4.8.2.6	Land Use on Federal Lands .....	4-259
4.9	SOCIOECONOMICS .....	4-268
4.9.1	Affected Environment.....	4-268
4.9.1.1	Population and Employment.....	4-268
4.9.1.2	Housing .....	4-270
4.9.1.3	Public Services.....	4-273
4.9.1.4	Tourism .....	4-275
4.9.1.5	Transportation and Traffic .....	4-281
4.9.1.6	Property Values, Mortgages, and Insurance .....	4-283
4.9.1.7	Economy and Tax Revenue .....	4-289
4.9.1.8	Environmental Justice .....	4-293
4.9.1.9	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-300
4.9.2	Environmental Consequences .....	4-301
4.9.2.1	Population and Employment.....	4-301
4.9.2.2	Housing .....	4-305
4.9.2.3	Public Services.....	4-307
4.9.2.4	Tourism .....	4-308
4.9.2.5	Transportation and Traffic .....	4-310
4.9.2.6	Property Values, Mortgages, and Insurance .....	4-312
4.9.2.7	Economy and Tax Revenue .....	4-314
4.9.2.8	Environmental Justice .....	4-320
4.9.2.9	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-321
4.10	CULTURAL RESOURCES .....	4-323
4.10.1	Consultations.....	4-323
4.10.1.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-323
4.10.1.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-328
4.10.2	Consultations with Local Governments and Historical Societies .....	4-328
4.10.2.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-328
4.10.2.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-331
4.10.3	Consultations with State Historic Preservation Offices .....	4-332
4.10.3.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-332
4.10.3.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-334
4.10.4	Consultations with Indian Tribes .....	4-334
4.10.4.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-338
4.10.4.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-339
4.10.5	Affected Environment.....	4-342
4.10.5.1	Overview and Survey Results .....	4-342
4.10.5.2	Definition of the Area of Potential Effect .....	4-344
4.10.6	Previous Surveys and Previously Recorded Cultural Resources .....	4-345
4.10.6.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-345
4.10.6.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-352
4.10.7	Sites Newly Identified from Surveys .....	4-353
4.10.7.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-353
4.10.7.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-366

## TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)

4.10.8	Cultural Attachment.....	4-366
4.10.8.1	Mountain Valley Project .....	4-366
4.10.8.2	Equitrans Expansion Project .....	4-373
4.10.9	Environmental Consequences .....	4-373
4.10.9.1	Historic Properties and Assessment of Project Effects .....	4-373
4.10.9.2	Unanticipated Discoveries Plans.....	4-383
4.10.9.3	Compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act .....	4-384
4.11	AIR QUALITY AND NOISE .....	4-386
4.11.1	Air Quality .....	4-386
4.11.1.1	Affected Environment.....	4-386
4.11.1.2	Air Quality Regulatory Requirements .....	4-390
4.11.1.3	Environmental Consequences .....	4-403
4.11.1.4	Radon Exposure .....	4-418
4.11.2	Noise .....	4-420
4.11.2.1	Affected Environment.....	4-421
4.11.2.2	Noise Regulatory Requirements .....	4-434
4.11.2.3	Environmental Consequences .....	4-436
4.12	RELIABILITY AND SAFETY .....	4-459
4.12.1	Safety Standards.....	4-459
4.12.2	Pipeline Accident Data.....	4-468
4.12.3	Impacts on Public Safety.....	4-471
4.12.4	Terrorism and Security Issues.....	4-472
4.13	CUMULATIVE IMPACTS.....	4-474
4.13.1	Other Projects within the Geographic Scope of Analysis .....	4-480
4.13.1.1	Oil and Gas Exploration and Production .....	4-493
4.13.1.2	FERC-jurisdictional Natural Gas Interstate Transportation Projects .....	4-494
4.13.1.3	Other Energy Projects .....	4-496
4.13.1.4	Transportation and Road Improvement Projects.....	4-496
4.13.1.5	Mining Operations .....	4-496
4.13.1.6	Residential and Commercial Developments .....	4-497
4.13.2	Cumulative Impacts on Specific Environmental Resources .....	4-498
4.13.2.1	Water Resources .....	4-498
4.13.2.2	Wetlands .....	4-502
4.13.2.3	Vegetation .....	4-503
4.13.2.4	Wildlife, Fisheries, and Federally-Listed Threatened or Endangered Species .....	4-504
4.13.2.5	Land Use, Recreation, Special Interest Areas, and Visual Resources.....	4-507
4.13.2.6	Cultural Resources .....	4-509
4.13.2.7	Air Quality and Noise .....	4-510
4.13.2.8	Jefferson National Forest .....	4-516
4.13.3	Conclusion .....	4-517
<b>5.0</b>	<b>CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
5.1	CONCLUSIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS .....	5-1
5.1.1	Geological Resources.....	5-1
5.1.2	Soils.....	5-2
5.1.3	Water Resources .....	5-3
5.1.3.1	Groundwater .....	5-3
5.1.3.2	Surface Waters .....	5-3

