

**News Release**

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| **Forest Service** |  |
| Wayne National Forest Eastern Region |
| 13700 US Hwy 33 |
| Nelsonville, Ohio 45764 |
| Web: www.fs.usda.gov/wayne | Media Contact: Dawn R. McCarthy, Public Affairs Officer |
|  | Voice: (740) 753‐0862 |
| fswork | Cell: (740) 517-5358 |
| dawn.mccarthy@usda.gov |
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**Public comment invited for pipeline
re-route and replacement**

**NELSONVILLE, Ohio** (May 20, 2019) – The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and U.S. Forest Service are seeking public input on the proposed Buckeye Xpress Project. The project proposed by Columbia Gas involves 66.1 miles in southeast Ohio, including approximately 12.6 miles of pipeline construction and approximately 10.2 miles of pipeline decommissioning in the Wayne National Forest Ironton Ranger District. The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission’s public release of an Environmental Assessment for the project begins a 30-day comment period today.

 “The Forest Service plays an important role in ensuring critical energy projects are implemented responsibly and with concern for our natural resources,” said Carleen Yocum, Acting Wayne National Forest Supervisor. “Public input is an essential part of ensuring this project meets conservation needs, while meeting domestic energy demands.”

Columbia Gas’s proposed project is to construct 66.1 miles of new 36-inch diameter natural gas pipeline, replacing and expanding existing pipelines and related facilities in parts of Vinton, Lawrence, Gallia, and Jackson Counties, Ohio. Approximately 12.6 miles of the proposed route crosses the Wayne National Forest. Columbia Gas holds private easement rights for most of this route, but the Forest Service retains decision authority for issuing a Special Use Permit for 4.1 miles of the route. Additionally, the Forest Service is considering alternatives for the pipeline to be decommissioned that include removal and leaving portions in place where removal could result in greater environmental impacts. The Forest Service will prepare a separate Decision Notice for the authorization of a Special Use Permit after issuance of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission Final Order. More detailed information can be found at <https://www.fs.usda.gov/project/?project=54536&exp=overview>.

Comments on the Forest Service decision for the project should be submitted to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission process and specifically reference the Wayne National Forest in the content so that those comments can be directed to the Forest Service for review and consideration.

Comments on the proposed Buckeye Xpress Project may be submitted online at [www.ferc.gov](http://www.ferc.gov) under the link to Documents and Filings. Comments may also be submitted by mail to Kimberly D. Bose, Secretary, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, 888 First Street NE, Room 1A, Washington, DC 20426. Comments must reference docket number CP18–137–000 in the submission and must be filed or postmarked within the 30-day comment period, which ends on June 18, 2019.

The U.S. Forest Service is an agency of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, a mission of sustaining the health, diversity and productivity of the nation’s forests and grasslands to meet the needs of present and future generations. The Forest Service’s Eastern Region includes 20 states in the Midwest and East, stretching from Maine, to Maryland, to Missouri, to Minnesota. There are 17 national forests and one national tallgrass prairie in the Eastern Region. For more information, visit [www.fs.usda.gov/R9](http://www.fs.usda.gov/R9).

The U.S. Forest Service manages 193 million acres of public land, provides assistance to state and private landowners, and maintains the largest forestry research organization in the world. Public lands the Forest Service manages contribute more than $13 billion to the economy each year through visitor spending alone. Those same lands provide 20 percent of the nation’s clean water supply, a value estimated at $7.2 billion per year. The agency has either a direct or indirect role in stewardship of about 80 percent of the 850 million forested acres within the U.S., of which 100 million acres are urban forests where most Americans live. For more information, visit [www.fs.fed.us](http://www.fs.fed.us).

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