**Bondurant, Roberta – Economics, Property Rights/Eminent Domain**

Hi, my name is Roberta Bondurant. I'm from Bent Mountain, Virginia, and I have worked for the last three years with Preserve Roanoke and Bent Mountain. I serve with the coalition along the MVP line through Protect Our Water Heritage and Rights. In our work, in many aspects I've gotten to be a map junkie, so I'm gonna step aside here and talk as loud as I can and just kind of show you where we are in the MVP and a little bit about what our issues are.

I heard Richard Averitt talk about property rights and I couldn’t impress again more the significance of what he had to say. I wanted to add in on that simply as to surveying and property rights issues. We're citizens , we’re not serfs, and unless we stand up and message that to our government and to our courts, and to require our local governments and our state governments and our federal government to serve us, and require our courts to serve justice then we’re not going to get it.

I was talking with my neighbor Karen Scott – whose home-schooled daughter from Bent Mountain by the way drew this adjustment to the state flag of Virginia, slaying the pipeline. You know we just determined this is one of those times in life where there’s just no choice, we're just digging in and we’re going forward. So we appreciate you being here.

I'm really going to be talking about cultural attachment, and cultural attachment in a large way through the water. What you see here is the ridge and valley zone of Virginia,and as many of you know from the ACP how the pipeline cuts across the mountains. It's cutting across Southwest Virginia here but what you see from Bent Mountain is when you look down in this far corner is they’re cutting to the highest point in Southwest Virginia. It’s almost a 4,000 foot mountain, and this route makes a beeline for this mountain. I can't imagine why that is except that you might think that when you're looking on a CAD drawing that there might be the fewest number of people there, but it's the most damning of routes and MVP has preceded with abandon.

So, what you see here is a route from which I'll be talking on behalf of groups of citizens from Montgomery County, from Mount Tabor, and from both sides of Bent and Poor Mountain, and in Roanoke, and in Montgomery County, a place that was settled from the mid to late 18-hundreds by industry, railroad and apple orcharding. Before that we had settlements for over maybe thousands of years of Native Americans. Relative to what we know, as more recent civilization, it was relatively late in the eighteen hundreds, and orchard industries is what you’d see in Roanoke county and Montgomery.

What our government and MVP have failed to recognize is that here in these higher most reaches you see the tendrils of Bottom and Mill Creek coming down, and it circles way back through Floyd and Montgomery County, and circling back to and from Montgomery County and Giles County, through the North Fork of the Roanoke River, and joining up right here. We've got Spring Hollow Reservoir right here. We talked a little bit about folks from this part of the mountain, and how this watershed is getting cut across by these hotspots on the MVP which will decimate the upward reaches of tendrils of what we've had designated as tier-three streams. Our former DEQ Agent, Bob Johnson, worked with his wife for ten years after his retirement, and had Bottom Creek ,which is you know part of the Nature Conservancy's Bottom Creek Gorge Preserve, designated a tier-three stream. DEQ has been prepared to fine people for offenses to that stream, but it's been looking the other way.

This is Cletus Beauhon. Cletus's mom and family grew up on Bent Mountain, and now Cletus has bought a place around the backside of the mountain. He's got both an access road and a part of the pipeline coming up the backside of Poor Mountain.

This is one of the caves coming through Mount Tabor. This is Thunder Croft cave, across from the Mount Tabor variation, that's just been discovered. The pipeline is slated to go through there. This was just discovered on surveying, this is an entire region of karst.

This is Jim Law. He lives with his neighbors Cletus Bohan and Don Apgar on the backside of Poor Mountain in Elliston. This area's been slated for a compressor station.

So I'm gonna read to you in summary a statement from Don Apgar. Don’s brother Mickey is elderly. The family ran the Sunshine Deli Mart on route 460 in Elliston all of their lives and I'll abbreviate this. He's writing about his watershed and he writes, he calls it his River.

Dear Mr. Paylor,

 I’m 87 years old. My wife Millie is 86. We’ve lived in Lafayette, Virginia all of our lives, in fact we grew up together playing on the Roanoke River. She swam in the Old Mill Pond and I caught hellgrammites by the sackful and used them on my trapline to catch catfish.

 Lafayette is right on the Roanoke River nestled in the area between the joining of the North and South Forks of the Roanoke and the crossing of the river by Lee Highway, presently route 11 and 460. Lafayette was a town that had three grocery stores, a blacksmith shop, post office, a cooper, an undertaker and a sawmill at the junction of the North and South Forks of the Roanoke.

 I've been in love with the river my whole life. I fished it, kayaked it and wrecked several boats on it. My first kayak was the Sears & Roebuck wood canvas kit, a gift from my aunt in 1948. My second kayak I made with Millie's uncle after I returned from military service in the Korean War. We worked on it at night after working in the grocery business all day, so it took us about two weeks to finish. We copied my original kayak but made it large enough to hold two people.

 I don’t want to see my river destroyed. I own about 1700 feet of river frontage which I can look out on every day when I wake up. In fact, the crossing of the Roanoke River is on my property at milepost 235. I live on a hill overlooking the Roanoke River and can see, hear and taste it every day.

And again that’s just a mile point two from the Spring Hollow Reservoir. I want to show you what the river looks like. I want to say that Don Apgar is in rehab now. His brother died last year. Don brought me up in his truck to see this cabin which sits on Fort Lewis Mountain in Roanoke County just before he fell and hurt his hip. He has many grandchildren, nieces and nephews who participate in the care and upkeep of this property.