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (CONTINUED)**

5.1.4 Wetlands..... 5-4  
5.1.5 Vegetation ..... 5-4  
5.1.6 Wildlife and Aquatic Resources..... 5-5  
5.1.7 Special Status Species ..... 5-6  
5.1.8 Land Use, Special Interest Areas, and Visual Resources..... 5-7  
5.1.9 Socioeconomics ..... 5-9  
5.1.10 Cultural Resources ..... 5-10  
5.1.11 Air Quality and Noise ..... 5-11  
    5.1.11.1 Air Quality ..... 5-11  
    5.1.11.2 Noise ..... 5-12  
5.1.12 Reliability and Safety..... 5-13  
5.1.13 Cumulative Impacts ..... 5-14  
5.1.14 Alternatives ..... 5-15  
5.2 FERC STAFF’S RECOMMENDED MITIGATION..... 5-16

## 3.0 ALTERNATIVES

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### Introduction

In this section, we evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives, as required by NEPA (at 40 CFR 1502.14) and Commission policy. We also discuss other alternatives that were eliminated from detailed review because they were not reasonable or practicable. The alternatives may have been presented by the Applicants, cooperating and other governmental resource agencies, affected landowners, the public, and staff. The range of alternative we evaluated include the no action alternative, system alternatives, pipeline route alternatives, route variations, and compressor station equipment alternatives.

The purpose of this evaluation is to determine whether an alternative would be preferable to the proposed action. We generally consider an alternative to be preferable to a proposed action using three evaluation criteria, as discussed in greater detail below. These criteria include:

- the alternative meets the stated purpose of the project;
  - i.e., for the MVP, to alleviate some of the constraints on transporting natural gas production by adding infrastructure to transport lower-priced natural gas from the Appalachian Basin to industrial users and power generators in the Mid-Atlantic and Southeastern United States, as well as to LDCs;
  - i.e., for the EEP, to provide additional volumes of firm capacity of natural gas to be transported north-south on Equitrans' existing system. The creation of expansion capacity on Equitrans' system would allow shippers to transport natural gas produced in the Appalachian Basin to markets in the Northeast, Mid-Atlantic, and Southeastern United States, mainly through an interconnection with the MVP. The EEP would also interconnect with the existing systems of Texas Eastern; Dominion; and Columbia. End-users could include LDCs, industry, and electric power generators;
- is technically and economically feasible and practical; and
- offers a significant environmental advantage over a proposed action.

Each of the cooperating agencies with obligations under NEPA can use this alternatives analysis as part of their decision making process. Individual agencies would ensure consistency with their own administrative procedures prior to accepting the conclusions in this EIS.

### Public Comments

We received 240 comments for the MVP and 3 comments for the EEP, respectively, requesting that we evaluate alternatives. In response to these comments, we requested that the Applicants provide additional environmental information to enable us to compare alternatives to the proposed action. Our analysis of the Applicants' data and assessment of the alternatives can be found below. In some cases, during pre-filing and following filing of the applications, in response to stakeholder, agency, and staff comments, and their own assessments, the Applicants revised their proposals.