



**For Immediate Release:**

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**Contacts:**

Maya K. van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper, 215-801-3043

Kacy Manahan, Senior Attorney, Delaware Riverkeeper Network, 215-369-1188 ext. 115

**FERC Greenlights Transco REAE Pipeline  
Forest Cutting; Denies Rehearing Requests  
Chainsaw Crews Begin Cutting Forests – Conservation Community Responds**

**Washington DC; Monroe, Luzerne, Chester Counties, PA; Gloucester Co, NJ:** Only a few hours after the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) approval was granted for tree cutting of Transco’s Regional Energy Access Pipeline (REAE), chainsaw crews began cutting down mature trees along the mostly forested pipeline route. The Transco REAE natural gas pipeline expansion would consist of 22.3 miles of 30-inch-diameter pipeline loop in Luzerne County, PA, 13.8 miles of 42-inch-diameter pipeline loop in Monroe County, PA, a gas-fired turbine-driven compressor station in Gloucester County, NJ, and several other modifications to existing pipeline and compressor stations in Chester County. The pipeline segments, if constructed, will cut across 114 Exceptional Value wetlands, 77 bodies of water supporting cold water fisheries, 39 High Quality streams, 2 Exceptional Value streams, 17 Class A Wild Trout Streams, 57 waterbodies with naturally reproducing trout, and over 280 acres of forests.

“Transco has run into the forest with their chainsaws for fear the community will successfully find a legal path to stop them. This is just another subversion of the legal process - undermining it and avoiding it,” **said Maya van Rossum, the Delaware Riverkeeper.** “This doesn’t mean we won’t still be challenging this pipeline and how it’s being developed as wrong, we will. But Transco is trying to make darn sure we can’t save the old trees as part of our success.”

FERC granted Transco’s Notice to Proceed (NTP) for tree felling request Thursday afternoon. On Friday March 16, 2023, Transco requested FERC issue a NTP with pipeline construction on the heels of securing the tree cutting request just hours before. The community and conservation groups are urging FERC not to provide the greenlight for construction. FERC’s denial order on rehearing of various conservation group requests

was published Friday evening, March 17, 2023.<sup>1</sup> In response, Delaware Riverkeeper Network filed a petition for review and the underlying certificate order in the D.C. Circuit, *Delaware Riverkeeper Network v. FERC* (filed March 20, 2023). Several other petitions by conservation groups have also been filed to challenge FERC's order.

“We believe this is a premature irreversible action by FERC where there is no indication that immediate construction is required on this project, and while significant weaknesses with FERC's orders are the subject of several petitions for review in the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit,” **noted Kacy Manahan, Senior Attorney, Delaware Riverkeeper Network.**

Several Pennsylvania groups, including Delaware Riverkeeper Network, also filed a letter to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on March 20<sup>th</sup> urging the Service not to allow any waivers to tree felling restrictions under the Endangered Species Act to protect threatened and endangered bats that live where the pipeline will cut. The current window to cut down the 280 acres of trees ends March 31.

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To see the joint letter to USFWS submitted March 20 by Delaware Riverkeeper Network and other allies:

<https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/20230320JointLettertoUSFWSTranscoREAEtreeFelling.pdf>

To see the petition for review filed by Delaware Riverkeeper Network on March

20<sup>th</sup>: <https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/20230320DRNPetitionforReviewTranscoREAE.pdf>

To see the motion for waiver on tree cutting filed by Delaware Riverkeeper Network:

<https://www.delawariverkeeper.org/sites/default/files/20230219DRNOppositiontoMotionforWaiverTranscoREAE.pdf>

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<sup>1</sup> Order on Rehearing, Granting Clarification, Denying Stay, and Dismissing Waiver, Transcontinental Gas Pipe Line Company, LLC, 182 FERC ¶ 61,148 (March 17, 2023).